

Speaking Test: 7 Complete tests

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How to use this eBook to improve your speaking score

1. Look at questions and think how you would answer them
2. Think about any high-level language you could use to answer questions
3. Practice speaking out your answers
4. Learn from the model answers for part 2
5. Learn from the ideas for answers for part 3

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LESSON 1: Study

PART 1

Let's talk about studying.

Do you prefer to study in the morning or the evening?

Do you think you a quick Learner?

Do you do anything to help yourself concentrate when studying?

Is there anything new that you would like to learn in the future?

Let's move on and talk about high school.

How many different high schools did you go to?

Did you have a favourite teacher?

Did you get on well with your classmates at high school?

Do you still meet or contact your old classmates from high school?

Now let's talk about dictionaries

How often do you use a dictionary?

Do you prefer to use an electronic dictionary or a paper dictionary?

Do you think it is easy to use a dictionary?

If someone gave you a dictionary as a gift, how would you feel?

PART 2

DESCRIBE A SUBJECT YOU HAVE STUDIED THAT YOU LIKED

You should say:

- what the name of the subject was
- why you enjoyed studying this subject
- how hard you studied this subject

and explain what it was that you like most about this subject

Follow up questions:

Are you still interested in this subject?

Would you like to continue studying this subject in the future?

PART 3

Let's talk about studying and job opportunities

Do you think studying at university is necessary to get a good job?

What courses offer graduates the best job opportunities?

Why do you think some people who have studied at university still find it difficult to get a job?

Now let's move on to talk about the costs of studying.

Why do you think many universities charge high fees?

What are some solutions to help graduates with large loans to pay these off?

What are the advantages of a free education compared to paying for education?

PART 2: Model Answer

DESCRIBE A SUBJECT YOU HAVE STUDIED THAT YOU LIKED.

You should say:

- what the name of the subject was
- why you enjoyed studying this subject
- how hard you studied this subject

and explain what it was that you like most about this subject

Ok, the subject I studied at university that I **excelled** in as an **undergraduate** student was **psychology**. I decided to enrol in this course through the **Faculty of Arts** and **major** in it because it didn't have any **prerequisites** in mathematics, which was not one of my best subjects in high school and I also because I had a natural **curiosity** for it.

From the very first **lecture** I attended in my first year to my final exam in my third year I loved it. In the three years I studied it I attended every lecture and every **tutorial**.

Apart from being naturally interested in psychology, I found my lecturers to be very interesting, intelligent and helpful people who all had a real passion for their **speciality**. This encouraged me to study harder and **strive** for high grades.

In order to achieve the highest grades I possibly could in this subject I knew I had to **put in** long hours of hard study. I **devoted** every spare moment of my free time to studying this subject **intensely**. I even studied a lot of other material on psychology not related to my course because I loved it so much.

While most of my classmates were busy partying in their **fraternity** clubs in their free time I had my **head buried in the books**, but it was not a **burden** for me at all, rather, an **insatiable** curiosity.

I was in disbelief when I saw my final grade for psychology. I got a score of ninety four percent. The hard work and **persistence** had **paid off**. The excellent grade it **spurred me on** to maintain my discipline for not only this subject but for the rest of my subjects throughout my entire Arts course. After my graduation the head **professor** of the faculty of psychology encouraged me to think about doing a **master's degree** the following year but I decided to take a few years of instead as I was so **burnt out**.

PART 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

Arts: an Arts faculty allows a broad category of subjects to be studied by a student at a university or college. These subjects range in areas of study from the many liberal arts courses on offer to many of the sciences.

bachelor's degree: an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study lasting from three to seven years.

burden: a load, a toll. Especially a heavy psychological one.

curiosity: a strong desire to want to know or learn something.

degree: a qualification or award upon successful completion of a course of study at a university or college.

faculty: the teaching staff at a university or college or one of its departments.

fraternity: a group of people sharing a common profession or interests. Friendship, brotherhood, sisterhood, kinship, fellowship.

graduation: A special ceremony that takes place after a student completes their college or university course, especially their undergraduate course.

lecture: an educational talk, speech or presentation to students at a university or college.

major: the main speciality area of study undertaken by a student in an undergraduate program. The other subjects studied that make up a degree course is called a 'minor.

master's degree: a degree awarded to someone after successfully completing an undergraduate degree.

persistence: the continuation of a habit or action. To continue a habit or action without giving up.

prerequisite: an essential requirement or condition that is needed before one can go on to the next step.

professor: an academic title given to a high-ranking teacher and scholar at a university or tertiary institution.

psychology: is the study of behaviour and mind including the study of conscious and unconscious experience as well as thought.

speciality: a subject that someone knows a lot about. An area, field or discipline.

tutorial: a small class of between 15 to 30 students conducted by a tutor after a lecture in front of a large group of students conducted by a lecturer.

undergraduate: a student at college or university who has not yet earned a bachelor's or equivalent.

ADJECTIVES

insatiable: having a strong desire for something that is impossible to satisfy.

postgraduate: relating to a course of study undertaken after completing a degree.

VERBS

devote: to give a large part of one's time, energy or resources to a particular activity or cause.

encourage: to give support confidence or hope to someone.

enrol: to register as a member of an institution or as a student in a course of study.

excel: to be exceptionally good or proficient in a particular activity or subject.

fail: to be unsuccessful in achieving one's goals. To not pass a test or exam.

pay off: good results or success that has come about because of persistence and hard work.

put in: to dedicate a lot of time and effort into doing something.

strive: make great efforts to achieve or obtain something.

ADVERBS

intensely: in an extreme way.

IDIOMS

burnt out: to become completely exhausted through overwork.

head buried in the books: to become fully committed and absorbed in one's studies.

spur (someone on): to strongly support and encourage someone to do something or be strongly encouraged yourself to do something.

PART 3: Ideas

Let's talk about studying and job opportunities.

Do you think studying at university is necessary to get a good job?

- I believe that to some extent, but it really depends on the course you are studying.
- yes, many employers demand their employees have a university degree.
- no, there are many good careers you can pursue without going to university.
- no, the economy is so bad now it doesn't matter whether you have a university degree or not.

What courses offer graduates the best job opportunities?

- I think courses like science, technology, engineering and mathematics offer the best opportunities for job seekers.
- graduating from university with any degree improves your chances in the job market.
- getting good grades is more important to employers than what course you studied.
- job opportunities change with time so you should just study what you love or are good at.

Why do you think some people who have studied at university still find it difficult to get a job?

- they may have graduated but got only average grades.
- they may have realized after graduating that they choose the wrong field.
- job opportunities in their chosen field may have dried up by the time they graduated.
- they may be lazy, unmotivated or sick.

Now let's move on to talk about the costs of studying.

Why do you think many universities charge high fees?

- they have a lot of expenses such as teachers' salaries
- the government does not give much funding
- they need to make money to invest in better facilities

What are some solutions to help graduates with large loans pay these off?

- offer them a discount if they pay their debts off early
- increase university funding so universities won't have to charge students so much for courses
- make all university education means tested / free.
- cancel the debts of graduates who cannot find decent employment within ten years of graduating.

What are the advantages of a free education compared to paying for education?

- It allows people from low socio-economic backgrounds to go to university.
- it stops people with money but no talent from buying an education.
- it stops graduates from being burdened with huge debts they can't pay off.
- the money spent on paying off student debts would be better spent in other areas of the economy to help stimulate broader economic growth and hence increase taxable revenue and income for the government.

LESSON 2: WORK

PART 1

Let's talk about everyday tasks and activities

What time do you usually get up?

Which part of the day do you like best?

Do you like to plan what you will do each day?

What are some things that you do [every day](#)?

Now let's talk about unpaid or volunteer work

Have you ever done unpaid work for a company or organisation?

Are you likely to do any unpaid work in the future?

What benefits might you get from doing unpaid work?

Is it common to do unpaid work in your country?

Let's move on and talk about paid work

Did you ever do any jobs that you got paid for when you were a child?

Are you doing any kind of paid work now?

What are your career plans for the future?

What jobs earn the most money in your country?

PART 2

Describe a big company that you would like to work in

You should say:

- what kind of company it is
- what the company does
- how you know about this company

and explain why you are interested in working in this company.

Follow up questions:

Do you think you will apply for a job with this company in the future?

Do you know anyone else who would like to work in this company?

PART 3

Now let's talk about job satisfaction

Which do you think is more important, for most people, job satisfaction or a high income?

If people are unhappy with their job do you think they should they quit and look for a new job?

Should parents encourage their children to enter the same field that they are in?

Now let's talk about job dismissals and employability

What are some ways people can make themselves become more employable?

What are some common reasons why people lose their jobs?

Should people who find it difficult to get a job start their own business?

PART 2: Model Answer

Describe a big company that you would like to work in.

You should say:

- what kind of company it is
- what the company does
- how you know about this company

and explain why you are interested in working in this company.

Alright. I'd like to talk about an Aussie tech **start up** called 'Canva.' Canva is a **savvy** graphic design software company based in Sydney and has **recently** been named for a second year in a row as the **coolest** tech company to work for in Australia.

The company develops free online design software tools to make the whole process of designing easy, even for **novices**. If you need to make beautiful posters, invitations, cards, website graphics or even multiple-page presentations then Canva is the design service you simply must use. Using Canva has made using Photoshop seem **archaic**.

I found out about this company by reading a review about their **inspirational founder** Melanie Perkins who is now one of Australia's richest **entrepreneurs** under the age of 35 with a **net worth** of a \$150 million dollars. They plan to **scale-up** their operations considerably in the next 5 years and there is talk of them **going public** soon too.

I'm interested in working for this company in the future because firstly they are an **innovative** company where learning new skills and working on **challenging** tasks is an everyday occurrence. Secondly, they have a strong clear vision for the future. They are a **dynamic** company that has turned the world of developing web graphics **on its head**. They are a major **disruptor** in the industry of design and their workforce now has over 100 people and is growing **rapidly**.

Other **perks** include free gym membership, a cafeteria that serves free healthy food 24 / 7, free Uber transport to and from work; as well every person who is employed in the company longer than two years gets a **stake** in the company. All these perks are designed to encourage employees to stay **motivated**. They also have the coolest looking workplace and their employees all say they love **hanging out** there any time of the day or night.

PART 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

disruptor: A company that changes the traditional way an industry operates, especially in a more effective way.

entrepreneur: A person who organizes and operates a business or one who takes on the financial risks in order to do so.

founder: a person who establishes a business or company.

hierarchy: a series of things arranged according to their importance.

manpower: all the people who are available to do a particular job or to work in a particular place.

mentoring (gerund): the process of advising or training someone. Especially a senior colleague to a junior colleague.

net worth: the net worth of an individual is any asset owned minus any debt owed.

novice: a person new to a field or inexperienced in a situation.

perk: an advantage or something extra, such as money or goods that you are given because of your job.

start-up: a newly established business.

stak : a share of or financial involvement in a business.

ADJECTIVES

archaic: out of date, obsolete, outmoded, antiquated, bygone.

cool: fashionably attractive, impressive.

challenging: difficult. Testing one's abilities. Demanding

dynamic: characterized by constant change, progress or activity.

innovative: not allowed by the rules or laws; illegal.

motivated: a person who is stimulated, inspired, influenced or driven to do or achieve something.

reputable: generally considered to be honest and reliable.

savvy: shrewdness, insight, intelligence, wit, acumen, practical knowledge. Ability to make good judgements.

VERBS

contravene: to do something that is not allowed by a rule, law, or agreement.

hangout: spend a lot of time in a place or with someone.

proliferate: to increase or spread at a rapid rate.

scale-up: to make something larger in size or amount than it used to be.

ADVERBS

wilfully: deliberate intention to cause harm.

recently: at a recent time. Not long ago.

rapidly: very quickly, fast, swiftly, briskly, at a great rate.

IDIOMS

a keen eye for: an ability to notice and recognize something.

from the ground up: starting a business with completely nothing

go public: the act or process of a company selling stock in itself when it moves from private ownership to public trade.

turn something on its head: to cause something to be the opposite of or very different to what it was before.

PART 3: Ideas

Now let's talk about job satisfaction.

Which do you think is more important, for most people, job satisfaction or a high income?

- Income is more important as without good income you cannot secure your future.
- Job satisfaction is the most important thing as you will be happier even without a great income.
- They're both important and you should try for a job that provides both not just one of these aspects.
- Just focusing on high income is empty and banal and these jobs tend to be high-pressure high-stress jobs which can be very unenjoyable in the end and can cause sickness and illness over a long period of time.

If people are unhappy with their job do you think they should they quit and look for a new job?

- Yes definitely. However, they should hang on to the job they are unhappy in until they can find a job they feel happier in and not any time before then.
- No. Most people are unhappy with at least some aspects of their jobs. They will never find the perfect job so they may as well keep the job they are somewhat unhappy in.
- Yes, they should quit straight away as it is important to move on into something you are happier in sooner rather than later. People who hold onto jobs they are unhappy in tend to not quit those jobs at all. You have to make the move out of an unhappy job situation sometime so it may as well be sooner rather than later or not at all.
- No, even in jobs you are unhappy in you can eventually look at the positive aspects of that job and even learn to like it after a while.

Should parents encourage their children to enter the same field that they are in?

- Yes**, because their parents have a lot of life experience to pass on to their children so their children should listen to them carefully and consider their parent's advice about career choice.
- Yes**, but only if the field their parents are encouraging their kids to enter is a job in the professions where a good income and job satisfaction is more assured.

-**No** definitely not. Pushing their children into jobs their parents chose will only make them unhappy and resentful. They should just look for a job that makes them happy and not a job that makes only their parents happy.

-**No**, as the job their parents have now may not even exist by the time their kids grow up and are ready to enter the workforce.

Now let's talk about job dismissals and employability.

What are some ways people can make themselves become more employable?

-They should be prepared to do voluntary work to gain valuable job experience but should be careful about companies exploiting them for cheap labour where they don't learn any meaningful skills.

-The government should force them to join the armed services where they will be trained not only as soldiers but also get paid while learning valuable job skills.

-The government should allow them to be trained in a useful skill for free and help them get work after training.

-More university and college courses should be dedicated to educating students so that they can acquire practical skills to make them more employable after graduation.

What are some reasons why people often lose their jobs?

-the employee does something wrong such as often being late for work

-the employee does his or her job badly and the company decides to replace them

-the company has to downsize due to it not making money

Should people who can't get a job start their own business?

-Yes, but it would be better to try to keep looking for stable employment as starting a business is risky.

-Yes, they have got to nothing to lose. They may even end up being more successful in their own business than they would have been in any job they may have gotten

-It depends on your age. For a younger person, it may be better to try and get some experience in the workforce before attempting to start their own business. For older workers who believe they may -not

be able to enter the workforce again due to companies discriminating against them then yes, as they have a lot of work experience behind them.

-Yes, if you are a person that just cannot stand having a boss tell you what to do and you think you have more skills than them then why not give it a try.

-Only if they are tolerant of taking on the higher risk of running their own business and are prepared give up all the perks of full-time employment such as a regular secure monthly pay cheque and health insurance coverage etc.

LESSON 3: Home and housing

PART 1

Let's talk about your home

Do you live in a house or an apartment?

What do you like about the rooms in your home?

What would you like to change about your home?

Will you live in this home for a long time?

Now let's talk about furniture

What sort of furniture do you have in your home?

Do you have any wooden furniture?

Do you have a favourite piece of furniture?

Are you planning to buy any furniture this year?

Let's move on to the topic of gardens and plants?

Does your home have a garden?

Do you enjoy gardening?

Do you prefer a garden with vegetables or flowers?

Do most homes in your country have a garden?

PART 2

DESCRIBE A HOME THAT YOU LIVED IN

You should say:

- what the home looks like
 - what you like about this home
 - where this home was located
- and explain how you feel about living in this home

Follow up questions:

Is this house still the same as when you lived in it?

Would you like to go back and live there again in the future?

PART 3

Let's talk about owning your own home

Is it common to own your own home in your country?

What are some advantages of owning your own home?

Do you think more people will own their own homes in the future?

Let's move on to talk about renovating your home

What are some reasons why people renovate their homes?

Do you think more people will renovate their homes in the future in your country?

Why are smaller homes becoming popular these days?

PART 2: Model Answer

Describe a home that you lived in

You should say:

- what the home looks like
 - what you like about this home
 - where this home was located
- and explain how you feel about living in this home

Alright, I'd like to talk about the home I lived in for most of my childhood.

It was a large **single storey brick** house on a large block of land near the centre of my hometown just outside of Brisbane. The house consisted of three sections. One section consisted of the bedroom, bathroom and living area. There were six bedrooms in all and a large living room. The kitchen, dining room and **recreation room** were located at one end of the bedroom and living area but could be **accessed** via a small **courtyard** with a beautiful lawn and garden and a brick path. The large living room **was carpeted** and consisted of a small drinks bar, an Italian **leather couch** and four **reclining leather chairs** and a state-of-the-art TV. It also had many windows to let the **natural light** in. **Adjoining** the kitchen was a large **spacious** dining room with several dining tables.

What I really loved about this house was the recreation room and our huge backyard. As a child me and my friends spent many long hours playing all kinds of games in the recreation room. The backyard had a **sandpit**, a big black bean tree and a brick **barbeque** and as a kid I remember spending many Sundays with my family having a barbeque, playing cricket in the backyard and climbing the black bean tree or building **sand castles** in the sandpit.

I feel I was lucky growing up in such a big house close to the centre of town with **access** to so many **facilities**. I have a lot of **fond** memories of many **fun-filled** days we had as kids. There really is **no place like home**.

PART 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

barbeque: an outdoor cooking apparatus.

brick: a small rectangular block made of fired or sun-dried clay used for building structures.

courtyard: an unroofed quadrangle, square or yard

leather couch: a leather settee or sofa.

natural light: light from outside

reclining chairs: an armchair or sofa that has a backrest that can be tilted back and a footrest that can be extended forward.

recreation room: a room in a building where people can relax and play games.

sand castles: a model of a castle built out of sand and often by children.

sandpit: a hole in the ground which is filled with sand for kids to play in.

single storey: a building with only a ground floor level.

ADJECTIVES

adjoining: next to or joined to

fond: having an affection for or liking something.

fun-filled: a happy, pleasing or satisfying place or situation.

spacious: roomy, sizable, large, vast, palatial

VERBS

access: the ability to approach or enter an area

was carpeted (passive verb): the house had carpet in it in some areas. Who put the carpet down doesn't matter. In this case, we use a passive verb.

IDIOMS

have a roof over your head: have somewhere to live

there's no place like home: an expression that means your home is a special place

PART 3: Model Answers

Let's talk about owning your own home

Is it common to own your own home in your country?

In my country, it is still very common to dream of owning your own home but that dream is dying for more and more people because we are having a housing affordability crisis in my country at the moment.

Renting is making a comeback again as many people have realized that renting in the right areas is actually cheaper than buying a home and job security is not the same as it used to be for many people these days.

It is common to do both but living in rental accommodation comes with having to do without a lot of luxuries. However, you can attain these luxuries if you own your own home. Things such as living space and having your own backyard are a few examples.

It's still a lot more common to own your own home and people are willing to take out huge mortgages to make their dream of owning a home possible. These people will be paying off their mortgages for many decades to come.

What are some advantages of owning your own home?

Owning your own home is your own piece of property that has a monetary value. There is a good chance the value of your home will increase over time so it is seen as a safe investment.

There are too many advantages to name but some advantages are if you own your own home you can have things like more living space, your own garage, a swimming pool, a garden and much more privacy. Also, your lifestyle is much better. You can do things like have a backyard barbeque with your family or friends or have house parties or have friends stay over in spare rooms in your house.

It's much better to raise a family in a home, particularly a bigger home with a lot of land for kids to run around in. You can't have the same freedom, privacy and space raising kids in an apartment. Kids can have a much happier childhood growing up in a nice home.

If you decide to rent out your house or some rooms in your house you can charge much higher rent for Airbnb stays as there is a much greater demand for people to want to live in a house.

Do you think more people will own their own homes in the future?

That's a hard question to answer but my own thinking is as long as the country continues to grow population-wise and the economy and standard of living keep improving then more and more people will want to own their own home.

I think more people will rent as housing affordability is only going to get worse. Owning your own home these days is increasingly becoming a luxury for the well-off.

I think more people will move out of the expensive cities and buy much cheaper homes in the country areas or opt for living in a mini home.

More people will live in rental accommodation as housing affordability has only gotten worse because of this unprecedented ten-year period of all-time-low interest rates. Once the interest rates start going up again which is inevitable less and less people will consider taking out a mortgage to buy a home.

Let's move on to talk about renovating your home

What are some reasons why people renovate their homes?

It's very common in my country because it increases the value of the home.

Another reason people renovate is to upgrade a home that is old.

Some professional builders buy old homes, renovate them then sell them for a quick profit.

It has become popular these days because of a home renovation reality TV program in my country.

Do you think more people will renovate their homes in the future in your country?

Yes, because it is seen as trendy to renovate your home these days and it will become trendier in the future.

No, because more and more young people can't even afford a home to renovate in the first place.

Yes, as it's cheaper to renovate a home than to buy your own.

No, because the government will make buying a new home much more affordable in the future so renovating won't even be an option.

Why are smaller homes becoming popular these days?

I think it's because housing affordability is at an all-time low these days and it is seen as a much more practical option.

People are starting to see the benefits of living a simple frugal life.

They are becoming more of an option because there are more permanently single people these days who don't plan to ever get married or start a family.

People can enjoy a lot more peace and quiet in a mini home compared to living in a noisy suburb or an apartment in the city.

Common issues:

1. Make sure you don't confuse the words apartment and department
2. Furniture is an uncountable noun
3. **The** is used with rooms of a house when there is only expected to be one, such as: the kitchen, the bathroom.
4. words which end in -room (such as bathroom) are stressed on the first part of the word

LESSON 4: Hometown

PART 1

Let's talk about your hometown.

Where is your hometown located?

What is your hometown known for?

What did you like about your hometown when you were a child?

Is there anything you don't like about your hometown?

Let's now talk about the people of your hometown.

Do you know most of the people in your hometown?

Do most of your friends and family still live there?

Are there any famous people that come from your hometown?

Do you know any people who have never left your hometown?

Now let's move on to talk about things to do in your hometown.

What things can a person do in your hometown these days?

When you were a child, what kind of things did you like to do in your hometown?

What things would you recommend a tourist do if they visited your hometown?

What types of entertainment facilities does your hometown need?

PART 2

DESCRIBE THE CITY OR TOWN THAT YOU GREW UP IN

You should say:

- describe the town or city
 - what are the advantages of living there
 - what are the disadvantages of living there
- and explain whether you will live there in the future

Follow up questions:

Is your hometown expensive to live in?

Do most of your family still live there?

PART 3

Now let's talk about towns

What are the advantages of growing up in a small town?

Why do you think young adults often move from small town to big cities?

What factors make a town more attractive for people to live in?

Now let's move on to talk about hometowns and cultural events

What are some famous cultural events that take place every year in your country?

Why do many people return to their hometowns for special cultural events every year?

How do festivals benefit towns and cities?

PART 2: Model Answer

DESCRIBE THE CITY OR TOWN THAT YOU GREW UP IN

You should say:

- describe the town or city
 - what are the advantages of living there
 - what are the disadvantages of living there
- and explain whether you will live there in the future

Brisbane used to be known as a **sleepy** city with nothing much to do, its **monotonous nightlife** and limited **cultural** or **culinary sophistication** compared it's bigger and **bolder** southern **rivals** of Sydney and Melbourne. Because of that the **moniker** 'Brisvegas', was **coined** by people from the south as a form of **mockery** to describe it.

One of the main advantages of living in Brisbane is its **sub-tropical** climate, so even in the middle of winter there is **virtually** no winter. It is common see people walking around in shorts and a tee shirt even in the middle of July and August. If you like long hot summers then Brisbane is the place for you and with its close proximity to the Gold and Sunshine Coasts a perfect place for people who want to **escape** the **rat race** on weekends. A great place to visit near the downtown is Southbank which **sits** alongside the Brisbane River and **opposite** the CBD is the original **site** of World Expo 1988 is another attraction which is filled with restaurants, bars, parklands, **plazas** and **promenades**. It also **features** Southbank's Big Wheel which is also visible all over Brisbane. There is even a **man-made** beach at Southbank called Kodac Beach which is a popular place to go to take a cool **dip** in the water on a hot summer's day.

The disadvantages are without doubt Brisbane's sweltering **humid** days in summer which is often **broken** by a late afternoon heavy **downpour** and **thunderstorms**. Because of the heat and high **rainfall** throughout the year, there is a constant mosquito problem. The main threat to Brisbane's **prosperity** in the future are things like a **downturn** in tourism and mining which Brisbane and South East Queensland are very much **dependant on**. A downturn in either **sector** tends to cause a lot of **unemployment**. Finally, Brisbane is **prone** to heavy **flooding**. Major **floods** in **previous** years have caused many people to lose their homes and caused billions of dollars in damage. **Prolonged** heavy rainfall and flooding occur around four times a **century** and this is, without a doubt, the biggest **permanent** threat to Brisbane's future.

I'm sure I will live in Brisbane in the future because it has a wonderful outdoor lifestyle and there are so many exciting places to visit.

PART 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

century: one hundred years

dependant on: relying on, contingent on

dip: a brief swim

downpour: heavy rainfall

downturn: a decline in economic activity

feature: attribute, quality, characteristic, hallmark

floods: water overflowing onto land that is normally dry

mockery: to tease or taunt a person or thing

moniker: a name

nightlife: an area that has late night café's, bars, eateries, night clubs and other night time entertainment

plaza: an open public square often found in many cities

promenade: esplanade, seafront, parade, boulevard often by the water

prosperity: success, security well-being, wealth. affluence

rainfall: the fall of rain

rival: competitor

sector: an area or industry within an economy

sophistication: worldliness, experienced

thunderstorm: a storm with thunder and lightning, heavy rain and sometimes hail

unemployment: a state of not having employment, being out of work

ADJECTIVES

bolder: daring. Not hesitant or fearful

culinary: related to cooking and food

cultural: relating to ideas, customs, social behaviour. Also artistic and intellectual achievements

humid: marked by a relatively level of water vapour in the air

man-made: made or caused by human beings as opposed to occurring naturally. Artificial

monotonous: tedious, boring, dull, uninteresting, unexciting

opposite: facing something from the other side. Across the street

permanent: enduring, lasting, remaining unchanged indefinitely

previous: happening or occurring beforehand

prolonged: continuing on for a long time

prone: susceptible, likely, vulnerable

sleepy: quiet. Not much activity happening there

sub-tropical: regions or areas just bordering the tropics

VERBS

broken: something that has stopped

coin: to invent or devise a new word or phrase

escape: to getaway or break free from of confinement, control or struggle

ADVERBS

virtually: nearly, almost, practically, essentially

IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

without a doubt: indisputably, no doubt, certainly

rat race: a way of life (usually in the city) where people are in a constant exhausting competitive struggle to make a living

PART 3: Ideas

Now let's talk about towns and population.

What are the advantages of growing up in a small town?

Higher security as everybody knows each other

Kids growing up in the country have stronger family bonds.

Kids growing up in big cities tend to grow up faster.

Why do you think young adults often move from small town to big cities?

There may be one or more universities in those areas.

Young people like convenience so those areas may have better public transport and facilities close by.

They may be attracted by the trendy nightlife in those areas.

What factors make a town more attractive for people to live in?

It is a quick commute to work.

The housing is affordable.

The area has good infrastructure and amenities.

It has good public transport.

They may attract people because there are jobs available in those areas.

Now let's move on to talk about hometowns and cultural events

What are some famous cultural events that take place every year in your country?

Some that stand out for me are The Melbourne Comedy Festival, The Melbourne Cup Festival, the Moomba Festival which is a traditional Greek Festival, all in Melbourne of course. In New South Wales it's the Byron Bay Blues Festival, in Sydney it would have to be Tropfest which is one of the world's biggest short film festivals and The Sydney Vivid Festival where many of Sydney's major landmarks are lit up in many different colours at night including Sydney's famous Harbour Bridge. Finally, in Perth, it

would have to be The Margaret River Gourmet Escape which attracts some of the world's most acclaimed gourmet chefs and wine producers.

Why do many people return to their hometowns for special cultural events every year?

It is tradition to do so, especially in Asian countries; similar to people in western countries returning home to get together with family and friends for Christmas.

It may be one of the few times every year people are able to get time off from work to visit their families, especially if their hometown is far away.

They will feel isolated if they don't return home at those times.

They may have to pay their respects to their deceased family members.

How do festivals benefit towns and cities?

Cultural events give a town or city a special identity.

Having these festivals every year is a big boost for their local economies.

They bring out a greater sense of community spirit within those areas.

They are traditions and rituals which must be preserved and celebrated.

LESSON 5: Away from Home

PART 1

Let's talk about where you live now?

Do you live in a city or a town?

What would you recommend visitors see in your city/town?

How could your city/town be improved?

Do you think you will live in this city/town in the future?

Let's move on to discuss being away from home

How often do you go on trips?

Have you ever been away from home for a very long time?

What do you miss the most when you are away from home?

Do you think you will move to a new home in the future?

Now let's talk about ways to travel

What is your favourite way to travel?

Do you like to sit by the window when you travel?

Are there any types of transport you don't like?

Would you like to go on a long journey by boat?

PART 2

DESCRIBE A HOTEL OR PLACE AWAY FROM YOUR HOME THAT YOU HAVE STAYED IN.

You should say:

- where you stayed
 - why you stayed there
 - how you felt when you stayed there
- and explain how you felt when you stayed there.

Follow up questions:

How did you travel there?

Was it expensive to stay there?

PART 3

Let's talk about being away from home

Why do you think being away from home is stressful for many people?

What kinds of things can people do to reduce the stress of being away from home?

Do you think most people prefer to stay home all the time?

Let's move on to talk about leaving home for work or study

What are the benefits of moving to another country for work or study?

What are the drawbacks of moving to another country for work or study?

Do you think more people in the future will work permanently in another country?

PART 2: Model Answer

DESCRIBE A HOTEL OR PLACE AWAY FROM YOUR HOME THAT YOU HAVE STAYED IN.

You should say:

-where you stayed

-why you stayed there

-how you felt when you stayed there

and explain how you felt when you stayed there.

I'd like to talk about my stay in a traditional Japanese-style inn. To find it I had arranged to meet one of the staff outside the station to walk me to my **accommodation** which was very nice. After finally meeting her we made small talk for a few minutes before heading off to the **inn**. It took about 10 minutes all up and on the way there I spoke in my bad Japanese while she spoke in her bad English and somehow we managed to understand each other.

The inn was beautiful on the outside and **spotlessly** clean on the inside. It had the usual traditional straw mats so you had to take your shoes off before entering the premises. As expected the rooms were small with sliding decorated paper windows and a futon on the floor for sleeping on. They even had western-style toilets and not the traditional Japanese-style toilets.

At the inn, they served traditional Japanese food which I was very much looking forward to. I remember my first meal in Japan was dinner and consisted of a bowl of miso soup, a bowl full of Japanese soy beans, a small bowl of mixed pickled vegetables followed by a radish salad and a **mouth-watering** piece of Japanese mackerel. After dinner, a big group of foreigners staying at the inn decided to go out drinking and invited me to go with them but I was far too tired for that so I politely declined.

Overall, I'd have to say my first night in Japan was a very pleasant one thanks to the wonderful **hospitality** of the Japanese people I had made contact with on my first day. Yes, there was a mild **culture shock** but my **exuberance** about actually being in Japan far outweighed any negative feelings I initially had and I would have to say I **adjusted** very well after that.

PART 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

culture shock: the feeling of disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life or set of attitudes.

exuberance: the quality of being full of energy, excitement, and cheerfulness; ebullience.

homesickness: the feeling of being uncomfortable and anxious about being in a new unfamiliar place.

hospitality: the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers.

inn: small hotel that usually also provides food and drink.

maze: an area in which you can get easily lost because there are so many similar streets or passages

ADJECTIVES

customary: according to the customs or usual practices associated with a particular society, place, or set of circumstances.

insulting: disrespectful or scornfully abusive

gleeful: really happy

homesick: a person who feels anxious and uncomfortable about being away from their familiar surroundings, especially when travelling abroad to a new culture.

hospitable: friendly and welcoming to strangers or guests.

spotless: absolutely clean or pure; immaculate.

VERBS

adjust: to change or modify

Anticipate: (something) regard as probable; expect or predict.

await: (of a person) wait for (an event).

blur: to make or become unclear or less distinct.

insult: (someone) speak to or treat with disrespect or scornful abuse.

overwhelmed (by something): To be mentally defeated or crushed by a situation.

lug: carry or drag (a heavy or bulky object) with great effort.

ADVERBS

gleefully: exuberantly or triumphantly joyful.

spotlessly: perfectly clean, ultraclean, pristine, immaculate, shining, shiny, gleaming, spick and span

IDIOMS

a change is as good as a holiday: you can get as much good from changing the work you do as from having a rest.

mouth-watering: smelling, looking, or sounding delicious

time for a change: an expression announcing a decision to make a change.

PART 3: Ideas

Let's talk about being away from home

Why do you think being away from home is stressful for many people?

- homesickness
- unfamiliar with their environment
- don't have access to things such as their computers

What kinds of things can people do to reduce the stress of being away from home?

- keep in touch with friends and family on social media
- plan their trip carefully so they know what shops and facilities will be in their area
- make friends with people in their new area

Do you think most people prefer to stay home all the time?

- YES, because they are in their comfort zone and have access to all the comforts of their home such as computers and TVs
- YES, because all their friends and family are nearby
- NO, as it's exciting to be in a new environment and people get bored if they stay home all the time
- NO, as many people like to visit their friends and family they live in distant places

Let's move on to talk about leaving home for work or study

What are the benefits of moving to another country for work or study?

- opportunity to find better career/study opportunities
- chance to experience different cultures, which makes life more interesting
- learn a new language to help one's career prospects

What are the drawbacks of moving to another country for work or study?

- It's expensive to have to move abroad and establish a new residence
- have to create a new social network
- miss things happening back home such as weddings and other parties

Do you think more people in the future will work permanently in another country?

-YES, because due to the globalising world people will have much wider opportunities if they also consider moving abroad.

-YES, many people will be forced to due to the requirements of their companies as they expand overseas.

-NO, because technology is enabling people to work online and taking away the need for people to physically move overseas for work

LESSON 6: Health

PART 1

Let's talk about health and being healthy

What do you do to keep in good health?

Did you have any unhealthy habits when you were a child?

Do you have any unhealthy habits now?

Are there any healthy habits that you would like to develop?

Let's move on to discuss rest and relaxation

Do you find it easy to relax?

What do you do to relax?

When do you usually have time to relax?

Do you feel you have enough time to relax?

Now let's talk about walking

How often do you go for a walk?

Did you walk a lot when you were a child?

Are there a lot of good places to go walking where you live?

Would you like to walk more in the future?

PART 2

DESCRIBE A TIME YOU WERE SICK OR INJURED WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD.

You should say:

- what illness or injury you had
 - how you got it
 - how you recovered from it
- and explain how it made you feel

Follow up questions:

Were you often sick as a child?

How often are you sick now?

PART 3

Let's talk about healthy lifestyles...

What are some of the things people can do to be healthier?

Do you think people were healthier in the past?

Why do you think people do unhealthy things such as smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol?

Now let's talk about healthy food...

What kinds of food are considered healthy in your country?

What kinds of food are considered unhealthy in your country?

What are some ways to reduce the consumption of fast food in your country?

PART 2: Model Answer

Describe a time you were sick or injured when you were a child.

You should say:

what illness or injury you had

describe the illness or injury

describe how it made you feel

and explain how you recovered from it

I'd like to talk about a time I got the **Chickenpox** when I was about 6 years old. This is a **dreadful virus** that affected about half my class. I remember waking up one day feeling **under the weather** with a fever, headache, and sore throat. Also, I had a red, itchy **skin rash** on my **abdomen**, back and face, which quickly spread all over my body. I wondered what had happened to me and even wondered if I was going to die. My mother is a nurse and I went straight to her to get her **diagnosis**.

My mother said I had the chicken pox and I had to stay home and not go to school for at least a week. Cool! The idea of not going to school, at first, made me feel **over the moon**...I thought it was going to be like a holiday. But, in reality, I felt terrible for days, I can remember feeling hot and cold and sweating **profusely**. I spent almost all day sleeping, and not watching TV like I had imagined I would in the beginning.

Since chicken pox is a virus there is no real **treatment**. I just had to sweat it out for a few days. Finally, my **fever broke** and I started to feel like I was **back on my feet** again. I went back to school and found many of my classmates were still off sick with the chickenpox.

PART 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

abdomen: stomach

chickenpox: is a very contagious disease caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV). It causes a blister-like rash, itching, tiredness, and fever. The rash appears first on the stomach, back and face and then spreads over the entire body causing between 250 and 500 itchy blisters

diagnosis: an opinion of a patient's health condition or illness

fever: high body temperature

skin rash: a group of red spots on the skin that is caused by an illness or a reaction to something.

virus: the cause of an infectious disease

treatment: a way of curing an illness or medical condition

ADJECTIVES

dreadful: something we fear or hate

VERBS

Broke [fever]: finished. The fever finished.

ADVERBS

profusely: abundantly, a large amount

IDIOMS

back on my feet: recovered from an illness or injury

over the moon: very happy

under the weather: not feeling well

PART 3: Ideas

Let's talk about healthy lifestyles...

What are some of the things people can do to be healthier?

- improve diet
- stop harmful habits such as smoking
- start good habits such as exercising

Do you think people were healthier in the past?

- YES, because they spent more time outdoors and less time on activities of sedentary lifestyles like watching TV and surfing the internet
- NO, because healthcare is better today due to advances in medical knowledge and cures

Why do you think people do unhealthy things such as smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol?

- because peer pressure forces them to do them
- to relieve stress

Now let's talk about healthy food...

What kinds of food are considered healthy in your country?

- Fruit and vegetables because they are rich in vitamins and minerals
- Seafood due to the omega 3 which is good for the brain

What kinds of food are considered unhealthy in your country?

- deep-fried food because it is full of unsaturated fats
- fast food because it has lots of harmful additives that are linked to cancer

What are some ways to reduce the consumption of fast food in your country?

- education so that people know the harmful effects
- a fast food tax would make it more expensive and decrease the demand for it

Common issues:

1. More healthy or healthier both seem acceptable
http://forum.thefreedictionary.com/postst25255_Comparative-form.aspx
2. Walking and working sound similar
<http://rachelsenglish.com/pronounce-work-vs-walk/>

LESSON 7: ENTERTAINMENT

PART 1

Let's talk about going out

When do you usually like to go out?

What kinds of things do you like to do when you go out?

Do you spend a lot of money on going out every month?

What kinds of things would you like to do, in the future, when you go out?

Let's move on to talk about entertainment at home

Do you like entertaining friends in your home?

Have you ever had a large party in your home?

Do you like going to other people's homes for entertainment?

Do you like to bring a gift when you visit someone's home?

Let's talk about online entertainment

What is your favourite type of online entertainment?

How much time do you spend on online entertainment?

Do you ever feel you spend too much time online?

Are there any new online activities would you like to try in the future?

PART 2

DESCRIBE A FUN INDOOR GAME YOU PLAYED AS A CHILD.

You should say:

- what the name of the game was
- what the aim of the game was
- who you played with

and explain why it was such fun for you.

Follow up questions:

Did your friends also find this game fun?

Did you play a lot of similar games?

PART 3

Let's now discuss entertainment in your country

Are there a lot of places in your country for young people to go out?

What kinds of live entertainment are popular in your country?

What places would you recommend a tourist go to, for entertainment, in your country?

Let's now talk about technology and entertainment

What forms of online entertainment have become popular these days?

What are the dangers of spending too much time on online entertainment?

Is entertainment these days better than in the past because of technology?

Part 2: Model Answer

Describe a fun indoor game you played as a teenager.

You should say:

What the name of the game was

What the aim of the game was

Who you played with

And explain why it was such fun for you.

Alright. I'd like to talk about a fun indoor game I often played with some of my classmates in junior high school. It was **compulsory** to **participate** in an **extra-curricular activity** on Friday nights and you could choose from activities like karate to debating to playing musical instruments. I chose to join the chess club because I thought it would be **absorbing** and **practicing it regularly** may even help me become a bit smarter.

Chess is a well-known board game played by millions of people around the world. Each chess board has 64 squares and each opponent has 16 pieces. One **opponent** has black pieces and the other white. The aim of the game is to checkmate your opponent by **cornering** his or her king.

Chess is a game of **strategy** that involves a lot of **patience** and **critical thinking**. As a player, you get a great thrill out of **outsmarting** your opponent. Chess is also an **infinite** game. After each player has moved just one piece, there are more than 400 possible moves the players can make. After four moves **apiece** there are over 288 billion possible positions the players can move into, so you have to think very carefully before you make a move and think many moves ahead of just your next move.

After a lot of practice I became quite **adept** at chess and even though I was never able to beat the smartest kid in our class I came to love chess. In fact, I think I became a little bit **addicted** to it. I first became **fascinated** with chess when I saw a documentary on TV about Bobby Fisher, an American chess grand master at the time who went on to become an eleven-time world champion. I was **astounded** at just how **skilfully** he could **outmanoeuvre** and eventually **demoralize** his opponents, some of whom were past world champions. In fact, in the nineteen eighties he even beat IBM's 'Big Blue' supercomputer. I knew I could never be like Bobby Fisher, but I was really **in my element** at outsmarting some of my own **albeit**, much weaker opponents.

Part 2: Vocabulary

NOUNS

critical thinking: The process of conceptualizing, analysing, applying or evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion.

enjoyment: pleasure, fun, amusement, entertainment, recreation, relaxation, diversion

opponent: challenger, contender.

patience: the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, suffering or trouble without getting upset. Tolerance, restraint.

strategy: action plan, game plan, master plan

ADJECTIVES

absorbing: intensely interesting, engrossing.

addicted: physically or mentally dependant on something. Fixated, obsessed, passionate, devoted or fanatical about something

adept: expert, skilful, talented, accomplished, proficient, masterly, consummate.

compulsory: necessary, mandatory, obligatory.

infinite: limitless, unlimited, never-ending, boundless.

VERBS

astound: amaze, astonish, shock, surprise, confound, stagger, stun.

corner: trap, surround, enclose, close in on.

demoralize: cause someone to lose hope. Dishearten, dispirit, daunt, unnerve, dismay.

fascinated: Interested, captivated, engrossed or mesmerized by something.

outmanoeuvre / outmanoeuvring (gerund): outwit, outplay or outthink someone by using clever cunning tactics to defeat them.

outsmart / outsmarting (gerund): outwit, outplay or outthink someone by using clever cunning tactics to defeat them.

participate: take part in, get involved in, join in.

practice/practicing (gerund): train for, rehearse, go over, apply, run through, repeat.

ADVERBS

apiece: each, respectively, individually.

regularly: occurring commonly, frequently, habitually, normally, routinely

skilfully: good, talented, expert, proficient, accomplished, masterly, adept, consummate.

PHRASES

extracurricular activities: after school activities.

CONJUNCTIONS

albeit: even though, although, even if, notwithstanding.

IDIOMS

chill out: to do something to help you calm down and relax after a period of hard work, nervous tension or stress.

in one's element: when you are 'in your element' you are doing something you do well and are enjoying yourself.

PART 3: Ideas

Let's now discuss entertainment in your country

Are there a lot of places in your country for young people to go out?

No, Australia would have to be one of the world's most boring countries because there is not much variety nightlife. The only choice is to go get drunk in the pub really.

Yes, compared to other countries around the world Australia is a surprisingly lively place with lots of choices for indoor and outdoor entertainment.

What kinds of live entertainment are popular in your country?

- You can always see people like street performers, buskers and artists, especially in the big cities.
- Young people enjoy going to rock concerts
- Older people like to see the performances at the Sydney Opera house such as the symphony orchestra

What places would you recommend a tourist go to, for entertainment, in your country?

- I would recommend going to King's Cross in Sydney because it is the biggest nightclub scene in all of Australia.
- They should also go to places that most tourists don't go to like Barossa valley in Adelaide to visit the amazing wineries there.

Let's now talk about technology and entertainment

What forms of online entertainment have become popular these days?

- Things like online shopping, online dating and gaming have become very popular.
- These days new kinds of social games have become popular like Pokémon Go.
- Most people these days spend their time on sites like Facebook and Twitter.

What are the dangers of spending too much time on online entertainment?

- No doubt things like addiction and social withdrawal are some of the most common dangers.
- There are no real dangers. It's just the media beating up another story.

- The biggest danger is befriending the wrong people online.

Is entertainment these days better than in the past because of technology?

- No, life was great back then. You didn't need an app to meet people. You just went out and met them. Simple.

-Yes, we have a plethora of choices today on the internet that brightens our lives. [Plethora = huge number]

Useful Links

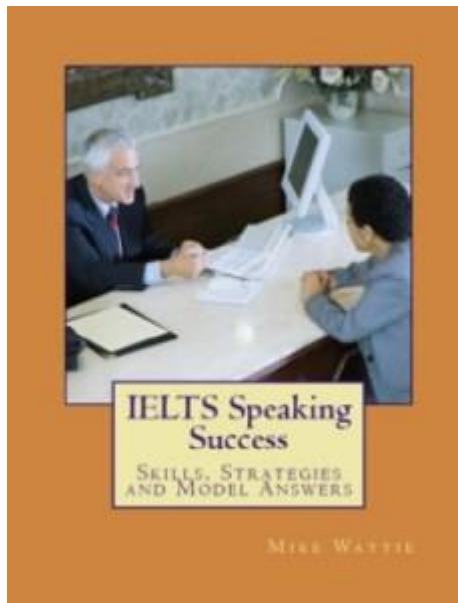
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