

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

over 300 pages of photocopiable
materials for IELTS Academic and
IELTS General

by Alex Case

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

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If you have ever thought that there must be more that can be done to improve students' IELTS Speaking skills and scores than just endless exam practice and work on model answers, then this is the book for you.

Speaking is usually the most difficult and slowest of the four skills in IELTS to improve, but the right kinds of useful phrases, vocabulary, tips and intensive practice can help students jump up by at least a point, as well as boosting their oral communication skills and level more generally. Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities contains over 300 pages of thoroughly classroom-tested photocopyables with exactly the language, advice and activities that students need to successfully prepare for, practise, reflect on and improve on IELTS Speaking Parts 1, 2 and 3. Its materials have been successfully used with students at all levels from IELTS 4.0 to IELTS 8.5, including mixed-level classes.

This IELTS Speaking e-book includes:

- icebreakers, warmers and easy introductions to IELTS Speaking
- introductions to, practice of and ways of memorising the most useful language for IELTS Speaking
- nearly 150 pages on improving students' answers to every kind of IELTS Speaking Part One question
- over 60 pages on better answers to all kinds of IELTS Speaking Part Two question
- over 100 pages on giving the best possible answers to all sorts of IELTS Speaking Part Three question
- materials combining, comparing and contrasting IELTS Speaking Parts One, Two and Three
- intensive specific practice of vital tactics, skills and functional language for the exam such as extended answers, using more ambitious/ high-level language, checking/ clarifying, thinking aloud/ filling silence, strong and weak opinions, and rephrasing
- lots of work on common difficulties such as questions which seem similar but need different answers, yes/ no questions, questions which don't quite match the candidate, typical student errors, and tricky but crucial grammar points like prepositions and tenses
- big lists of typical question stems, typical topics, useful phrases and useful vocabulary
- indexes by title, activity and language point

As the name of the book suggests, the materials in Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities are all designed to stimulate classroom interaction, with no awkward silences and no wasting time on things that would be better done at home. Stimulating pairwork and groupwork activities also help make the language and tips more memorable, and lead to more intensive practice of the language than more traditional IELTS Speaking materials do. Such activities include:

- tips and useful phrases
- memory games
- board games
- making IELTS questions
- card games
- matching activities

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- coin games
- dice games
- error correction pairwork
- sentence completion activities
- guessing games
- list dictations
- discussion of preparation and exam tactics
- bluffing games
- key word activities
- finding things in common
- line by line brainstorming
- quick response games
- meeting criteria activities
- truth or dare
- comically bad answers to spot and improve on

Planning IELTS Speaking lessons and courses

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities can be used for everything from a one-off lesson to a whole course, including as a supplement to less interactive and less intensive IELTS textbooks.

The book starts with each of the three parts of the exam in order, and then has some reviews of all three parts. I would also generally introduce the parts of the exam in this order (but obviously not spending too long on one part before moving onto the next, then coming back to earlier parts later on). Other possibilities for what order to use the materials in include:

- doing Part Three straight after Part One (because they are both oral questions that candidates have to answer, or because you want to link from Part Three to Writing Part Two), then doing Part Two later
- starting with a review of all three parts (especially in short courses or when at least some of the students already know something about the exam), then dealing with the parts one by one

A good way of linking smoothly between one part of IELTS Speaking and another is to use the same kind of activity twice, e.g. using Tips and Useful Phrases to revise Speaking Part One, then using the Speaking Part Two version to introduce that part of the test. Activities for which this book has two or more versions include:

- Coin games (Ask and Tell, etc)
- Dice games
- Error correction pairwork
- Functions board games
- Good and bad answers
- List dictations
- Longer phrases card games
- Making questions
- Meeting criteria board games
- Question reviews/ Analysing typical questions

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- Rephrasing
- Roleplays
- Sentence completion/ Discuss and agree
- The same or different
- Tips and useful phrases
- Truth or dare
- Yes no questions
- Brainstorming

You can search for suitable activities such as these by using the Index by Activity and Language Point on page 357.

Each section of the book is also organised in approximately the order I would use the materials in, starting with easy introductions to the tasks, giving overviews of useful language to do them, dealing with useful skills and language points one by one, prompting intensive practice of that part of the exam, covering typical difficulties such as common errors, brainstorming useful words and phrases, and finally giving suggested language in big lists of useful vocabulary and phrases.

If you have problems choosing which materials are most suitable for your class, I would recommend that most courses cover:

- A nice easy way into the exam, such as IELTS Needs Analysis and Speaking Part One Question review
- A review of typical questions/ question stems and topics such as Making Questions
- A review of useful phrases such as Sentence Completion/ Discuss and Agree
- Something to teach useful vocabulary such as Sharing Useful Vocabulary for IELTS Speaking Part One
- Discussion and practice of good (and maybe bad) exam tactics such as Tips and Useful Phrases, or Tactics Roleplay Cards
- At least one Brainstorming stage
- Intensive practice of particular kinds of phrases/ functions/ tactics that your students have problems with such as Rephrasing, or Strong and Weak Opinions in IELTS Speaking Part Three
- Some more fun general practice such as Meeting Criteria Board Games
- Some learner training such as Preparing for IELTS Speaking Outside Class Discussion

Higher level students also usually benefit from something forcing them to use more impressive language such as the ones listed under Ambitious Language in the Index by Activity and Language Point on page 357.

Instructions and answers

Instructions are given as part of each worksheet below. The instructions are usually written as if they are addressing the students, but obviously it is better if the teacher explains and demonstrates the activities, using those instructions as a guide.

Answers are given as part of the worksheet and/ or in the list of phrases on page 141, page 153, page 212, and page 318.

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Brainstorming

The brainstorming stages at the end of the worksheets are squashed into one or two pages to save space and paper, and so don't really give enough room to write all the possible useful phrases. It is therefore often better to get students to copy the headings and write suitable phrases under them there, or to use the relevant parts of the brainstorming activities at the end of each section on page 136, page 150, page 210 and page 315.

Copyright and copying

You may include the worksheets here in your own classroom materials, perhaps after adapting them to the available class time, your students' levels, etc. However, please acknowledge where the original materials or ideas came from with "From Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities by Alex Case" or "Adapted from Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities by Alex Case" on each copy. You may also share the materials with other teachers in your own school, but please buy one copy per school. You may share individual worksheets on class websites which are not publicly available such as class pages on Edmodo.com, but must get specific permission from Usingenglish.com for any other sharing of these materials and materials closely based on them.

Other materials

If you like the approach used in this book and want more materials for your IELTS classes, Teaching IELTS Writing: Interactive Classroom Activities (<https://www.usingenglish.com/e-books/ielts-writing/>) has just as much classroom interaction and intensive practice (despite being about writing).

For other classes, all students should enjoy and get something useful from Teaching Social English: Interactive Classroom Activities Second Edition (<https://www.usingenglish.com/e-books/social-english/>). For business English classes, there are Teaching Meetings: Interactive Classroom Activities, Teaching Telephoning: Interactive Classroom Activities, Teaching Emailing: Interactive Classroom Activities, and Teaching Presentation Skills: Interactive Classroom Activities, available at <https://www.usingenglish.com/e-books/teaching-meetings/>, <https://www.usingenglish.com/e-books/teaching-telephoning/>, <https://www.usingenglish.com/e-books/teaching-emailing/> and <https://www.usingenglish.com/e-books/teaching-presentation-skills/>. Similar titles on other EFL exams, travel English, negotiations, teleconferences and video conferences, grammar, and functional language are also planned.

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IELTS Speaking Part One section

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- Analyse and write IELTS Speaking Part Two tasks (with Speaking Part Two tasks on typical Speaking Part One topics) page 159
- IELTS Speaking Part Three coin games (for Parts One and Three) page 283
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IELTS needs analysis and Speaking Part One question review

Interview each other about your needs for English and IELTS and make brief notes about your partner in the boxes below.

Name:		
Job		
Present	Past	Future
Education		
Present	Past	Future
Studies of English		
Present	Past	Future
Use of English		
Present	Past	Future
IELTS and other English language exams		
Present	Past	Future

Ask any questions on the next page which you haven't already and write more above.

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Use questions from below (plus follow-up questions if you like) to find more information to write in the table above.

Job

- Are you working at the moment (or are you a student)?
- What do you do (for a living)?
- What was your first job?/ Have you had many jobs?
- What would you like to do in the future?/ What is your ambition?/ Are you planning to change jobs?

Education

- Are you a student (or are you working)?
- Are you studying anything at the moment?
- What was your favourite subject at school?
- Did you enjoy foreign languages at school?
- Is there anything you'd like to study (full time) in the future?

Studies of English

- Are you studying English at the moment?
- How often do you study English?
- How long do you spend studying English every week?
- Do you do any English language self study?
- How long have you been studying English?/ When did you start studying English?
- Did you like your English lessons at school?
- Would you like to study English abroad?

Use of English

- Do you use English in your work or studies?/ How often do you use English (in your work/ studies/ free time)?
- Do you have any foreign friends?
- When did you last use English (outside the classroom)?
- Do you think you will need English more in the future?

English language exams

- Why are you taking IELTS?/ What is your motivation for taking IELTS?
- Have you ever taken any English language exams?
- When are you taking IELTS?
- What are you going to do if you get the mark you need in IELTS?

Ask about any questions above that you weren't sure how to answer, weren't sure the differences between, etc.

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Without looking back at the last page, fill in the correct tenses in these questions from your memory or grammar knowledge. Sometimes more than one tense is possible. If no wh-question word is given, it is a Yes/ No question without a wh- word.

_____ (you work) at the moment?

What _____ (you do) for a living?

_____ (you have) many jobs?

What _____ (your first job be)?

What _____ (you do) in the future?

_____ (you study) anything at the moment?

Is there anything _____ (you study) in the future?

How often _____ (you study) English?

How long _____ (you spend) studying English every week?

How long _____ (you study) English?

When _____ (you last use) English outside the classroom?

Do you think _____ (you need) English more in the future? (Why/ Why not?)

_____ (you ever take) any English language exams?

When _____ (you take) IELTS?

What _____ (you do) if you get the mark you need in the IELTS?

Check your answers on the previous page. Other tenses might be possible, so check with your teacher if you wrote something different.

What are the differences between the different future tenses that are used?

Which of those future tenses are you most likely to use in your answers?

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Brainstorm similar (present, past and future) questions for these other typical IELTS Speaking Part One topics:

Hometown

Hobbies and free time

Family and friends

Festivals and celebrations

Accommodation

Transport and travel

Compare with the questions on the next page, brainstorm more, then compare your extra questions as a class.

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Hometown

Present

- Are you from (*name of this town*)? / Are you from round here?/ Where are you from?
- What kind of place is your hometown? / Tell me a little about where you come from./ Can you tell me something about your hometown?
- Would you rather live in your hometown or in _____? (Why?)
- Are you from the country or the city?
- What's the most interesting part of your hometown?
- What kind of jobs do people in your hometown do?
- Would you say your hometown a good place to live? (Why?)
- Do you often visit your hometown?/ How often do you go back to your hometown?
- Is your hometown famous for anything?

Past

- Where were you born?
- Where did you grow up? / Where did you live when you were a child?

Future

- Would you like to live in your hometown when you retire/ get older?
- How do you think your hometown will change in the future?
- When are you next going back to your hometown?

Hobbies and free time

Present

- Do you have much free time?
- What do you like doing in your free time?
- Do you have any hobbies or interests?
- Do you prefer to go out or to stay at home in the evenings?
- How do you usually spend your days off?
- What do you usually do when you meet up with your friends?
- Do you prefer going out with a large group or a small group of friends?

Past

- What did you do last weekend?
- When was the last time you went out?

Future

- Are there any new leisure activities you would like to take up?
- Do you have any plans for this evening?

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Family and friends

Present

- Do you have a large family?/ How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- Would you say that you get on well with your family?
- Which of your parents do you most take after?
- What do your parents do?
- Do you have many friends?

Past

- Did you get on well with your parents when you were a child?
- When was the last time you met your extended family?

Future

- When will you next meet up with your relations?

Festivals and celebrations

Present

- How do you usually celebrate your birthday?
- What is the most important day of the year for you? (Why?)
- What is the most important festival in your local area?
- Does your hometown have any festivals?

Past

- How did you celebrate your last birthday?
- When did you last go to a festival?

Future

- How do you think you will celebrate your birthday?
- What is the next big celebration in your family?
- Are there any festivals you would like to go to?

Accommodation

Present

- Where do you live now?/ Do you live near here?
- Do you live in a house or flat? / What sort of home do you live in?
- What do you like about your home?
- What is your neighbourhood like?
- What is your favourite room in your house?
- Do you live on your own?

Past

- When did you move into your present accommodation?/ How long have you been living where you do now?

Future

- What sort of accommodation would you most like to live in?/ What would your dream house be like?
- How long do you think you will continue living in your present accommodation?/ Would you like to move house? (Why/ why not?)

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Transport and travel

Present

- What things would you recommend a foreign tourist to do in your country?
- Do you often travel by train?

Past

- Have you visited many foreign countries?/ Have you travelled much?
- Have you ever had any problems while you were travelling?

Future

- Would you like you live abroad?
- When do you think you will next travel abroad?
- Which countries would you like to visit (in the future)?
- If you could travel anywhere, where would you choose?

Ask each other questions on those topics in exam style, with an easy present question followed by one or two more difficult past and/ or future questions on each topic, then changing topic at least once.

IELTS Speaking Part One examiner's script

"Come in and take a seat. Good morning/ afternoon. Can I see your ID?"

*

"Thank you. My name's _____. Can you tell me your full name, please?"

*

"So, what would you like me to call you?"

*

"Okay (*name*), in the first part of the test, I'd like to ask you a few questions about yourself, if that's okay."

*

"Let's start with (*name of the topic*)"

(examiner asks two or three questions on that topic, mixing up present, past and future and sometimes using follow-up questions – but only if the initial answers are short)

"Now, I'd like to ask you about (*name of the topic*)"

(examiner asks questions on that topic using the follow up questions only if the initial answers are short, stopping after two or three questions or when four or five minutes is up)

*Optional, depending on time: "Okay. Let's move onto (*name of the topic*)"*

(examiner asks questions until four or five minutes is up)

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Ask and analyse 100 IELTS Speaking Part One questions

Take turns asking each other questions from below.

Ask about any questions which you don't understand, aren't sure how to answer, etc.

Analyse all the questions and make statements about what they have in common with phrases like:

All of the questions...

Almost all of the questions...

Most of/ The majority of questions...

Many of the questions...

Quite a lot of the questions...

Some of the questions...

A few of the questions...

A couple of the questions...

One or two of the questions...

None of the questions...

Use the ideas below the list of questions to continue your discussion.

Share some ideas about things which are common, less common and very uncommon.

Ask about any expressions above you couldn't use, any doubts you have about how common things are, etc.

Extensions

- Look at many Speaking Part Two questions and do the same
- Look at many Speaking Part Three questions and do the same
- Make different Speaking Part One questions from the same question stems

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100 typical IELTS Speaking Part One questions

1. Are there any museums that you would like to go to?
2. Are you working at the moment?
3. Are your friends interested in technology?
4. Can you tell me something about your hometown?
5. Can you cook well?
6. Did you enjoy learning English when you were younger?
7. Do you enjoy going to the cinema? (Why/ Why not?)
8. Do you find it easy to stay in touch with your school friends?
9. Do you have any plans to go abroad?
10. Do you have any subscriptions to publications? (Why those?/ Why not?)
11. Do you have any brothers and sisters?
12. Do you like the area where you live? (Why/ Why not?)
13. Do you often watch TV?
14. Do you prefer to get your news online or by other means?
15. Do you still continue any of your childhood hobbies?
16. Do you usually have music on when you study?
17. Do you want to take up any new sports in the future?
18. Do you celebrate Christmas?
19. Do people often attend public festivals in your country?
20. Has your taste in music changed much since you were younger?
21. Have you always lived in the same place?
22. Have you ever tried to write a book?
23. How are your movie viewing habits changing?
24. How did you spend your weekends when you were younger?
25. How do changes in technology affect you?
26. How do most people in your country try to stay healthy?
27. How do you think you will spend your next holiday?
28. How do you usually revise before exams?
29. How easy is it to find work near where you live?
30. How important is the Internet to you?
31. How long do you think you will continue studying English?
32. How long have you been living in your present home?
33. How many books do you have?
34. How much time do you spend watching TV every week?
35. How much free time do you have?
36. How often do you download music?
37. How often do people eat out where you come from?
38. How popular is your hometown with tourists?
39. If you could live anywhere, which area of your town would you choose?
40. In what ways is exercise important to you?
41. Is there any kind of healthy food which you don't like?
42. Is there anything you dislike about modern art?
43. Is there any hobby you'd like to try in the future?
44. Is there any festival you particularly want to go to?
45. Is the last place you went on holiday famous for anything?
46. Is celebrating birthdays popular with your people in your country?

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47. Tell me a little about your parents.
48. The last time you met up with your friends what did you do together?
49. What is the best thing about public transport in your town?
50. Would you say the most popular newspaper in your country is a good one?
51. What are you going to do at the weekend?
52. What are your plans for the next public holiday?
53. What changes would you like to make to your hometown?
54. What did you do on your last birthday?
55. What do you do when you have time to surf the Internet?
56. What do you find most difficult about using modern technology?
57. What do you like about going to the cinema?
58. What do you like doing with your family?
59. What do you usually do to keep healthy?
60. What do your best friends do?
61. What does your taste in TV say about you?
62. What is the most famous food from your country? (Can you describe it?)
63. What is the most important sport for you? (Why?)
64. What is the most important festival in your hometown?
65. What ways of learning languages are there in your town?
66. What is your favourite means of transport? (Why?)
67. What is your main hobby?
68. What is your typical working day like?
69. What is the area near your home like?
70. What kinds of homes do people in your town usually live in?
71. What kinds of music do you dislike?
72. What kind of art do you like?
73. What kind of books do people your age in your country usually read?
74. What type of magazines do you like?
75. What kinds of things make you motivated to study?
76. What kinds of new leisure activity would you like to try?
77. What was the last concert you went to?
78. What kinds of subjects do you enjoy studying?
79. What was your favourite TV programme when you were a child?
80. What were the best things about the place you grew up in?
81. What would your ideal job be like?
82. What's the most interesting thing about your favourite website?
83. What level of English do you hope to have in ten years' time?
84. What kinds of literature do you most like to read?
85. What social problems are there in your neighbourhood?
86. What films would you like see in the future?
87. What part of your lifestyle would you most like to make healthier?
88. When are you next going to take an aeroplane?
89. When did you last buy some new technology? (Why that thing?)
90. When do you think you will next buy a magazine?
91. When was the last time you took a vacation?
92. When you celebrate family birthdays what do you like to do?
93. Where did you first meet your best friend?

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94. Where do you exercise?
95. Which foods from your country do most foreign people enjoy?
96. Which part of your home do you like most?
97. Who in your family do you get on well with?
98. Would you like to take up a new hobby?
99. Would you prefer to go to an art gallery or other kind of museum? (Why?)
100. Would you help if a festival was held in your street? (Why/ Why not?)

Use this list to make at least 10 statements analysing the questions above.

- are personal questions
- are very personal questions (on religion, your love life, etc)
- are normal questions to ask someone when you meet them for the first time
- are odd questions to ask someone when you meet for the first time
- are about your family and friends
- are about your accommodation/ your local area
- are about your hometown
- are about festivals and celebrations
- are about free time and hobbies
- are about work and studies
- are about recent news (politics, etc)
- need special(ist) knowledge to be answered
- are about (very) academic topics (like some topics in IELTS Reading)
- are about the world in general
- are opinion questions
- are yes/ no questions
- are wh- questions
- are “tell me about...” questions
- need a long answer
- can be answered with quite a short answer
- probably need a reason in the answer
- are difficult to answer
- are difficult to understand
- are ambiguous/ are vague/ have more than one possible meaning
- can't be answered by some people
- are likely to bring up things that the examiner might not know or understand
- are about preferences/ likes and dislikes
- are about habits/ routines
- are about the present
- are about the past
- are about future plans
- are about future predictions
- are about future arrangements
- are about future desires
- are asking you to speculate/ hypothesise (imagine alternate universes, choices you didn't make, etc)
- could be used to make questions about other topics

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Good and bad answers in IELTS Speaking Part One

Without looking below, listen to your teacher a question and some different candidate answers, and decide which option is the best answer to that question in Speaking Part One. All the others are bad answers in some way, so there should clearly be one good choice. Your teacher will tell you if you should write down the answer and/ or shout it out.

With a partner, choose the one best answer to each question below.

Check your answers with the answer key or as a class.

What different kinds of problems are there with the wrong options?

Find at least one example of each of those things in the wrong options. One option could have more than one mistake.

Common mistakes with Speaking Part One answers

- Language too simple
- Misunderstood the question
- Not (really) answering the question
- Off topic
- Overgeneralisation
- Rude
- Too literal answer to the question
- Too long
- Too short
- Typical language mistake

After doing the brainstorming task below, test each other on the questions and phrases:

- Do the same reading out good and bad answers game, with the person who is listening choosing the best one.
- Do the same reading out good and bad answers game, with the person who is listening repeating back the best one.
- Read out a question and a bad answer for your partner to give a better answer to.
- Give your partner the heading of one of the brainstorming categories and help them make suitable phrases.
- Ask one of the questions, tell your partner what kind of phrase from the brainstorming they should use (e.g. checking) and see if they can successfully do that as part of their answer.
- Take turns answering the questions.
- Ask each other similar questions about different topics, e.g. “What kinds of movies do you like?”
- Answer the same and similar questions in an exam format, with two or three questions on each topic and two or three topics, and with one examiner and one candidate.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Name

1. Can I check your name?
 - A) Sure.
 - B) Yes, you can.
 - C) Of course. It's Alex. Alex Case.
 - D) It's written here.
2. How do you pronounce your name?
 - A) It's D,O,U,G.
 - B) It's pronounced "dug", like "rug".
 - C) I pronounce it "dug", like "rug".
 - D) Just like it's written.
3. What would you like me to call you?
 - A) Please call me Alex.
 - B) I don't care.
 - C) Call me anything you like.
 - D) My family call me Alexander and my nickname is Rex, but please call me Alex.

Work and studies

4. Are you working at the moment?
 - A) No, obviously not! As you can see, I'm taking the IELTS test at the moment!
 - B) Well, I'm an unpaid intern right now, so I'm not sure if that counts as work or not.
5. How do you usually revise before exams?
 - A) To be frank I don't have any special technique or anything, I mainly just read and highlight in different colours.
 - B) So much! Sometimes I don't sleep the night before!
6. What is your typical weekday like?
 - A) It's pretty busy, but I don't usually have to do overtime.
 - B) I like my lunchbreak.
 - C) I get up at 6:45. Then I brush my teeth and have a shower. After that,...

Transport and travel

7. Where have you come from today?
 - A) I was born in Nagano. It's a medium-sized city in central Japan.
 - B) Not too far. I live about 35 minutes away by underground.
8. What is the best thing about public transport in your town?
 - A) I think it's probably the best in the world.
 - B) It's difficult to find anything good about it, to be honest, but I guess it's quite cheap.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

9. How do you most like to travel?

- A) By train.
- B) I like trains, boats, buses, trams, bicycles and motorcycles.
- C) Generally by train, but I also like boats, long distance buses, all kinds really.
- D) I don't really like buses or planes, because they are quite cramped and you can't really stretch your legs.

10. Which country would you most like to visit?

- A) I'm flying to Canada next week.
- B) Actually, I'm flying to Canada next week. I've always wanted to go there.
- C) Actually, I will fly to Canada next week. I've always wanted to go there.

Sports and exercise

11. How important is doing exercise to you?

- A) It keeps me slim and makes me happy.
- B) Incredibly important.
- C) Frankly, it's not important at all. I find walking to the station is quite enough.

12. How is exercise important to you?

- A) Well, I do exercise but I've never really thought about why. I guess the main thing for me is working out some of the stress of my job.
- B) It's absolutely vital. I couldn't live without it.

Free time

13. Is there any hobby which you'd like to take up?

- A) Yes, there is.
- B) Not that I can think of, but I'd like to go skydiving again someday.

14. How did you spend your weekends when you were younger?

- A) I spent quite a lot. I liked karaoke, and that is quite expensive.
- B) I was a pretty serious kid, so I didn't do anything too interesting. I mainly just read and played computer games.

15. How much free time do you have?

- A) Three hours a week.
- B) Actually, at the moment I basically don't have any.

Accommodation

16. What is your home like?

- A) Yes, I do. I love it.
- B) It's very narrow.
- C) It's difficult to know what to say about it. It's a pretty typical Japanese flat, I guess. Yes, that really is all I can think of to say.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Friends and family

17. Do you have a large family?

- A) No, I don't.
- B) It depends what you mean by large, but I have three brothers, so that's quite big nowadays.
- C) Yes, I have three brothers. My oldest brother's name is Steve. He is a doctor. My second brother's name is...

18. Who are you most like in your family?

- A) I really take after my father. We even have the same voice!
- B) I really love my little sister. She's so cute!

Hometown

19. How popular is your hometown with tourists?

- A) Frankly, I'm not sure I've ever seen a single tourist there. It's not really that kind of place.
- B) They like to go to the hot springs and sometimes go hiking.

20. If you could live anywhere, which area of your town would you choose?

- A) I chose the riverside because I like fishing.
- B) I'm not sure.
- C) I'm not sure, but somewhere near the sea, I guess.

21. What kinds of homes do people in your town usually live in?

- A) People live in apartments.
- B) It's difficult to say for sure, but I guess flats are more common than houses.

Arts and media

22. Do you ever listen to the radio?

- A) Yes, sometimes in the car.
- B) Yes, of course I have listened to the radio many times. I last listened to the radio about two years ago.

23. What type of magazines do you like?

- A) I like Newsweek, National Geographic and The Times Literary Supplement.
- B) I don't read magazines a lot, but I quite enjoy ones about cars and technology.

24. What do you like about going to the cinema?

- A) I can't understand what you are talking about. What do you mean "What do you like about"?
- B) What?
- C) Sorry, I'm not sure what the question means. Are you asking if I enjoy going to the cinema or not?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

The answer in **bold** is the best one. Ask if you are not sure why the others are not good.

Name

1. Can I check your name?

A) Sure.

B) Yes, you can. – Too literal answer to the question./ Misunderstood the question.

C) Of course. It's Alex. Alex Case.

D) It's written here. – Not (really) answering the question.

2. How do you pronounce your name?

A) It's D,O,U,G.

B) It's pronounced "dug", like "rug".

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3. What would you like me to call you?

A) Please call me Alex.

B) I don't care. – Not (really) answering the question./ Rude.

C) Call me anything you like. – Not (really) answering the question.

D) My family call me Alexander and my nickname is Rex, but please call me Alex. – Off topic./ Too long.

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Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

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Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

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B) It depends what you mean by large, but I have three brothers, so that's quite big nowadays.

C) Yes, I have three brothers. My oldest brother's name is Steve. He is a doctor. My second brother's name is... – Too long./ Language too simple.

18. Who are you most like in your family?

A) I really take after my father. We even have the same voice!

B) I really love my little sister. She's so cute! – Misunderstood the question.

Hometown

19. How popular is your hometown with tourists?

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23. What type of magazines do you like?

A) I like Newsweek, National Geographic and The Times Literary Supplement. – Language too simple./ Not (exactly) answering the question.

B) I don't read magazines a lot, but I quite enjoy ones about cars and technology.

24. What do you like about going to the cinema?

A) I can't understand what you are talking about. What do you mean "What do you like about"? – Rude.

B) What? – Too short./ Rude.

C) Sorry, I'm not sure what the question means. Are you asking if I enjoy going to the cinema or not?

Ask about any options which don't seem good or don't seem bad, phrases you don't understand, etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above for now, brainstorm at least suitable two or three phrases for each of the functions below. Many phrases not above are also okay.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Answering questions whose meanings aren't 100% clear phrases

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Ending answers phrases

Look above for examples, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Many more suitable answers are possible, so check if you wrote something different.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Sorry, I'm not sure what the question means.

Are you asking...?

Pardon?

Sorry, could you rephrase the question?

Sorry, could you say that another way?

Sorry, I'm not familiar with the word...

Sorry, what do you mean by...?

Sorry, could you repeat the question?

Sorry, is... a kind of...?

Sorry, can I speak about...?

Answering questions whose meanings aren't 100% clear phrases

It depends what you mean by... but...

Well, if you mean... my answer is...

Well, if you are asking..., I would say...

Assuming you mean..., I guess...

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

Actually,...

Not that I can think of, but...

Vague answers/ Weak answers

It's difficult to think of... but I guess...

It's difficult to know what to say about..., but...

I'm not sure, but... I guess.

It's difficult to say for sure, but...

Strong language/ Strong answers

To be frank,...

Frankly,...

To be honest,...

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Well,...

Let me think.

Let me see.

I can't remember exactly, but...

I guess...

I suppose...

If I remember correctly,...

Ending answers phrases

... all kinds really.

... and that kind of thing.

... and stuff like that.

... and things like that.

... and so on.

That (really) is all I can think of to say.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases

Discuss tips you would(n't) give on Speaking Part 1, then cross off bad tips below.

Entering the exam room in IELTS Speaking tips and useful phrases

When the examiner greets you and asks you to come in, take a seat, show your ID, etc, you can react in your own language or remain silent, because the test hasn't really started.

When the examiner greets you and asks you to come in, take a seat, show your ID, etc, you should react naturally in English ("Hi", "Thanks", "Of course. Here you are", etc).

Speaking about your name in IELTS Speaking tips and useful phrases

You can ask the examiner to use a nickname if you like ("My name's... but everyone calls me...", "I'm... Please call me...", "You can just call me... It stands for...", etc).

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There are a few common first questions in the exam ("Have you come far today?", "Are you working or are you a student?", "How did you get here today?"), so you can think about and practise what you want to say before the exam.

There are a few common first questions in the exam ("Have you come far today?", "Are you working or are you a student?", "How did you get here today?"), so it's a good idea to write out and memorise long answers to those questions before the exam.

Dealing with communication problems/ difficult questions in IELTS Speaking tips

You will lose marks if you don't understand the questions. If you aren't sure what the examiner asked, just answer what you guess the question might be. If you misunderstood, the examiner will ask the question again, so you can answer it correctly then.

If you didn't catch the question, just wait in silence for the examiner to repeat it.

If you didn't catch the question, it's best to use a short general phrase to show that ("Pardon?", "One more time, please", "Say again"), then the examiner will rephrase it.

If you didn't catch the question, it's best to be specific about what the problem was ("Sorry, could you rephrase the question?", "Sorry, I didn't catch the last part", "Sorry, could you say that again more slowly?", "Sorry, what does... mean?", etc).

If you think you probably understand but aren't sure, ask a Yes/ No question to check ("Should I talk about...?", "Just to check, you want me to talk about..., right?").

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is ambiguous, you can mention that in your answer ("I guess you mean..., in which case...", "Well, if... counts as..., then...") and then perhaps check if you have answered the question ("Is that what you wanted to know?", "Does that answer your question?")

If you still don't understand after the question has been repeated, ask again ("Sorry, I'm still not sure what I should say", "I'm really sorry, but can you explain what... means?")

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

If you still don't understand after a question has been rephrased, it's best to say you want to skip to the next one ("Sorry, can we skip that one?", "I'm afraid I don't think I will ever understand that question") because otherwise the whole of Speaking Part One could be the examiner explaining the same question over and over again.

If the examiner says "Okay", it means you understood the question and your answer is OK.

Grammar in IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases

Not making grammar mistakes is the most important thing to get a good score, so you should think carefully about your answers before speaking and speak slowly and carefully.

Not making grammar mistakes is the most important thing in the exam, so you should correct yourself every time you make a mistake ("My brother live, er, lives..." "I have gotten, sorry, got three brothers" "Sorry, I meant...", "Sorry, that's wrong. I should have said...")

Communicating effectively is most important than not making mistakes, so you should only usually correct yourself if what you said will be difficult to understand or is factually wrong ("I come from Tokyo. Well, I don't actually come from Tokyo but...", "I'm working. Well, actually I'm an intern, but it's full-time so it's like a job", "Sorry, that doesn't make sense. I mean...", etc).

Most questions can be answered with the same grammar as the question ("Yes, I have, many times", etc) but you can use special phrases when a different tense is necessary in your situation ("Actually, I never... but...", "In my case..., so for that reason...", etc).

Most future questions can be answered with "I will..."

Try to use a range of different future forms ("going to", "I'm...ing", "will probably", "might", "I'd like to", "look forward to", "planning to", "expect to") to match your real future situations.

The best way to impress the examiner is to find some way to use complex tenses ("I will be...ing", "I had been...ing", etc).

You can impress the examiner with a range of different time expressions ("the day before yesterday", "a couple of weeks ago", "in my early teens", "ages ago", "all the time", "from time to time", "every other week", "in the last few...", "almost never", "as we speak", etc).

Vocabulary in IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases

Everyone makes mistakes but you can make up for it by learning and using complex language to talk about your accommodation ("high-rise apartment/ condo", "satellite town", "suburbs", "dorm", "studio flat", "my neighbourhood"), friends and family ("baby sister", "sister in law", "old friend", "fellow alumni", "sibling", "workmate", "only child", "distant relation"), festivals/ celebrations ("coming of age day", "fireworks", "street stall"), work and studies ("uni", "cram school", "new recruit", "postgrad", "hot desking"), travel ("bullet train", "package tour", "B&B", "commuter", "abroad/ overseas"), arts and media ("rom-com", "sci-fi", "historical drama", "whodunit"), free time ("every other week", "hot springs", "meet up with", "hang out with", "days off", "go out for a drink"), etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

If you want to talk about something that isn't translatable into English like "sempai", you can usually just assume that the examiner knows what you are talking about, but you can ask them to check ("Do you know what... is?", "Are you familiar with...?", "I guess you know..., right?")

If you want to talk about something that isn't translatable into English like "sempai", you can use the word but should then explain what it means ("In my country we have something called...", "In my language, we say..., which means something like...", "The literal translation is...", "It's kind of like...", "It's a kind of...", "It's similar to..., but...")

Communicative strategies/ functional language in IELTS Speaking Part One tips

You need to be ready to reject the (possibly many) questions that you can't answer ("I can't answer that because...", "That question doesn't match my situation because...", etc).

If the question doesn't exactly match your situation, you should show that in your answer ("Actually, I don't... but...", "Well, in my case..., so...", etc).

English speakers hate silence, so you should use a range of different noises and phrases to fill your thinking time ("Hmmm. Let me think", "Well", "Let me see", "That's a difficult question", "That's a tricky one", "I've never thought about that before", "What's the best way to explain?", "I'm not sure how to say it in English, but...", "As far as I remember,...")

Make your answers as long as you can, like a kind of mini-presentation ("I have three answers. Firstly,...", "In addition,...", "That is all I wanted to say").

If you feel your answer is too short, the easiest way to make it longer is to add a reason ("I'm not sure why, maybe...", "This is mainly because...", "... so I can...")

One good way to expand your range of language is with strong statements ("I absolutely love...", "I completely detest...", "I... without fail", "obsessed with", "to be honest", "frankly")

One good way of expanding the level of language you use is to soften what you say ("I'm not so fond of...", "I don't really like...", "fairly good at", "quite like", "don't mind")

Preparing for IELTS Speaking Part One outside class tips and useful phrases

It's a good idea to practise answering the questions out loud, preferably without reading through the questions first (so you don't get too much thinking time).

To improve your answers, you should often record yourself and then listen back.

You should study as much vocabulary as you can about typical Speaking Part One topics like accommodation and celebrations with vocabulary books, pages on each topic on general English websites, etc.

You only need to talk about your own accommodation, celebrations, etc in Speaking Part One, so it's best to think about and maybe write about your own accommodation etc, looking up and then learning useful language that you need to do that.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

The underlined ones are probably a good idea. Make sure you know why the others aren't.

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If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is ambiguous, you can mention that in your answer ("I guess you mean..., in which case...", "Well, if... counts as..., then...") and then perhaps check if you have answered the question ("Is that what you wanted to know?", "Does that answer your question?")

If you still don't understand after the question has been repeated, ask again ("Sorry, I'm still not sure what I should say", "I'm really sorry, but can you explain what... means?")

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If you want to talk about something that isn't translatable into English like "sempai", you can usually just assume that the examiner knows what you are talking about, but you can ask them to check ("Do you know what... is?", "Are you familiar with...?", "I guess you know..., right?")

If you want to talk about something that isn't translatable into English like "sempai", you can use the word but should then explain what it means ("In my country we have something called...", "In my language, we say..., which means something like...", "The literal translation is...", "It's kind of like...", "It's a kind of...", "It's similar to..., but...")

Communicative strategies/ functional language in IELTS Speaking Part One tips

You need to be ready to reject the (possibly many) questions that you can't answer ("I can't answer that because...", "That question doesn't match my situation because...", etc).

If the question doesn't exactly match your situation, you should show that in your answer ("Actually, I don't... but...", "Well, in my case..., so...", etc).

English speakers hate silence, so you should use a range of different noises and phrases to fill your thinking time ("Hmmm. Let me think", "Well", "Let me see", "That's a difficult question", "That's a tricky one", "I've never thought about that before", "What's the best way to explain?", "I'm not sure how to say it in English, but...", "As far as I remember,...")

Make your answers as long as you can, like a kind of mini-presentation ("I have three answers. Firstly,...", "In addition,...", "That is all I wanted to say").

If you feel your answer is too short, the easiest way to make it longer is to add a reason ("I'm not sure why, maybe...", "This is mainly because...", "... so I can...")

One good way to expand your range of language is with strong statements ("I absolutely love...", "I completely detest...", "I... without fail", "obsessed with", "to be honest", "frankly")

One good way of expanding the level of language you use is to soften what you say ("I'm not so fond of...", "I don't really like...", "fairly good at", "quite like", "don't mind")

Preparing for IELTS Speaking Part One outside class tips and useful phrases

It's a good idea to practise answering the questions out loud, preferably without reading through the questions first (so you don't get too much thinking time).

To improve your answers, you should often record yourself and then listen back.

You should study as much vocabulary as you can about typical Speaking Part One topics like accommodation and celebrations with vocabulary books, pages on each topic on general English websites, etc.

You only need to talk about your own accommodation, celebrations, etc in Speaking Part One, so it's best to think about and maybe write about your own accommodation etc, looking up and then learning useful language that you need to do that.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, write suitable phrases below. Many phrases not above are also possible.

Entering the exam room in IELTS Speaking tips and useful phrases

When the examiner greets you and asks you to come in, take a seat, show your ID, etc, you should react naturally in English (_____

_____).

Speaking about your name in IELTS Speaking tips and useful phrases

You can ask the examiner to use a nickname if you like (_____

_____).

Answering the first question in IELTS Speaking tips and useful phrases

There are a few common first questions in the exam (_____

_____),

so you can think about and practise what you want to say before the exam.

Dealing with communication problems/ difficult questions in IELTS Speaking tips

If you didn't catch the question, it's best to be specific about what the problem was (_____

_____).

If you think you probably understand but aren't sure, ask a Yes/ No question to check (_____

_____).

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is ambiguous, you can mention that in your answer (_____

_____)

and then perhaps check if you have answered the question (_____

_____)

If you still don't understand after the question has been repeated, ask again (_____

_____)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Grammar in IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases

Communicating effectively is most important than not making mistakes, so you should only usually correct yourself if what you said will be difficult to understand or is factually wrong

(_____

_____)

Most questions can be answered with the same grammar as the question (“Yes, I have, many times”, etc) but you can use special phrases when a different tense is necessary in your situation (_____

_____).

Try to use a range of different future forms (_____

_____) to match your real future situations.

You can impress the examiner with a range of different time expressions (_____

_____).

Vocabulary in IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases

Everyone makes mistakes but you can make up for it by learning and using complex language to talk about your accommodation (_____

_____),

friends and family (_____

_____),

festivals/ celebrations (_____

_____),

work and studies (_____

_____),

travel (_____

_____),

arts (_____

_____) and

free time (_____

_____)

If you want to talk about something that isn't translatable into English like “sempai”, you can use the word but should then explain what it means (_____
_____)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Communicative strategies/ functional language in IELTS Speaking Part One tips

If the question doesn't exactly match your situation, you should show that in your answer

(_____

_____).

English speakers hate silence, so you should use a range of different noises and phrases to fill your thinking time (_____

_____)

If you feel your answer is too short, the easiest way to make it longer is to add a reason

(_____

_____)

One good way to expand your range of language is with strong statements (_____

_____)

One good way of expanding the level of language you use is to soften what you say (____

_____)

Compare with the phrases above, brainstorm more, then compare your extra phrases as a class.

Write similar tips and useful phrases for another part of the exam that your teacher tells you to (e.g. Speaking Part Two, Speaking Part Three, Writing Part One or Writing Part Two).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One sentence completion games

For each sentence (and all the different games), if there are options divided by a slash and/ or optional words in brackets, circle any that you want to use and cross off the others.

IELTS Speaking Part One things in common

In groups of two or three, choose a phrase from the next two pages and try to make a statement that is true for both of you/ all of you, choosing another phrase and doing the same when you have done so or if you can't find anything in common.

When the teacher stops you, share one sentence with the class and see if anyone else has the same thing in common. Then ask about any sentences you couldn't complete and see if anyone else could/ can.

IELTS Speaking Part One sentence completion guessing game

On your own, fill in as many of the phrases on the next two pages as you can in ten minutes with your real experiences, real feelings, etc. Choose one of your statements and read out just the part you wrote (not the printed part that was there before), and see if your partner can guess which sentence you put that information in. If there are optional words, they can then also try to guess which optional words you included in that sentence.

IELTS Speaking Part One sentence completion bluffing game

Choose one of the sentence stems on the next two pages for your partner to use. They should complete the sentence as quickly as they can, using their imagination if they can't think of anything true. Perhaps after asking follow-up questions, guess if that is their real experience, real habits, etc or if they just made it up.

Brainstorming stage

When you finish the game or games, ask about any phrases you couldn't complete, categories of phrases which you don't understand the need for, etc.

First of all without looking at the first worksheet, brainstorm useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part One into the blanks on the brainstorming sheet. Many phrases not on the first worksheets are also possible.

Check with the first worksheet, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class and/ or with a list of useful phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One sentences to complete

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

"I wouldn't describe my _____ as '_____', but _____"

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

"No one's ever asked me _____ before."

"It's difficult to choose just one, but I guess _____"

Vague answers/ Weak answers

"I don't remember it myself, but from what I've been told (by _____), _____"

Strong language/ Strong answers

"I would never say this to his/ her face, but _____"

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences

"I (really/ absolutely/ totally) detest/ loathe/ love/ adore _____"

"I'm (quite/ very/ not so) fond of _____"

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses

"I'm (absolutely/ completely/ totally) excellent/ terrible/ awful at _____"

"I'll (probably) never get the hang of _____"

Talking about habits/ routines

"I spend (quite) a lot of time _____"

"On my days off, _____"

"Whenever I get the chance, _____"

Talking about the distant past

"When I was in my (early/ mid/ late) teens, _____"

"When I was in (the first year of) primary school, _____"

"The first time I ever _____"

Talking about the recent past

"Just the other day _____"

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present

"I haven't _____ for ages."

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc)

"I'm meeting up with some friends and _____"

"I've arranged to _____"

Talking about your plans

"I'm (probably) going to _____"

"I'm considering _____"

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about desires

"I'd really love to _____"

"My dream is to _____"

Talking about predictions

"It's difficult to predict but I may (well) _____"

Talking about the near future

"_____ the day after tomorrow."

"_____ in the next few days."

Talking about the distant future

"_____ by the time I retire."

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc)

"In an ideal world, _____"

Giving reasons

"The (main) reason why I want to pass IELTS is _____"

Talking about your education phrases

"I dropped (out of) _____"

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc) phrases

"My hometown is _____"

Talking about people/ relationships phrases

"I take after _____ (when it comes to _____)"

"I didn't get on well with _____"

Talking about festivals and celebrations phrases

"I (always/ almost always) take part in _____"

Talking about music phrases

"I can play the _____ (fairly well/ very well/ a little/ but quite badly)."

Talking about work phrases

"I'm in (joint) charge of _____"

"I report to _____"

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

"I'd (quite/ really) like to take up _____"

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

First of all without looking above, brainstorm useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part One into the blanks below. Many phrases not on the first worksheets are also possible.

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses

Talking about habits/ routines

Talking about the distant past/ Talking about the recent past

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present

Talking about future arrangements/ Talking about your future plans

Talking about desires

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about predictions

Talking about the near future/ Talking about the distant future

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc)

Giving reasons

Talking about your education phrases

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc) phrases

Talking about people/ relationships phrases

Talking about festivals and celebrations phrases

Talking about music phrases

Talking about work phrases

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

Check above, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Collocations in IELTS Speaking Part One phrases pairwork

Student A

Without showing your worksheets to each other, match up the beginnings and endings of Speaking Part 1 phrases, and write the missing parts in the gaps on your worksheet.

"It is pronounced 'Case', as	
"I'm sorry but I'm not familiar	
"That's an interesting	
"It was a long time ago, but as far	
"To be perfectly	
"What's the best	
"I'm a huge	
"I'm quite fond	
"On my days	
"For as long as I can	
"The last time it happened was the week before	
"However, that hasn't happened for	
"At the weekend I'm meeting	
"My next appointment is the day after	
"This won't happen for ages, if	
"In a perfect	
"The main	
"This may well be due	
"In other	
"I could go	

Check as a class or with the suggested answers.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student B

Without showing your worksheets to each other, match up the beginnings and endings of Speaking Part 1 phrases, and write the missing parts in the gaps on your worksheet.

	ages, despite my best efforts”
	as I remember, when I was a toddler I...”
	ever, but I hope to visit at least 30...”
	fan of the Rolling Stones.”
	honest, I can’t stand the sight of...”
	in ‘suitcase’.”
	last, on my way back from work.”
	off, I mostly chill out and do my chores.”
	of reality TV, especially competitions.”
	on, but you get the general idea.”
	question. I guess I would say that...”
	reason why I hate it is probably...”
	remember, I’ve always been into...”
	to my upbringing, because I was raised...”
	tomorrow, but I might have to cancel.”
	up with some uni friends and...”
	way to explain? Well,...”
	with the expression ‘green issues’.”
	world, I would not have to put up with...”
	words, it isn’t as popular as it was.”

Check as a class or with the suggested answers.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Other matches may be possible. Ask about any different answers, complete sentences you don't understand, situations you can't imagine, etc.

Phrases for talking about your name	
"It is pronounced 'Case', as	in 'suitcase'."
Checking/ clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)	
"I'm sorry but I'm not familiar	with the expression 'green issues'."
Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)	
"That's an interesting	question. I guess I would say that..."
Vague answers/ Weak answers	
"It was a long time ago, but as far	as I remember, when I was a toddler I..."
Strong language/ Strong answers	
"To be perfectly	honest, I can't stand the sight of..."
(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases	
"What's the best	way to explain? Well..."
Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases	
"I'm a huge	fan of the Rolling Stones."
"I'm quite fond	of reality TV, especially competitions."
Talking about habits/ routines phrases	
"On my days	off, I mostly chill out and do my chores."
Talking about the distant past phrases	
"For as long as I can	remember, I've always been into..."
Talking about the recent past phrases	
"The last time it happened was the week before	last, on my way back from work."
Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases	
"However, that hasn't happened for	ages, despite my best efforts."
Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases	
"At the weekend I'm meeting	up with some uni friends and..."
Talking about the near future phrases	
"My next appointment is the day after	tomorrow, but I might have to cancel."
Talking about the distant future phrases	
"This won't happen for ages, if	ever, but I hope to visit at least 30..."
Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases	
"In a perfect	world, I would not have to put up with..."
Giving reasons phrases	
"The main	reason why I hate it is probably..."
"This may well be due	to my upbringing, because I was raised..."
Explaining (more/ things the examiner might not know or understand) phrases	
"In other	words, it isn't as popular as it was."
Ending (long) answers phrases	
"I could go	on, but you get the general idea."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above for now, write as many suitable phrases as you can in each category below. Many other phrases not above are also okay.

Phrases for talking about your name
Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)
Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)
Vague answers/ Weak answers
Strong language/ Strong answers
(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases
Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases
Talking about habits/ routines phrases
Talking about the distant past phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about the recent past phrases
Talking about experiences/ linking the past and present phrases
Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases
Talking about the near future phrases
Talking about the distant future phrases
Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases
Giving reasons phrases
Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases
Ending (long) answers phrases

Look above, brainstorm more, then compare your extras as a class or with a list of phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One vocabulary list dictation

Listen to your teacher or partner read out one list from below. As soon as you are sure, guess what typical IELTS Speaking Part One topic all the words and expressions are related to. You can only guess once per hint, and if you guess wrongly then you have to wait until someone else has guessed before you can guess again. When someone has guessed correctly, listen to the words again, then read out and listen to other lists in the same way.

Look at the whole worksheet and ask about any words you don't understand, words which don't seem connected to that topic, etc.

Brainstorming stage

First of all without looking at the next page, write as many suitable words and expressions as you can in each gap. Many things not below are also possible.

Vocabulary for talking about names

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

Vocabulary for talking about music

Vocabulary for talking about work

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

Look below, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class or with vocab lists.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Lists to dictate

Vocabulary for talking about names – sur.../ family.../ last.../ first.../ given.../ Christian.../ nick.../ full.../ middle.../ named after/ short for/ abbreviation/ initials

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education – Ivy League/ BA/ BSc/ doctorate/ PhD/ MA/ MBA/ MSc/ kindergarten/ cram/ junior high/ uni/ major in/ pass (with flying colours)/ scrape through/ drop out/ finals/ cram/ swot/ (fellow) alumni/ retake/ re-sit/ by heart/ rote/ freshman/ sophomore/ postgrad/ take notes/ revise/ revision/ review/ be distracted/ drift off/ concentrate/ focus

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc) – high-rise/ block of flats/ birthplace/ dorm/ condo/ (youth) hostel/ neighbourhood/ detached.../ terraced.../ student halls/ studio (flat)/ grew up/ was brought up/ suburb/ outskirts/ downtown/ move out/ B&B/ my roots/ rundown/ gentrified/ easy access

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people – ex-colleague/ workmate/ co-worker/ bestie/ BFF/ distant relation/ close relative/ get on with/ get along with/ acquaintance/ clash with/ fellow alumni/ fellow.../ in-laws/ flatmate/ take after/ ancestor/ look up to/ generation gap/ tell off/ strict/ indulgent/ spoil

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations – fireworks display/ street stall/ dress up/ take part in/ take place/ parade/ procession/ toast/ reunion/ marked by

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel – coach/ commuter/ sleeper/ tram/ broaden your horizons/ backpacking/ hitchhike

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies – cartoon/ rom-com/ sci-fi/ based on/ set in/ sequel/ prequel/ adaptation/ costume drama/ current affairs/ game show/ whodunit/ sitcom/ soap opera/ binge/ boxset/ streaming/ couch potato/ telly addict/ channel hopping

Vocabulary for talking about music – top ten hit/ crooners/ indie/ alternative/ bubble gum pop/ drown out/ block out

Vocabulary for talking about work – responsible for.../ in charge of.../ report to.../ side hustle/ clerk/ on the dole/ downsizing

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies – take up/ go out for.../ day off/ stay in/ stay out/ meet up with/ unwind/ chill/ take it easy/ laze around/ do my chores/ have a lie-in/ catch up with my sleep/ keep fit/ tidy up/ hang out with/ DIY/ household maintenance/ jobs around the house

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Questions with IELTS Speaking Part One vocabulary challenge

Work in groups of three or four. Choose one of the words or expressions below, make a personal question out of it, and ask it to one other person in the group. If they can answer your question (without any help, and without going off topic), you both get one point. If they can't answer for some reason, they can respond with one of the phrases below and you can try again (repeating, rephrasing, changing it to make it answerable, etc) for half a point each. Take turns asking and answering questions in this way around the group until your teacher stops you.

Useful phrases for when it's impossible to answer the question

Problems with meaning

Sorry, I've never come across the word... before.

I'm afraid I'm not familiar with the word...

Sorry but I've never heard of...

Sorry, I didn't catch...

I'm afraid I'm still not (quite) sure what the question means.

I'm sorry but I didn't understand the last part of the question.

Problems with vague questions

I'm afraid I'm not clear if you are asking... or...

It depends what you mean by '...' (but...)

Problems with memory

I'm afraid I don't remember.

Sorry but nothing is coming to mind.

Mismatches between the question and your situation

Actually, I've never... (but...)

Unfortunately, there's no (real)... in my... (but...)

I'm afraid I can't (really/ exactly) answer that question because... (but...)

Sorry but that question doesn't really make sense for me, due to...

Can I talk about ... instead? (I don't really remember much about...)

Can I pick a third option?

Ask about any vocabulary you can't understand, trying to make suitable questions from that vocabulary each time.

Do the brainstorming task below.

Without looking above, brainstorm suitable phrases for dealing with difficult to answer questions.

Do the first game again, but this time with the suggested questions below, and without looking at the phrases above.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One vocabulary to make questions from

Vocabulary for talking about names

nickname
named after
abbreviation

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

postgraduate
preschool/ kindergarten/ nursery school
cram (school)
primary school
pass (a test) (with flying colours)
scraped through (an exam)
drop (out)
fellow alumni
learn (poetry) by heart
take notes

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

hometown
flat
host family
brought up
city centre
suburbs/ outskirts
(good) transport connections/ easy access
dream home/ ideal home
green space(s)

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

get on/ get along (well)
(ex-)classmate(s)
(ex-)colleague/ workmate/ co-worker
best friend/ BFF/ bestie
be strict/ tell off
take after
extended family/ relations/ relatives
ancestor(s)
look up to

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

take place
coming of age
marked
fireworks/ firework displays
wedding (ceremony/ reception)
traditional festival(s)

(high school) reunion

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

public transport/ public transportation
overseas/ abroad/ foreign countries
by bicycle/ coach/ shared taxi/ tram/...
on foot

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

based on
animation/ cartoons
directed by
comedy/ stand-up/ sitcom/ sketch show
follow
soap opera
telly addict/ couch potato

Vocabulary for talking about music

contemporary music
chart music
classical music
folk music/ traditional music
hit record
drown out/ block out
world music

Vocabulary for talking about work

be promoted
side job
in charge of/ responsible for
between jobs/ on the dole

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

take up
go out with
days off
unwind/ chill/ laze around
window shopping
meet up with
keep fit
have a lie in
housework/ chores
stay in/ stay (at) home

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, write as much suitable vocabulary as you can in each category below, concentrating on high-level language. Many answers not above are also possible.

Vocabulary for talking about names

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

Vocabulary for talking about music

Vocabulary for talking about work

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

Look above, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class or with vocab lists.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested questions

Note that these are not necessarily realistic exam questions, but are just practice of useful words and expressions for the exam.

Vocabulary for talking about names

- Do you have a nickname?
- Are you named after anyone?
- Do you use any abbreviations of your name?

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

- Do you want to get any postgraduate qualifications?
- Did you go to preschool?
- Have you ever attended cram school?
- Did you enjoy primary school?
- Have you ever passed a test with flying colours?
- Have you ever scraped through an exam?
- Have you ever wanted to drop out of a course?
- Do you usually cram for exams?
- Are you in touch with any fellow alumni?
- Do you enjoy learning poetry by heart?
- Are you good at taking notes?

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

- How often you visit your hometown?
- Do you live in a house or flat?
- Would you like to stay with a host family?
- Where were you brought up?
- Would you prefer to live in the city centre or the suburbs?
- Does where you live have good transport connections?
- What would your dream home be like?
- Are there any nice green spaces near where you live?

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

- Do you get on well with your classmates and/ or colleagues?
- How did you meet your best friend?
- Were your parents strict when you were younger?
- Who do you take after?
- How often do you meet your extended family?
- Do you know much about your ancestors?
- Is there anyone who you really look up to?

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

- Do any festivals take place near where you live?
- How is coming of age marked in your culture?
- When is it traditional to have fireworks in your country?
- What would be the perfect wedding?
- Do you enjoy taking part in traditional festivals and celebrations?
- Would you go to a high school reunion?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

Is there good public transport in your town?

How do you prefer to travel overseas?

Do you prefer to travel by bicycle or on foot?

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

Are there any movies based on your favourite books?

How much time did you spend watching animation when you were younger?

Are many of your favourite movies directed by the same person?

What kind of comedy do you prefer, stand-up, sitcoms or sketch shows?

Do you follow any soap operas?

Would you describe yourself as a telly addict?

Vocabulary for talking about music

Do you like most contemporary chart music?

Were you taught much about classical music at school?

Do people your age in your country like folk music?

What was the last hit record that you really liked?

Do you ever use music to drown out other noise?

Do you like any world music?

Vocabulary for talking about work

Would you like to be promoted?

Have you ever had a side job?

What kinds of projects would you like to be in charge of?

How would you spend your time if you were between jobs?

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

Are there any new hobbies that you'd like to take up?

What do you usually do when you go out with your family or friends?

How do you usually spend your days off?

What do you usually do to unwind?

Do you enjoy window shopping?

How often do you meet up with your friends?

Do you do anything to keep fit?

How often do you have a lie in?

When do you do most of your housework?

What do you do if you stay in on a Saturday night?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One longer phrases card games

Instructions for teachers

Give students just the edge (right-hand and left-hand) cards to put together to make basic phrases for answering IELTS Speaking Part One questions. After they have tried to put those together for five or ten minutes, also give them the middle cards (in **bold**) to check and expand on their answers.

If they get stuck, you can:

- tell them that if they can't put bold cards in the middle somewhere, they probably got the basic phrases wrong
- read out two parts of some of the sentences

If any group finishes before the others, ask them to read the short and long versions of the phrases out loud to make sure that they all make sense. They could then read them out to the class for the other groups to copy and/ or give feedback on.

After checking with an un-cut-up copy of the worksheet and perhaps doing the brainstorming task, they can then test each other by:

- reading out a phrase with one bit missing
- reading out one part and helping their partner make the whole phrase
- reading out the name of a function from the brainstorming stage and helping their partner make suitable phrases
- dealing out the cards and using those words to answer Speaking Part 1 questions

Cards to cut up/ Suggested answers

Sorry, I	still	don't understand the question, can you repeat it?
If I understand	you/ the question/ correctly	, you want me to tell you...
No one's	ever	asked me that before.
It's difficult to say	for sure	, but I guess...
I don't remember it	exactly/ well/ myself	, but I've been told that...
To be	perfectly	honest,...

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How can I	best	answer that question? Well,...
I'm not sure the	exact/ proper	English expression, but...
And talking about movies, I	absolutely	adore/ love/ detest/ loathe...
I'm a	great/ huge/ obsessive	fan of...
I'm	quite/ very/ not so	fond of...
My	all-time/ least	favourite actor is...
I spend	quite	a lot of time playing...
When	-ever	I get the chance, I like to...
When I was in my	early/ mid/ late	teens/ twenties/...s,...
When I was in	the first year of	primary school/ secondary school/ ... school,...
I'm meeting	up	with some friends and...
In the	very near/ near/ distant	future, I'm going to...
It's difficult to explain	in English/ even in my own language	, but I would probably describe it as...
The	direct/ literal/ usual/ best	translation is...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

First without help, brainstorm as many suitable phrases as you can into the gaps below.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

Talking about (distant and recent) past times phrases

Talking about the future (arrangements, plans, predictions, desires, etc) phrases

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

*Use the cards to help, starting with just the **middle cards in bold**.*

Compare with the suggested answers, brainstorm more, then compare your extra answers as a class or with lists of phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

- “Sorry, I (still) don't understand the question, can you repeat it?”
- “If I understand (you/ the question/ correctly), you want me to tell you...?”

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

- “No one's (ever) asked me that before.”

Vague answers/ Weak answers

- “It's difficult to say (for sure), but I guess...”
- “I don't remember it (exactly/ well/ myself), but I've been told that...”

Strong language/ Strong answers

- “To be (perfectly) honest,...”

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

- “How can I (best) answer that question? Well,...”
- “I'm not sure the (exact/ proper) English expression, but...”

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

- “And talking about movies, I (absolutely) adore/ love/ detest/ loathe...”
- “I'm a (great/ huge/ obsessive) fan of...”
- “I'm (quite/ very/ not so) fond of...”
- “My (all-time/ least) favourite actor is...”

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

- “I spend (quite) a lot of time playing...”
- “When(ever) I get the chance, I like to...”

Talking about (distant and recent) past times phrases

- “When I was in my (early/ mid/ late) teens/ twenties/...s,...”
- “When I was in (the first year of) primary/ secondary school,...”

Talking about the future (arrangements, plans, predictions, desires, etc) phrases

- “I'm meeting (up) with some friends and...”
- “In the (very near/ near/ distant) future, I'm going to...”

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

- “It's difficult to explain (in English/ even in my own language), but I would probably describe it as...”
- “The (direct/ literal/ usual/ best) translation is...”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Making IELTS Speaking Part One questions games

Brainstorming IELTS Speaking Part One questions challenge

Choose a card below. Take turns asking and answering questions matching that card until someone gives up, asks the same question, or asks a question that is unsuitable because:

- it's too personal/ taboo
- the other person can't answer it (because they've never had that experience, etc)
- it couldn't be answered by almost anyone
- it more like a Speaking Part 3 question (opinions about the world in general/ not personal)

Take turns doing the same with other cards until your teacher stops you. If you are scoring, the last person to make a suitable question based on each card gets one point. Your teacher will tell you if you should just use one kind of card, use any card you like, or move through the different kinds of cards.

Ask about any cards you had difficult making questions from, then do the same with the cards face down, or do the same but combining a topic card and one other card each time.

IELTS Speaking Part One questions ask and tell

Ask a question based on a topic, type of question or question stem below, then flip a coin to see if you have to answer it yourself (heads) or can ask it to someone else (tails, for "tell").

IELTS Speaking Part One truth or dare

Choose a topic, type of question or question stem below. Ask a question to your partner, then decide if you want to answer the same question (truth) or you want another question made with the same topic or question stem (dare). You then have to answer that question.

IELTS Speaking Part One exam practice

Practice the same kinds of questions but in exam format, asking about two topics below with two or three questions on each.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Topic cards

<u>Arts/ Books/ Media</u>	<u>Friends/ Family/ People</u>	<u>Hobbies/ Interests/ Free time</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
<u>(Foreign) language(s)</u>	<u>Festivals/ Celebrations</u>	<u>Science/ Technology/ Internet</u>	<u>Studies/ Education</u>
<u>Transport/ Travel</u>	<u>Work/ Career</u>	<u>Food and drink</u>	<u>Personality/ Character</u>
<u>Accommodation/ Home</u>	<u>Neighbourhood/ Local area</u>	<u>Holidays/ Vacations</u>	<u>Health and fitness/ Sport/ Exercise</u>

Type of question cards

<i>Likes and dislikes/ Preferences/ Interests</i>	<i>Habits/ Routines</i>	<i>Present/ Now</i>
<i>Abilities/ Skills/ Strengths and weaknesses</i>	<i>People in your town/ country</i>	<i>Experiences/ Past and present</i>
<i>Distant past/ First time/ Childhood</i>	<i>Recent past/ Last time</i>	<i>Future plans/ Arrangements</i>
<i>Future predictions</i>	<i>Future desires/ Ambitions</i>	<i>Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagination</i>

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Question stem cards

Are there any... that you would like to...?
Are you... (or...) at the moment (or are you...)?
Are your friends (mostly)...?
Do you enjoy...?
Do you find it easy/ hard to...?
Do you have any plans to...?/ How long are you planning to...?
Do you have (a/ any/ many)...?
Do you live...?
Do you think you will... (someday)?
Do you (ever/ often)... (much/ a lot)?
Do you... more or less than when you were a child?
Has... changed (much) in recent years/ since...?
Have you (ever/ always)...?
How do you (usually)...?
How do you (most) like to...?/ How do you prefer to... (... or...)?
How is... changing?
How long have you...?
How popular is/ are...?
How well... you...?
If you could..., w...?
Is there anything you dislike about...?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Is there anywhere you...?
Is... important to you?/ How important is... to you?
On what occasions... you...?
Tell me something about your...
What changes would you like to make to your...?/ What changes would improve...?
What did you do...?
What do you find most difficult about...?
What do you like most about...?/ What are the best things about...?
What do you think you will be doing...?
What is the most famous...?
What is the most important...?
What is... like?
What kind of... do people in your town (usually)...?
What kind of/ What sort of/ What type of... you...?
What was the last... you...?
What would your dream/ ideal ... be (like)?
When did you last...?/ When was the last time you...?
When do you think you will (next)...?
Which is more important to you, ... or ...?
Would you say ... is a good place to...?
Would you ... if you could?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

More ambitious language in IELTS Speaking Part One

Listen to your teacher read out pairs of words, pairs of expressions or pairs of phrases, and say which is more likely to impress the examiner/ show the examiner your good level of English. If you are not sure, think about which one is too simple/ too basic/ too low level, and choose the other.

In small groups, work together to circle the higher-level option on each line below.

Try to make rules about what kinds of words, expressions and phrases are generally more impressive in IELTS Speaking Part One, then check that the ones which you chose match those rules.

Try to find examples of each of these good things and use that to continue checking your answers:

- more specific/ more accurate/ communicates more information
- more idiomatic/ more casual/ usually only spoken English (phrasal verbs, etc)
- more formal/ more academic (long words from Latin, words with prefixes or suffixes, etc)
- probably not known by lower-level students (e.g. not known by most Intermediate students/ B1 students)
- Advanced language (usually covered at higher levels such as Cambridge Advanced textbooks)
- more natural ways of saying something
- more succinct ways of explaining something (without using simpler language)

Check as a class.

Test each other in small groups:

- do the same reading out two options and choosing the most ambitious activity
- read out the less ambitious option and help your partner change it to something more specific, more idiomatic, etc (with other higher-level options also okay)
- read out the name of one of the categories and help your partner come up with high level language of that kind (including suitable things not below)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Functional language

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

I'm afraid I couldn't catch the last word./ Sorry, I don't understand the last word.

Sorry, I don't know what... is./ Sorry, I'm not familiar with...

Commenting on the question phrases

That's a difficult question./ That's a tricky one.

Vague answers/ Weak answers

About fifty percent of my friends.../ Approximately half of my friends...

It was a long time ago, but I think.../ It was ages ago, but I reckon...

Strong language/ Strong answers

To be honest,.../ To be perfectly frank,...

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

How can I best answer that question? Well,.../ Let me think.

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

I don't like.../ I totally detest...

I like.../ I'm really into...

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

I'm absolutely awful at.../ I'm bad at...

Talking about the present (habits/ routines and now) phrases

I always.../ I make sure that I... without fail.

at the moment/ now

Talking about the (distant and recent) past phrases

the day before yesterday/ two days ago

recently/ the other day

Talking about the future phrases

I want to.../ What I really want to do is...

I confidently expect to.../ I will...

in the very near future/ soon

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

Sure, all the time./ Yes, I do.

Giving reasons phrases

because.../ I'm not really sure why, but perhaps the reason is...

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

In English, it's.../ The best translation is probably...

Topics

Talking about your education

I dropped out of.../ I quit...

uni/ university

BSc/ degree

exam/ finals

cram/ study

Talking about places

I was brought up in.../ when I was a child, I lived in...

apartment/ studio flat

in my neighbourhood/ near my house

Talking about people/ relationships

I take after my mum./ I'm similar to my mother.

I got on with my baby sister./ I had a good relationship with my youngest sister.

my maternal grandmother/ my mother's mother

one of my workmates/ someone in my company

my in-laws/ my wife's family

Talking about festivals and celebrations

It happens.../ It takes place...

It is one week long./ It lasts for a week.

dress up/ wear special clothes

Talking about transport and travel

It took me around an hour to get here./ My home is an hour from here.

overseas/ to other countries

Talking about movies and TV

sci-fi/ science fiction

comedy/ rom-com

murder mystery/ whodunit

Talking about music

It was a big hit in the early seventies./ It was popular in 1973.

Talking about your work

I have to talk to customers./ I'm responsible for dealing with customers.

I'm currently working on.../ My present project is...

between jobs/ not working

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies

I go out for a drink with some mates./ I go to the pub with my friends.

I'd like to start gardening./ I'm interested in taking up gardening.

I get up late./ I have a lie-in.

I chill out./ I relax.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Functional language

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

I'm afraid I couldn't catch the last word./ Sorry, I don't understand the last word.

Sorry, I don't know what... is./ Sorry, I'm not familiar with...

Commenting on the question phrases

That's a difficult question./ That's a tricky one.

Vague answers/ Weak answers

About fifty percent of my friends.../ Approximately half of my friends...

It was a long time ago, but I think.../ It was ages ago, but I reckon...

Strong language/ Strong answers

To be honest,.../ To be perfectly frank,...

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

How can I best answer that question? Well,.../ Let me think.

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

I don't like.../ I totally detest...

I like.../ I'm really into...

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

I'm absolutely awful at.../ I'm bad at...

Talking about the present (habits/ routines and now) phrases

I always.../ I make sure that I... without fail.

at the moment/ now

Talking about the (distant and recent) past phrases

the day before yesterday/ two days ago

recently/ the other day

Talking about the future phrases

I want to.../ What I really want to do is...

I confidently expect to.../ I will...

in the very near future/ soon

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

Sure, all the time./ Yes, I do.

Giving reasons phrases

because.../ I'm not really sure why, but perhaps the reason is...

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

In English, it's.../ The best translation is probably...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Topics

Talking about your education

I dropped out of.../ I quit...

uni/ university

BSc/ degree

examination/ finals

cram/ study

Talking about places

I was brought up in.../ when I was a child, I lived in...

apartment/ studio flat

in my neighbourhood/ near my house

Talking about people/ relationships

I take after my mum./ I'm similar to my mother.

I got on with my baby sister./ I had a good relationship with my youngest sister.

my maternal grandmother/ my mother's mother

one of my workmates/ someone in my company

my in-laws/ my wife's family

Talking about festivals and celebrations

It happens.../ It takes place...

It is one week long./ It lasts for a week.

dress up/ wear special clothes

Talking about transport and travel

It took me around an hour to get here./ My home is an hour from here.

overseas/ to other countries

Talking about movies and TV

sci-fi/ science fiction

comedy/ rom-com

murder mystery/ whodunit

Talking about music

It was a big hit in the early seventies./ It was popular in 1973.

Talking about your work

I have to talk to customers./ I'm responsible for dealing with customers.

I'm currently working on.../ My present project is...

between jobs/ not working

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies

I go out for a drink with some mates./ I go to the pub with my friends.

I'd like to start gardening./ I'm interested in taking up gardening.

I get up late./ I have a lie-in.

I chill out./ I relax.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage 1

Write better ways of saying these things. Answers not above are also possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Sorry, I don't understand the last word.

Sorry, I don't know what... is.

Commenting on the question phrases

That's a difficult question.

Vague answers/ Weak answers

About fifty percent of my friends...

It was a long time ago, but I think...

Strong language/ Strong answers

To be honest,...

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Let me think.

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

I don't like...

I like...

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

I'm bad at...

Talking about the present (habits/ routines and now) phrases

I always...

now

Talking about the (distant and recent) past phrases

two days ago

recently

Talking about the future phrases

I want to...

I will...

soon

(More interesting/ natural) answers to yes/ no questions

Yes, I do.

Giving reasons phrases

because...

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

In English, it's...

Talking about your education

I quit...
university
degree
examination
study

Talking about places

when I was a child, I lived in...
apartment
near my house

Talking about people/ relationships

I'm similar to my mother.
I had a good relationship with my youngest sister.
my mother's mother
someone in my company
my wife's family

Talking about festivals and celebrations

It happens...
It is one week long.
wear special clothes

Talking about transport and travel

My home is an hour from here.
to other countries

Talking about movies and TV

science fiction
comedy
murder mystery

Talking about music

It was popular in 1973.

Talking about your work

I have to talk to customers.
My present project is...
not working

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies

I go to the pub with my friends.
I'd like to start gardening.
I get up late.
I relax.

Compare to above. Many answers not above are also possible.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage 2

Write as many different words, expressions and phrases as you can for each category below. Many things not above are also possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

Talking about the present (habits/ routines and now) phrases

Talking about the (distant and recent) past phrases

Talking about the future phrases

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

Giving reasons phrases

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about your education

Talking about places

Talking about people/ relationships

Talking about festivals and celebrations

Talking about transport and travel

Talking about movies and TV

Talking about music

Talking about your work

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies

Look above for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Sharing useful vocabulary for IELTS Speaking Part One

For homework or on your own, try to write vocabulary for the topics below to describe your own accommodation etc in a way which gives specific answers and shows your high level of English. For each topic you could think about:

- present situation/ habits
- (recent/ memorable) experiences
- childhood/ when you were younger
- future (plans, desires, predictions, etc)
- likes/ preferences
- dislikes/ bad experiences
- those of people you know (friends, family, etc)

You can use a dictionary to help.

Share some vocabulary for how you can describe the personal topics below with impressive language, writing down anything which your partner says which is also useful for you. Only write words and expressions which you are likely to be able to use because they relate to your own life, and concentrate on advanced vocab.

Useful phrases for discussing the vocabulary

Useful phrases for sharing your choices

- I wrote the word/ expression... (which is.../ which means...) (because...) (and you might be able to use it in the exam too because...)
- I recommend trying to use the word/ expression... because...
- I think most people would find the word/ expression... to be useful (in Speaking Part One) because...

Useful phrases for commenting on your partner's choices

- That's really useful for me too (because...) I'll write that down.
- That's a really good word/ expression, but I don't think I could use that (to describe...) (because...)
- I could (also) use that to describe my..., but I think the word/ expression ... might be more useful/ more specific/ more impressive/ more... (because...)
- I don't think that is the right word (to describe.../ to mean...) I think that it would be better to say...

When you finish comparing in pairs, share some vocab that you both wrote with the whole class and see if they wrote down or want to write down the same things.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Vocabulary to describe your (present, past and future) home/ accommodation

Vocabulary to describe your (present, past and future) friends and family

Vocabulary to describe your (present, past and future) work and studies

Vocabulary to describe your (present, past and future) travel

Vocabulary to describe your (present, past and future) arts and media

Vocabulary to describe your (present, past and future) free time

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Take turns using these question stems to ask questions about one topic from above, looking at the lists of vocabulary to help you with your answers if you like:

1. Are there any... that you would like to...?
2. Are you...ing (...) at the moment (or are you...)?
3. Are... important in your culture?/ Is... important in your culture?
4. Can you tell me about the kind of... that you...?
5. Can you tell me something about your...?
6. Can you...?
7. Did you... when you...?
8. Do you (often/ ever/ sometimes)...?
9. Do you enjoy...?
10. Do you find it easy to...?
11. Do you have any plans...?
12. Do you have...?
13. Do you like...?
14. (In general) do you prefer... or...?
15. Do you think you will... someday?
16. Do you want to... in the future?
17. Do you... more or less than when you were a child?
18. Do you... when you...?
19. Has... changed (much) since.../ in recent years?
20. Have you (ever/ always)...?
21. How did you become interested in...?
22. How did your parents...?
23. How do you (most) like to...?
24. How do you (usually)...?
25. How important is... to you?/ How important is it for you to...?
26. How is... changing?
27. How long are you planning to...?
28. How long do you think you will continue...?
29. How long have you.../ been ...ing (...)?
30. How much... do you...?
31. How often do you...?
32. How popular is/ are...?
33. How well do/ can you...?
34. How... are you (...)?
35. If you could..., wh... would you choose?
36. In general, do you...?
37. Is there anything you dislike about...?
38. Is there anything you'd like to.../ Is there a... you'd like to... in the future?
39. Is your... ...?
40. On what occasions do you/ would you...?
41. Tell me (something) about your...
42. Wh... do your parents...?
43. What are your plans for...?
44. What are/ were the best things about...?
45. What changes would you like to make to your...?/ What changes would improve...?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

46. What did you do...?
47. What do you (most) like about...?
48. What do you find most difficult about...?
49. What do you like about...?
50. What do you think you will do...?
51. What do you usually do...?
52. What don't you like about...?
53. What is the most.../ the...est...?
54. What is your favourite...?
55. What is... like?
56. What makes a good... (for you)?
57. What sort(s)/ type(s) of... do you...?
58. What was the last... you...?
59. What was your favourite...?
60. What would your dream/ ideal ... be (like)?
61. What's the most interesting...?
62. What... do you hope to... in ten years?
63. When did you last...?
64. When do you think you will (next)...?
65. When was the last time you...?
66. When you..., do you...?
67. Where are you...?
68. Where do you (prefer to)...?
69. Where would you go to...?
70. Where... your family...?
71. Which is more important to you, ... or ...?
72. Which... did you... when you were a child?
73. Which... do you usually...?
74. Who (in your family) (normally)...?
75. Who do you... (with)?
76. Why did you choose...?
77. Would you like to... (in the future)?
78. Would you prefer to... (or.../ than...)?
79. Would you say... is a good place to...?
80. Would you... if you could?

When you have no more ideas for questions with different stems above, do the same for another topic.

Ask about any question stems you don't understand, couldn't use, etc.

Do the same for these other Speaking Part One topics: books, dancing, exercise/ sport, festivals/ celebrations, food and drinking/ cooking, health, keeping in contact, local area/ neighbourhood/ neighbours, music/ musical instruments, names, photography, technology/ the internet, and weather.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Checking/ clarifying in IELTS Speaking Part One

Take turns asking all the questions from one topic below, adding back up questions if any of the first answers are quite short. Don't look at the questions when you are answering.

Introduction

Can I see some ID?
Could I just check your name?
Which part is your first name?

Friends and family

How many people are there in your family?
Did you get on well with your family when you were growing up?
Would you like to have a large family?

Hobbies and free time

What do you usually do in the evenings?
How did you spend your free time when you were at secondary school?
Do you enjoy any sports?

Food and drink

Can you cook?
What's your favourite dish?
What is the most famous dish from your area?

Work

Have you ever had a job?
Are you working?
What job would you like to do in the future?

Studies

Are you studying anything at the moment?
Is it a difficult subject?
Is there anything you dislike about your studies?

IELTS and English

What do you want to do after you take the IELTS test?
Did you enjoy English at school?
How long have you been studying English?

Hometown

Where are you from?
Where did you grow up?
Do you often visit your hometown?

Do the same, but this time (double-)check the meaning of each question before you answer it (even if you really understand). Try to use different checking/ clarifying phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Match the questions above to the answers below.

- Apart from English?
- Are you asking me about doing sports, or just watching them?
- Can I check if you mean continuously or in total?
- Can I talk about my summer job, even though I'm not doing it right now?
- Could twice a year be called often? I'm not sure. That's more average than often, I guess.
- Do you mean my full name or just my first name?
- Does preparing a salad count as cooking? If so, I guess I can.
- Does that include part-time jobs?
- Does that mean where I was born, or where I grew up?
- Does the question mean favourite dish to cook, or to eat?
- I guess you mean weekday evenings, in which case my answer would be that I just watch TV and sleep.
- I suppose you mean given name, even though some people put it last.
- I'm not quite sure what ages you are asking about.
- If by dislike you mean hate, nothing really. I don't enjoy giving presentations very much, though.
- If you mean straight after graduation, I'd actually like to go travelling for a while before I start work.
- In terms of workload, it's not that bad. It's quite difficult to understand, though.
- Including me?
- Is a driving license okay?
- Is that the same as junior high school?
- It depends what you mean by enjoy. It was okay, I guess.
- Should I talk about famous in my country, or famous abroad?
- Should I talk about my parents, or my brothers and sisters?
- You mean straight after? Go for a drink!
- You mean when I'm married, right? Probably not.

Underline the parts of the clarifying sentences above which could be used in many situations.

Compare as a class or with the suggested answers.

Try to use similar phrases as you answer other exam questions, e.g. ones from two exams. Then do the same but without looking at the phrases below to help.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Introduction

Can I see some ID? – Is a driving license okay?

Could I just check your name? – Do you mean my full name or just my first name?

Which part is your first name? – I suppose you mean given name, even though some people put it last.

Friends and family

How many people are there in your family? – Including me?

Did you get on well with your family when you were growing up? – Should I talk about my parents, or my brothers and sisters?

Would you like to have a large family? – You mean when I'm married, right? Probably not.

Hobbies and free time

What do you usually do in the evenings? – I guess you mean weekday evenings, in which case my answer would be that I just watch TV and sleep.

How did you spend your free time when you were at secondary school? – Is that the same as junior high school?

Do you enjoy any sports? – Are you asking me about doing sports, or just watching them?

Food and drink

Can you cook? – Does preparing a salad count as cooking? If so, I guess I can.

What's your favourite dish? – Does the question mean favourite dish to cook, or to eat?

What is the most famous dish from your area? – Should I talk about famous in my country, or famous abroad?

Work

Have you ever had a job? – Does that include part-time jobs?

Are you working? – Can I talk about my summer job, even though I'm not doing it right now?

What job would you like to do in the future? – If you mean straight after graduation, I'd actually like to go travelling for a while before I start work.

Studies

Are you studying anything at the moment? – Apart from English?

Is it a difficult subject? – In terms of workload, it's not that bad. It's quite difficult to understand, though.

Is there anything you dislike about your studies? – If by dislike you mean hate, nothing really. I don't enjoy giving presentations very much, though.

IELTS and English

What do you want to do after you take the IELTS test? – You mean straight after? Go for a drink!

Did you enjoy English at school? – It depends what you mean by enjoy. It was okay, I guess.

How long have you been studying English? – Can I check if you mean continuously or in total?

Hometown

Where are you from? – Does that mean where I was born, or where I grew up?

Where did you grow up? – I'm not quite sure what ages you are asking about.

Do you often visit your hometown? – Could twice a year be called often? I'm not sure. That's more average than often, I guess.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Yes no questions in IELTS Speaking Part One games

Warmer – Don't say yes or no game

Take turns asking each other Yes/ No questions made from the question stems below. You lose a point if you say "Yes" or "No", get one point if you answer (truthfully) without those words, and get a second point if your answer is different to any answer in the game so far. Similar words to "yes" and "no" like "not" are okay.

IELTS Speaking Part One yes/ no question stems

1. Are there any... that you would like to...?
2. Are you from...?
3. Are you...ing (...) at the moment?
4. Are your friends (mostly)...?
5. Are... important in your culture?/ Is... important in your culture?
6. Can you...?
7. Did you... when you...?
8. Do you (often/ ever/ sometimes)...?
9. Do you enjoy...?
10. Do you find it easy to...?
11. Do you have any plans...?
12. Do you have...?
13. Do you like...?
14. Do you live...?
15. Do you think you will... someday?
16. Do you want to... in the future?
17. Do you... when you...?
18. Does your hometown...?
19. Has... changed (much) since.../ in recent years?
20. Have you (ever/ always)...?
21. If you could..., would you?
22. In general, do you...?
23. Is there anything you dislike about...?
24. Is there anything you'd like to.../ Is there a... you'd like to... in the future?
25. Is there anywhere you...?
26. Is your hometown...?
27. Is your... ...?
28. Would you like to... (in the future)?
29. Would you say... is a good place to...?
30. Would you... if you could?

Ask about any sentence stems that you couldn't make questions out of, questions which you are not sure that you answered correctly, etc.

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

Try to use as many of the words below as you can when you answer more questions with the same question stems. The underlined ones are probably most useful.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

A couple./ A few./ Several.

Apart from...

As long as.../ Only if.../ Only when.../ Providing...

Fairly./ Somewhat./ Quite a lot.

Generally not./ Not usually.

Hardly at all./ Hardly ever.

(Yeah,) I guess.

I may well.

I suppose so.

I try to avoid it if I can./ Not if I can help it.

I wouldn't necessarily call it.../ I wouldn't say...

It depends.

It's difficult to say.

Maybe (someday).

More or less.

No way!/ Are you kidding?

Not as far as I remember.

Not as much as.../ Not like...

Not at all./ Never./ Not even once.

Not by... standards./ Not compared to...

Not exactly.

Not much.

Not right now.

Not so much./ Not so often.

Not that you'd notice.

Nothing springs to mind.

Obviously not.

Of course (not).

Only if you compare it to.../ Only in comparison to...

Only in so far as...

Probably (not).

Some people might say that.

Some./ Sometimes./ From time to time.

Sort of./ Kind of./ Kinda.

Sure (, why not?)

That's sometimes the case.

That's what I've been told./ That's what I've heard./ (Not) according to...

Very./ Extremely./ (Quite) a lot.

Well, actually...

You could say that.

What is a good answer to a yes/ no question in IELTS Speaking Part One?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Choose good descriptions from this list:

- as long as possible
- natural length/ whatever length is needed to really answer the question
- as short as possible
- just yes or no
- just yes or no + subject + auxiliary verb ("Yes, I have", etc)
- avoiding saying yes or no whenever possible
- sometimes not saying yes or no, depending on your true situation
- mostly thinking about the grammatically correct answer to the question
- mostly thinking about what the questioner wants to know
- sometimes adding something extra after answering the question (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)
- often adding something extra after answering (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)
- usually adding something extra after answering (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)
- always adding something extra after answering (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)

Take turns asking questions from here for three minutes, answering naturally this time.

- Are there any countries that you would like to visit?
- Are you from near here?
- Are you working at the moment?
- Are your friends mostly interested in learning English?
- Can you cook?
- Did you like studying English when you were younger?
- Do you enjoy hiking?
- Do you find it easy to decide where to go on holiday?
- Do you generally buy souvenirs when you go abroad?
- Do you have any plans to visit your family?
- Do you have a large family?
- Do you like meeting new people?
- Do you live in large town?
- Do you think you will live abroad someday?
- Do you usually have enough free time?
- Do you want to make any big purchases in the future?
- Does your hometown have any good places for tourists?
- Has your neighbour changed much in recent years?
- Have you ever lost anything important or expensive?
- Have you always lived in the same area?
- In general, do you cope well with stress?
- Is Christmas important in your culture?
- Is there anything you dislike about using PCs?
- Is there anything you'd like to get rid of?
- Is there anywhere you find particularly relaxing?
- Is your hometown famous for anything?
- Is your neighbourhood very noisy?
- Would you like to move house?
- Would you say that your hometown is a good place to raise a family?
- Would you quit your job if you could?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Rephrasing in IELTS Speaking Part One

One good way of showing your knowledge in all parts of the IELTS exam is using different words rather than repeating. What other ways of describing these things can you think of (synonyms, longer phrases to describe those things, more specific words, etc).

- accommodation
- art
- books
- celebration
- food
- friend
- go to a restaurant
- I'm going to...
- have a good relationship with
- holiday
- holidaymakers
- hometown
- important
- in my childhood
- interested in
- job
- keep fit
- keep in contact with
- leisure activity
- most important
- movie
- movie theater
- neighbourhood
- newspapers and magazines
- normal
- on Saturday and Sunday
- on the Internet
- overseas
- perfect (job/ holiday/ home)
- start something new
- technology
- television
- to review
- transport

Compare your ideas with those below, checking if you've written anything different. "=" means a synonym and things in brackets "()" are other ways of rephrasing such as more specific examples.

Look at some IELTS Academic Writing Part One questions and write the first sentences of the introduction of your answers, rephrasing the questions as much as possible.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

- accommodation = home (house/ flat = apartment/ condo = condominium/ company accommodation/ student halls = student dorm)
- art = visual art (paintings/ sculpture/ modern art/ contemporary art/ Impressionism/ watercolours/ oil painting/ exhibition)
- books (literature/ novels/ non-fiction/ short stories/ biographies/ comic)
- celebration (ceremony/ birthday/ party/ special meal/ family get together/ drinks)
- food = cuisine = diet (dish/ meal/ course)
- friend = mate = buddy (school friend/ good friend/ close friend/ best friend/ ex-colleague/ workmate/ drinking buddy/ fellow graduate)
- go to a restaurant = eat out = go to a restaurant for dinner/ lunch
- I'm going to... = I'm planning to... = I have plans to = I intend to...
- have a good relationship with = get on (well) with = get along with = get on like a house on fire
- holiday = vacation (national holiday/ public holiday/ long weekend/ three-day weekend)
- holidaymakers = tourists = (foreign) visitors (travellers/ tour groups/ day trippers)
- hometown = where I'm from (where I was born/ my family home/ where I was brought up = where I grew up)
- important = crucial/ vital
- in my childhood = when I was a (young) child (when I was younger/ when I was in primary school/ when I was in my early teens/ when I was a toddler)
- interested in = be (really) into = keen on = fascinated by
- job = work = occupation (profession/ part-time job/ temporary job)
- keep fit = do exercise (work out/ go to the gym/ do aerobics)
- keep in contact with = stay in touch with (email/ Skype/ class reunions/ meet up with)
- leisure activity = free time activity (hobby/ interest/ how I use my free time)
- most important = main = chief
- movie = film (thriller/ rom com/ horror/ comedy/ human interest/ drama/ bio-pic/ superhero movie/ sci fi/ fantasy)
- movie theater = cinema = movie house (art cinema/ multiplex)
- neighbourhood = local area = the area where you live = the area near your home
- newspapers and magazines = (paper/ regular) publications = The Press
- normal = usual = typical = everyday
- on Saturday and Sunday = at the weekend/ on weekends (during your days off)
- on the Internet = on the web = online = on the 'Net
- overseas = abroad = in/ to other countries = outside name of your country
- perfect (job/ holiday/ home) = ideal... = dream...
- start something new = try... = take up
- technology = tech (electronics/ high tech/ new gadgets)
- television = TV = the box = the telly
- to review = to revise = to go over
- transport = transportation (public transport/ aeroplane = airplane = plane/ the underground = the subway = the Tube)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Questions you can't exactly answer in IELTS Speaking Part One

Take turns asking and answering questions from below, not looking at the worksheet when it is your turn to answer.

Why did you choose your university major?

What is your typical day like?

How long have lived in this city?

Are you from the country or the city?

What do people your age do in their free time?

What's the most interesting part of your town?

Where is your family from?

What kind of jobs do people in your town do?

Can you tell me something about your hometown?

How is your hometown changing?

What changes would you like to make to your hometown?

What is your hometown famous for?

On what occasions do you eat special meals?

What's your main meal of the day?

What would be your perfect job?

Do you prefer cooking at home or eating in a restaurant?

Why did you choose to take IELTS?

Were there any questions which you couldn't answer, for example because you never eat special meals?

What could you say if the question didn't match your life and so couldn't exactly be answered, e.g. if you didn't go to university?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Match the answers below with the questions above.

- Actually, I was born here.
- Can I pick a third option? I prefer to buy takeout food and take it home, which is kind of between the two.
- Can I talk about Tokyo instead? I don't really remember much about where I was born.
- Frankly, there isn't anything interesting there. The surrounding countryside is nice enough, though.
- I can't speak for most people, but I know a lot of people in tourism.
- I don't think "special" is the right word for it, but we always have KFC on Xmas Day.
- I wouldn't describe it as a choice. Everybody in my company who wants a promotion has to take it, but I suppose I could choose not to be promoted!
- I'm not sure it's possible to generalise, but the people who I know mainly play computer games and go shopping.
- I'm not sure that it's changing right now. It grew a lot in the bubble years of the 1990s, though.
- In my country most people choose the university rather than the major and then just get on the best course they can, so it's not really possible to answer that question.
- Neither, really. I was brought up on the outskirts of a medium-sized town.
- There's no real main meal in my country. All three are about the same size. However, my mother always said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day.
- There's nothing I'd want to change, really. In fact, the exact opposite – I'd like to stop it changing!
- They moved around so much that it is difficult to say, but two of my grandparents were born in Kyushu, which is in the south of Japan.
- To be frank, I'd prefer not to have to work! If I had to choose though, I'd be a pilot.
- To be honest, I don't really have a typical day, but I'm a morning person, so I like to study from early in the morning if I can.
- To be perfectly frank, nothing at all. The nearest thing to a claim to fame is that a minor pop star of the 1980s was born there, but she left when she was very young.

Underline the phrases above that you could use to answer other questions, then brainstorm similar phrases.

Compare your answers with the answer key and/ or as a class.

Read out a question and the answer with one of the underlined words missing, and see if your partner can complete it.

Ask and answer the questions again, but this time using similar phrases to explain why you can't exactly answer the question (even if you could really answer the question).

Switch partners and ask and answer the questions naturally, only explaining why you can't exactly answer if that is really the case. This time do it like the exam, with one person asking the questions for three minutes and with follow-up questions if the first answer is short.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

- Why did you choose your university major? – In my country most people choose the university rather than the major and then just get on the best course they can, so it's not really possible to answer that question.
- What is your typical day like? – To be honest, I don't really have a typical day, but I'm a morning person, so I like to study from early in the morning if I can.
- How long have lived in this city? – Actually, I was born here.
- Are you from the country or the city? – Neither, really. I was brought up on the outskirts of a medium-sized town.
- What do people your age do in their free time? – I'm not sure it's possible to generalise, but the people who I know mainly play computer games and go shopping.
- What's the most interesting part of your town? – Frankly, there isn't anything interesting there. The surrounding countryside is nice enough, though.
- Where is your family from? – They moved around so much that it is difficult to say, but two of my grandparents were born in Kyushu, which is in the south of Japan.
- What kind of jobs do people in your town do? – I can't speak for most people, but I know a lot of people in tourism.
- Can you tell me something about your hometown? – Can I talk about Tokyo instead? I don't really remember much about where I was born.
- How is your hometown changing? – I'm not sure that it's changing right now. It grew a lot in the bubble years of the 1990s, though.
- What changes would you like to make to your hometown? – There's nothing I'd want to change, really. In fact, the exact opposite – I'd like to stop it changing!
- What is your hometown famous for? – To be perfectly frank, nothing at all. The nearest thing to a claim to fame is that a minor pop star of the 1980s was born there, but she left when she was very young.
- On what occasions do you eat special meals? – I don't think "special" is the right word for it, but we always have KFC on Xmas Day.
- What's your main meal of the day? – There's no real main meal in my country. All three are about the same size. However, my mother always said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day.
- What would be your perfect job? – To be frank, I'd prefer not to have to work! If I had to choose though, I'd be a pilot.
- Do you prefer cooking at home or eating in a restaurant? – Can I pick a third option? I prefer to buy takeout food and take it home, which is kind of between the two.
- Why did you choose to take IELTS? – I wouldn't describe it as a choice. Everybody in my company who wants a promotion has to take it, but I suppose I could choose not to be promoted!

Suggested extra phrases

- As a matter of fact,...
- In my case,...
- I can't exactly answer that question, but...
- It's impossible to say (for sure), but I guess...
- There's no way of knowing (for sure), but I suppose...
- Well, the nearest thing I can give to an answer is...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One tactics roleplay cards

Take five roleplay cards, choose one, then do that thing when you answer IELTS Speaking Part One questions from your partner. Whenever they think they know, your partner will try to guess what you are doing/ what your roleplay card says. If they are wrong, continue doing the same thing, more extremely if you can. If they are right, together discuss how good or bad that thing is, and what language you could use to do it if it is something that you should do. Take one more roleplay card so that you still have five choices next time, then listen to your partner doing the same thing. Take turns doing the same thing until your teacher stops you.

When you finish, look at the whole list of roleplays and discuss as a class which are best and worst things to do in Speaking Part One.

Roleplay cards

Thank the examiner for the questions.

Check what each question means (with a different phrase each time if possible).

Check what each question means (being specific about what the problem is each time).

Ask the examiner to repeat each question.

Use body language to show you don't understand, waiting in silence for it to be explained.

Refuse to answer the questions (because they are too personal, impossible to answer, etc).

Think carefully (in silence) before you answer each question.

Think carefully (filling all silence) before you answer each question.

Comment on your understanding of each question at the beginning of your answers.

Comment on how difficult every question is (with a different phrase each time if possible).

Comment on how unusual each question is (with a different phrase each time if possible).

Speak slowly and carefully.

Speak as quickly as you can.

Make each answer as short as you can.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Give a short answer to each question, then add more detail.

Make each answer as long as you can.

Give a reason for every answer.

Talk about the right topics, but don't actually answer the questions.

Give (very) soft/ vague/ unsure answers.

Give (very) strong/ opinionated/ passionate/ negative answers.

Give general opinions on those topics (avoiding talking about yourself).

Use words from your language, then explain them in English.

Often correct yourself/ change your answers.

Use lots of body language/ gestures.

Check if each answer was okay (using different phrases each time if you can).

Ask questions back to the examiner.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One dice game

Take turns rolling the dice twice to decide what kind of IELTS Speaking Part One-style personal question your partner should ask you:

First roll of the dice

- 1 = Arts and media
- 2 = IELTS and language studies
- 3 = Hobbies, interests and free time
- 4 = Work and studies
- 5 = Hometown
- 6 = Accommodation

Second roll of the dice

- 1 = Distant past
- 2 = Recent past
- 3 = Past and present
- 4 = Present
- 5 = Future plans or arrangements
- 6 = Future predictions/ imagination or desires

Work together to write six Speaking Part One-style personal questions that together combine all six topics and times/ tenses.

Compare with the suggested questions below. Many other questions are possible, so please check if you made different questions.

Ask about any questions you don't know how to answer, etc.

Play the same dice game, but this time with the examiner reading out the questions below which match the numbers on the dice.

Use the script on the last page to ask similar questions in exam format.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested questions

1. Arts and media

1. Did you like art when you were a child? (What other subjects did you like?)
2. When did you last go to an exhibition? (How was it?)
3. Have you ever bought any art? (What kind of art would you be interested in buying?)
4. Are you reading anything at the moment? (What kinds of books do you usually like?)
5. Do you have any plans to see a movie? (Do you prefer to go to the cinema or watch DVDs?)
6. Do you think your taste in music will change as you get older? (Why/ Why not?)/ Are there any exhibitions you would like to see? (What is the best place for exhibitions in this city?)

2. Language studies and IELTS

1. Did you enjoy language classes at school? (Why/ Why not?)
2. When did you last speak English outside the classroom? (Did you have any problems communicating?)
3. How long have you been studying English? (Has your English improved much recently?)/ Have you studied any other languages? (Which languages are popular in your country?)
4. How long do you spend studying and using foreign languages in an average week? (Do you think that's enough?)/ Why are you taking the IELTS exam?/ Why is it important for you to learn English?
5. What are you going to do after you get the score you need in IELTS?
6. Do you want to study any other languages?

3. Hobbies, interests and free time

1. How did you spend your evenings when you were at primary school?
2. Did you do anything last weekend? (Was that typical for you?)/ What did you do last night?
3. Have you had much free time this week? (What did you do with the time you had?)
4. Do you have any hobbies?/ How much free time do you have?/ What do you like doing in your free time?/ What do you usually do on your days off?
5. Do you have any plans for the weekend?/ Do you have any plans for the next public holiday?
6. What would you do if you had more free time?/ How do you think you will spend your time after you retire?

4. Work and studies

1. What subjects did you like at school? (Why?)
2. When did you last take an exam? (How was it?)
3. How long have you been working where you do/ studying what you do?
4. What do you do?/ Are you working or are you a student?
5. Do you have a career plan?/ Do you have any plans to study abroad?
6. Is there anything you'd like to study in the future?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

5. Hometown

1. Where did you grow up? (How do you feel about that place now?)/ Were you born near here? (Where exactly?)
2. When did you last visit your home town? (Did you enjoy that visit?)
3. Has your hometown changed much recently? (Why do you think that might be the case?)
4. How often do you visit your hometown? (Are you happy with that?) Is your hometown famous for anything?
5. When are you next planning to go back to your hometown?
6. Would you like to live in your hometown when you retire? (Why/ Why not?)/ How will your hometown change in the next ten years, do you think?

6. Accommodation

1. What kind of home did you grow up in?/ What was your childhood home like?
2. When did you last move house? (How was the move?)
3. How long have you been living in your present accommodation?/ Have you ever lived on your own? (Do you think you suit that way of living?)
4. What sort of home do you live in?/ What kind of accommodation do you live in?/ Do you like the place where you are living?
5. Do you have any plans to move? (Why?/ Why not?)
6. What would your perfect home be like?

IELTS Speaking Part One exam practice

Use the questions above to practise this part of the exam. Start with the candidate standing and the examiner using this script:

“Come in and take a seat. Good morning/ afternoon. Can I see your ID?”

*

“Thank you. My name’s _____. Can you tell me your full name, please?”

*

“So, what would you like me to call you?”

*

“Okay (*name*), in the first part of the test, I’d like to ask you a few questions about yourself, if that’s okay.”

*

“Let’s start with (*name of the topic*)”

(examiner asks two or three questions on that topic, mixing up present, past and future and sometimes using follow-up questions – but only if the initial answers are short)

“Now, I’d like to ask you about (*name of the topic*)”

(examiner asks questions on that topic using the follow up questions only if the initial answers are short, stopping after two or three questions or when four or five minutes is up)

*Optional, depending on time: “Okay. Let’s move onto (*name of the topic*)”*

(examiner asks questions until four or five minutes is up)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One coin games

Game 1: IELTS Speaking Part One topics coin game

Choose one of the rows below (at random, with a dice or choosing whichever one you like), then flip a coin to see which topic your partner should ask you a question about:

- Heads = a question on the topic in the left-hand column
- Tails = a question on the topic in the right-hand column.

	Heads	Tails
1	Free time/ Hobbies/ Interests	Work and studies
2	Transport and travel	Accommodation/ Hometown
3	Friends and family	Arts and media
4	Foreign languages	Health and fitness
5	Future plans	Festivals and celebrations
6	Food and drink	Technology and the Internet

Game 2

See the next page below.

Game 3: IELTS Speaking Part One ask and tell coin game

Make a question using a stem on the next page, then flip a coin to check if you can ask the question to someone else (= heads) or if you should answer your question yourself (= tails, for tell).

Game 4: Past, present and future IELTS Speaking Part One questions coin game

Flip a coin and your partner will ask you questions like those below about different times:

Heads = question about the present or past

Tails = question about the future or hypothetical situations (imagining a different life, etc)

Game 5: IELTS Speaking Part One questions about different people coin game

Flip a coin and your partner will ask you a personal question about:

Heads = questions about you

Tails = questions about other people (your family and friends, people in your hometown and neighbourhood, etc)

Game 6: IELTS Speaking Parts One and Three coin game

Flip a coin and your partner will ask you this type of question:

Heads = a personal question (about you, your family, etc, like Speaking Part One)

Tails = a discussion question about the world more generally (society, people your age in your country, etc, like Speaking Part Three)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Game 2: IELTS Speaking Part One question stems coin games

Choose a row from below (perhaps by choosing a random number). Flip a coin to decide if you will answer a question on the left (heads) or on the right (tails). Your partner will ask you a question starting with the words in that box, for example "Do you have any plans for the weekend?" if you chose the first row and then got tails. They may then ask one follow-up question if your first answer was quite short. Then take turns doing the same. You can use the same question stem, but don't ask exactly the same question twice.

	Heads	Tails
1	Do you (often/ ever)...?	Did you... when you...?
2	Can you tell me something about your...?	Can you tell me about the kind of... that you...?
3	Do you enjoy...?	Do you prefer... or...?
4	Do you want to... in the future?	Do you think you will... someday?
5	Do you live...?	Does/ Is your hometown...?
6	How long are you planning to...?	How long do you think you will (continue)...?
7	How do you usually...?	How do you (most) like to...?
8	How often do you...?	How much... do you...?
9	Do you have any plans...?	Is there anything you'd like to... in the future?
10	Have you (ever)...?	Do you (ever)...?
11	What are/ were the best things about...?	Is there anything you dislike about...?
12	What do you like doing...?	What do you like about...?
13	Are there any... that you would like to...?	What do you think you will be doing...?
14	What is the most important...?	How important is... to you?
15	What do you usually do...?	What did you do...?
16	What is your favourite...?	What was your favourite...?
17	Can you...?	What do you find most difficult about...?
18	What kind of/ sort of/ type of.... do you...?	What would your dream/ ideal... be (like)?
19	Where are you...?	Where do you...?
20	Are you from...?	Where... your family...?
21	Would you... if you could?	If you could..., wh... would you choose?
22	Would you say... is a good place to...?	What's the most interesting...?
23	Wh... do your parents...?	Who in your family...?
24	When did you last...?	When do you think you will (next)...?
25	How is... changing?	What changes would you like to make...?
26	Are you ...ing (...) at the moment (or...)?	How long have you...?
27	Would you like to... (in the future)?	What... do you hope to... in... years?
28	What is the most famous...?	What is... like?
29	Who do you... with?	What kind of... do people in your town...?

When your teacher stops the game, ask about any questions stems which you couldn't understand, couldn't make a question out of, couldn't answer, or couldn't understand the difference between. Then use similar questions to play the other games on the first page.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One picking numbers games

Choosing IELTS Speaking Part 1 questions game

Choose a number at random between 1 and 66, and your partner will ask you a question using that question stem below.

1. Are there any... that you would like to...?
2. Are you from...?
3. Are you ...ing (...) at the moment (or are you...)?
4. Can I (just) check...?
5. Can you cook?
6. Can you tell me about the kind of... that you...?
7. Can you tell me something about your...?
8. Did you... when you...?
9. Do you (often/ ever)...?
10. Do you enjoy...?
11. Do you have any plans...?
12. Do you have...?
13. Do you live...?
14. Do you prefer... or...?
15. Do you think you will... someday?
16. Do you want to... in the future?
17. Does your hometown...?
18. Have you (ever)...?
19. How do you (most) like to...?
20. How do you usually...?
21. How important is... to you?
22. How is... changing?
23. How long are you planning to...?
24. How long do you think you will continue...?
25. How long have you...?
26. How much... do you...?
27. How often do you...?
28. If you could..., wh... would you choose?
29. Is there anything you dislike about...?
30. Is there anything you'd like to... in the future?
31. Is your hometown...?
32. Wh... do your parents...?
33. What are your plans for...?
34. What are/ were the best things about...?
35. What changes would you like to make to...?
36. What did you do...?
37. What do you find most difficult about...?
38. What do you like about...?
39. What do you like doing...?
40. What do you think you will be doing...?
41. What do you usually do...?
42. What is the most famous...?
43. What is the most important... for you?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

44. What is the most important... in your hometown/ country?
45. What is your favourite...?
46. What is... like?
47. What kind of... do people in your town/ village...?
48. What kind.... do you...?
49. What sort of... do you...?
50. What type of... do you...?
51. What was your favourite...?
52. What would your dream... be (like)?
53. What would your ideal... be (like)?
54. What's the most interesting...?
55. What... do you hope to... in ten years?
56. When did you last...?
57. When do you think you will (next)...?
58. When was the last time you...?
59. Where are you...?
60. Where do you...?
61. Where... your family...?
62. Who do you... with?
63. Who in your family...?
64. Would you like to... (in the future)?
65. Would you say... is a good place to...?
66. Would you... if you could?

Ask about any questions which you couldn't make, couldn't answer, etc.

Work together to make one question from each question stem above, using as many of the different topics below as you can.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Choosing IELTS Speaking Part One topics game

Choose a number between 1 and 25 without looking at this list. Your partner will ask personal questions on that topic until they can't think of any more suitable questions or ask something unsuitable (because it is too personal/ taboo, an opinions question/ a question about life in general like Speaking Part Three, it's impossible to answer that question, etc).

1. Accommodation/ Home
2. Art
3. Books
4. Celebrations
5. Exercise/ Sport
6. Family
7. Festivals
8. Food and drink
9. Free time
10. Friends
11. Health
12. Hobbies and interests
13. Holidays
14. Hometown
15. Language learning
16. Movies
17. Music
18. The Press
19. Studies
20. Technology
21. The Internet
22. Transport and travel
23. TV
24. Work
25. Your local area

When you finish, work together to think of a different question for each topic above.

Choosing things to do during IELTS Speaking Part One game

Choose a number between 1 and 9, look to see which action you chose, then do that thing as much as you can when your partner asks personal questions about a topic above.

1. Checking/ clarifying
2. Commenting on the question
3. Vague answer/ Weak answer
4. Strong language/ Strong answers
5. Thinking aloud/ Filling silence
6. Giving reasons
7. Explaining (more)
8. Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong info
9. Ending (long) answers

When you finish, work together to brainstorm suitable phrases to do the things above.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One functions card game

Ask your partner Speaking Part One exam questions and give a card from below to that person every time that they do that thing with different language to what anyone has said so far (or write their name on that card if the worksheet isn't cut up). Small differences to what people have said before are also okay. The winner is the person with most cards when all the cards have been used or when the teacher stops the activity.

When you finish, brainstorm suitable phrases for doing the things on the cards.

Compare as a class or with lists of phrases.

Change partner and do the same thing again, first looking at the brainstormed phrases to help, then with no help.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Cards to cut up or write names on

checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying
checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying
checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying	checking/ clarifying
commenting on the question	commenting on the question	commenting on the question	commenting on the question
vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers
vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers
vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers	vague/ soft/ weak answers
strong answers	strong answers	strong answers	strong answers
strong answers	strong answers	strong answers	strong answers
thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence
thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence
thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence
adding more information	adding more information	adding more information	adding more information
giving reasons	giving reasons	giving reasons	giving reasons
giving reasons	giving reasons	giving reasons	giving reasons
giving reasons	giving reasons	giving reasons	giving reasons
explaining things	explaining things	explaining things	explaining things
explaining things	explaining things	explaining things	explaining things

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One functions board game

will + be + v + ing	would like	your area	your dream...	START abroad
when you were	<p><i>Place a counter or write your name on the START square. Someone in the group will ask you an IELTS Speaking Part One question about the topic or using the word(s) in the square that you are on. As you speak, they will tick off the functions below that you use while you are speaking, as long as you use a different phrase from what was said before. When you finish, you will be able to move one square for each function that you used (e.g. six squares if you used six functions, to a maximum of eight squares).</i></p> <p><u>Kinds of phrases that you can get points for:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Checking/ clarifying phrases ● Commenting on the question phrases ● Vague answers/ Weak answers ● Strong language/ Strong answers ● Thinking aloud/ filling silence phrases ● Giving reasons phrases ● Explaining (more) phrases ● Ending (long) answers phrases <p><i>In the real exam you should tell the truth and only do those things if you have to, but in this game just concentrate on using as much of that kind of language as you can. The winner is the person who has moved furthest around the board when the teacher stops the game.</i></p> <p><i>After you finish, work together to brainstorm different phrases for each of the functions above.</i></p>			accommodation/ home
what sort/ kind of				day(s) off/ weekend
TV				art/ media
transport/ travel/ holiday				sport/ exercise/ keep fit
recent past				change
near future				ambition/ goal/ plan
distant past				desires/ wants
distant future				dish/ food
festivals/ celebration(s)				going out
school/ studies				family/ friend(s)
routines				retire
reading				films
prediction(s)				first/ last
now/ at the moment				going to
next				green space(s)
name				have been + ing
music	health/ healthy			
likes/ preferences	hobbies/ interests			
hometown	free time/ leisure			
language(s)	how long			
job/ work	is/ are + ing	in... years	if	IELTS

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One functional language competition

Make sure that you have a different coloured pen or pencil to your partner. Take turns asking IELTS Speaking Part One questions. Whenever you use a new phrase with one of the functions written in the table, you can tick in that box. You can tick in the same box more than once as long as you use different words. If your partner thinks exactly the same phrase has already been used during the game or what you said doesn't have that function, they can cross that tick off. The person with the most ticks when your teacher stops you is the winner.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)
Commenting on the question phrases
(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases
Vague answers/ Weak answers
Strong language/ Strong answers
Giving reasons phrases
Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

When you finish, work together to write down as many useful phrases as you can for the functions above such as the things you said during the speaking game.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One prepositions and determiners pairwork

Work in groups with one Student A and one Student B in each group, sharing a worksheet if there are more than two students. Look at your worksheet but don't show it to the person with the opposite worksheet. Choose one of the sections on your worksheet and read out examples with the word in **bold** missing. Continue giving examples with the same word missing until your partner correctly guesses which one word is missing from all of those examples. They can **only guess once per hint**. If they haven't guessed when you have read out all the example sentences in that section on your worksheet, **make up your own extra example sentences with the same word missing** until they get the right word. If there are still some examples left in that section when they guess correctly, you can come back and use the other clues later.

Swap sheets and do the same thing, this time making sure that you start with the most difficult sections and the most difficult examples (as your partner has already seen those examples).

Look at both sheets and ask about any sentences you don't understand, any other words which you think could go in the part in bold, etc.

Together try to think of and then find prepositions and determiners which have these meanings/ have these uses/ go together with these things. Some have the same answer, and one has more than one answer.

- day/ date
- deadline/ time limit
- leaving somewhere/ starting point
- length of time
- more than a few and less than a lot
- none
- not at home
- one/ any one/ one of many
- point in time/ clock time
- similar
- somewhere inside a space/ somewhere within a larger time such as a season
- this/ that/ you know which one/ only one
- together
- topic/ subject
- way of doing something (travelling, etc)

After doing the brainstorming stage, test each other on the missing prepositions and determiners from one section of that stage (so with a mix of different missing words this time).

Choose one section from the brainstorming stage and help your partner make suitable phrases for it by giving them the beginning of phrases, key words, etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student A

“Sorry, could you say that again **a** little more slowly?”

“That’s **a** tricky one.”

“It was **a** long time ago, but I reckon...”

“I’m **a** total F1 obsessive.”

“I spend quite **a** lot of time making homemade...”

“**After** work, I usually do the shopping and make dinner.”

“It’s scheduled for the day **after** tomorrow.”

“I won’t have time until the week **after** next.”

“I take **after** my father.”

“I don’t have **any** strong feelings about that one way or the other.”

“I expect a reply **any** day now.”

“I didn’t have **any** interest in language learning, but now...”

I don’t have **any** actual hobbies, but I’m quite interested in history.

“I’m working on a big project **at** the moment.”

“I was fairly good **at** maths at high school.”

“It’s on Channel 9 **at** seven o’clock.”

“I rarely have time to eat **at** lunchtime.”

“It was a big hit **at** the end of the 90s.”

“It depends what you mean **by** “get on well”, but...”

“I hope to finish all of them **by** the time I retire.”

“Special costumes are worn **by** the performers.”

“I usually travel **by** tram.”

“My favourite movie was directed **by** Will Smith.”

“I don’t remember it myself, but **from** what I’ve been told by my parents,...”

“I graduated **from** high school two years ago.”

“I come **from** a small village in the southeast of my country.”

“My hometown is about seventy miles **from** London.”

“We get presents **from** our parents.”

“I took the bullet train **from** Kobe to Tokyo.”

“Most of my favourite music is **from** the 1980s.”

“I expect to complete it **in** the very near future.”

“It’s difficult to explain **in** English, but...”

“**In** other words,...”

“I majored **in** Physics.”

“I live **in** the suburbs of my country’s second city.”

“I’m looking for a place **in** the town centre.”

“I’m moving **into** a new flat next month.”

“I don’t spend much time **in** my neighbourhood.”

“The most famous festival is **in** the summer.”

“I take part **in** it every summer.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

It was **in** the top ten a couple of years ago.
I'm **in** charge of shipping.

"Off the top of **my** head,..."

"Actually, in **my** case, there wasn't really any free choice."

"**My** most hated sitcom is..."

"It's tricky to describe even in **my** own language), but..."

"It's **my** middle name, but most people call me that."

"I'd like to buy **my** own place in the next few years."

"If you were in **my** place, I'm sure you would also..."

"I moved **out** of my family home when I was nineteen, but I might move back **in**."
I hate cooking, so I eat **out** most weekends.

"I go **out** for a few drinks on Friday night, and go clubbing on Saturdays."

"I'm not sure when, but **someday**."

"I'm going out with **some** friends to celebrate..."

"I spend **some** of my free time renovating my flat."

"When I was in **the** first year of kindergarten,..."

"I saw him again just **the** other day."

"I'm going to call back in **the** next couple of days."

"It might happen, but only in **the** distant future."

"**The** main reason why I feel that way is..."

"**The** usual translation is 'afternoon nap'."

"That's **the** main thing."

"I have lived most of my life in **the** countryside."

"I can play **the** violin fairly well."

"My dream is **to** own..."

"It's difficult **to** predict, but I imagine..."

"This is probably due **to** my upbringing."

"That is **to** say,..."

"Is that what you wanted **to** know?"

"I didn't go **to** college or university."

"I want to move nearer **to** the city centre."

"My personality is similar **to** my grandfather's."

"We give presents **to** our teachers."

"It's a prequel **to** the Batman movies."

"I usually listen **to** chillout music."

I report **to** the head of HR in Singapore.

"Sorry, I'm not familiar **with** the word..."

"I have an appointment **with** the dentist, and then I am free."

"I live **with** my parents."

"I shared a flat **with** three friends from uni."

"I didn't get on well **with** my older brother."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student B

"I go swimming once **a** month or so."

"When I was **a** pre-schooler,..."

"I have been there quite **a** few times, and each time..."

"In **a** perfect world, I would almost certainly not have..."

"... which is **a** kind of snack."

"Can I just check? Should I talk **about** where I was born?"

"So, does that mean I can talk **about** former colleagues too?"

"I've never thought **about** that before."

"I'm thinking **about** buying a new..."

"I think that **about** covers it."

"That's **an** interesting question."

"To put that **another** way,..."

"I'm studying for **an** MBA."

"It takes over **an** hour on foot, so I tend to hire a bike."

I'm just **an** office worker, but I also have a side job, which is writing romantic fiction.

"Officially I'm Robert but I'm known **as** Robbie."

"As far **as** I remember, when I was a toddler I..."

"As far back **as** I can remember,..."

"As soon **as** this test finishes, I'm gonna..."

"No one's ever asked me that **before**."

"This was well **before** I remember, but..."

"I last did it the day **before** yesterday."

"I'm not sure when, but I think it was the week **before** last."

"Please call me Alex. It's short **for** Alexander."

"People call me PJ. It stands **for** Peabody James."

"It's difficult to say **for** sure, but..."

"I don't have a lot of time **for** hobbies, but..."

"**For** as long as I can remember,..."

"I haven't experienced that **for** ages."

"This won't happen **for** ages, if ever, but I hope to..."

"The festival lasts **for** twelve days."

I'm responsible **for** developing new advertising campaigns.

"It is pronounced "Case" as **in** 'suitcase'".

"It's **in** the region of..."

"I'm not sure how well I can explain this **in** English, but..."

"I'm really **into** reality shows."

"I'm extremely interested **in**..."

"**In** the evenings, I have a drink or two and stream some video."

"When I was **in** my mid-twenties,..."

"I have cut down on that **in** the last few days."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

“In the last few weeks, I have found that...”

“Looking **into** my crystal ball, I see...”

“..., or something **like** that”

“I bought wallpaper, paint, and stuff **like** that.”

“I really look **like** my mother. We have almost the same eyes and nose.”

“Sorry, could you repeat the first part **of** the question?”

“It’s difficult to think **of** just one, but I guess...”

“I’m a huge fan **of** the MCU.”

“I’m quite fond **of** cookery competitions.”

“The first time was just a couple **of** days ago.”

“I live near the top of a high-rise block **of** flats.”

“**On** my days off, I mostly...”

“I have my heart set **on** the latest...”

“I could go **on**.”

“I generally choose fruit, nuts, and so **on**.”

“I grew up **on** the outskirts of a medium-sized industrial town.”

“I live **on** the second floor of an apartment block.”

“I was brought up in a small town **on** the south coast of country.”

“It’s based **on** a novel by Kazuo Ishiguro.”

“Since I started streaming, I hardly ever switch **on** my TV.”

“Sorry I still don’t understand, can you rephrase **the** question?”

“Sorry, I didn’t really catch **the** last part of the question.”

“I’m afraid I’m still not quite sure what **the** question means.”

“I’m afraid I didn’t understand the last word of **the** question.”

“If you asked me **the** same thing tomorrow, I’d probably have a different answer, but...”

“What’s **the** best way to explain? Well,...”

“I’m not sure **the** proper English word, but...”

“Whenever I get **the** chance, I try to...”

“Sorry, just **to** check, are you asking where I live?”

“If I understand correctly, you want me **to** tell you which parent I’m most similar to?”

“So, you want **to** know why I studied that?”

“**To** be frank,...”

“**To** be perfectly honest,...”

“I would never say this **to** his face, but...”

“If you ask me, I’d have **to** say that...”

“I’ve already arranged **to** talk to my bank manager.”

“I’m planning **to** book...”

I’d quite like to take **up** gardening, if I can move somewhere with a garden.

“I’m meeting **up** with a couple of old friends and...”

“I’m completely fed **up** with going to the gym.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

First of all with no help, write as many suitable phrases as you can in each category below. Many phrases not above are also possible.

Phrases for talking about your name

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

Talking about the distant past phrases

Talking about the recent past phrases

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

Talking about your plans phrases

Talking about desires phrases

Talking about predictions phrases

Talking about the near future phrases

Talking about the distant future phrases

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

Giving reasons phrases

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

Ending (long) answers phrases

Talking about your education phrases

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc) phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about people/ relationships phrases

Talking about festivals and celebrations phrases

Talking about transport and travel phrases

Talking about movies and TV phrases

Talking about music phrases

Talking about work phrases

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

Find ideas in the first worksheets, brainstorm more, compare as a class or with the answers below, then share you extra ideas.

Suggested answers

Phrases for talking about your name

- “Please call me Alex. It’s short **for** Alexander.”
- “It is pronounced “Case” as **in** ‘suitcase’”.
- “Officially I’m Robert but I’m known **as** Robbie.”
- “People call me PJ. It stands **for** Peabody James.”
- “It’s **my** middle name, but most people call me that.”

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn’t clear, etc)

- “Sorry I still don’t understand, can you rephrase **the** question?”
- “Sorry, just **to** check, are you asking where I live?”
- “Sorry, could you say that again **a** little more slowly?”
- “Can I just check? Should I talk **about** where I was born?”
- “If I understand correctly, you want me **to** tell you which parent I’m most similar to?”
- “Sorry, I didn’t really catch **the** last part of the question.”
- “Sorry, could you repeat the first part **of** the question?”
- “So, you want **to** know why I studied that?”
- “I’m afraid I’m still not quite sure what **the** question means.”
- “So, does that mean I can talk **about** former colleagues too?”
- “I’m afraid I didn’t understand the last word of **the** question.”
- “Sorry, I’m not familiar **with** the word...”

Commenting on the question phrases (when it’s challenging, unusual, etc)

- “That’s **a** tricky one.”
- “No one’s ever asked me that **before**.”
- “I’ve never thought **about** that before.”
- “That’s **an** interesting question.”
- “Actually, in **my** case, there wasn’t really any free choice.”

Vague answers/ Weak answers

- “..., or something **like** that”
- “As far **as** I remember, when I was a toddler I...”
- “It’s difficult to say **for** sure, but...”
- “I don’t remember it myself, but **from** what I’ve been told by my parents,...”
- “It was **a** long time ago, but I reckon...”
- “Off the top of **my** head,...”
- “It’s **in** the region of...”
- “If you asked me **the** same thing tomorrow, I’d probably have a different answer, but...”
- “It depends what you mean **by** “get on well”, but...”
- “It’s difficult to think **of** just one, but I guess...”

Strong language/ Strong answers

- “**To** be frank,...”
- “**To** be perfectly honest,...”
- “I would never say this **to** his face, but...”

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

"I'm not sure how well I can explain this **in** English, but..."

"What's **the** best way to explain? Well..."

"I'm not sure **the** proper English word, but..."

"If you ask me, I'd have **to** say that..."

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

"I'm a huge fan **of** the MCU."

"I'm quite fond **of** cookery competitions."

"I'm really **into** reality shows."

"I'm **a** total F1 obsessive."

"I don't have **any** strong feelings about that one way or the other."

"**My** most hated sitcom is..."

"I'm extremely interested **in**..."

"I didn't have **any** interest in language learning, but now..."

"I'm completely fed **up** with going to the gym."

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

"I spend quite **a** lot of time making homemade..."

"**On** my days off, I mostly..."

"Whenever I get **the** chance, I try to..."

"I don't have a lot of time **for** hobbies, but..."

"I go swimming once **a** month or so."

"**In** the evenings, I have a drink or two and stream some video."

"**After** work, I usually do the shopping and make dinner."

"I rarely have time to eat **at** lunchtime."

Talking about the distant past phrases

"When I was **a** pre-schooler,..."

"When I was **in** my mid-twenties,..."

"When I was in **the** first year of kindergarten,..."

"This was well **before** I remember, but..."

"As far back **as** I can remember,..."

"**For** as long as I can remember,..."

Talking about the recent past phrases

"I last did it the day **before** yesterday."

"I'm not sure when, but I think it was the week **before** last."

"I saw him again just **the** other day."

"The first time was just a couple **of** days ago."

"I have cut down on that **in** the last few days."

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

"I have been there quite **a** few times, and each time..."

"I haven't experienced that **for** ages."

"**In** the last few weeks, I have found that..."

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

"I'm meeting **up** with a couple of old friends and..."
"I'm going out with **some** friends to celebrate..."
"I've already arranged **to** talk to my bank manager."
"I have an appointment **with** the dentist, and then I am free."

Talking about your plans phrases

"I'm planning **to** book..."
"I'm thinking **about** buying a new..."

Talking about desires phrases

"My dream is **to** own..."
"I have my heart set **on** the latest..."

Talking about predictions phrases

"It's difficult **to** predict, but I imagine..."
"Looking **into** my crystal ball, I see..."

Talking about the near future phrases

"It's scheduled for the day **after** tomorrow."
"I won't have time until the week **after** next."
"I expect a reply **any** day now."
"I'm going to call back in **the** next couple of days."
"I expect to complete it **in** the very near future."
"As soon **as** this test finishes, I'm gonna..."

Talking about the distant future phrases

"I hope to finish all of them **by** the time I retire."
"I'm not sure when, but **someday**."
"It might happen, but only in **the** distant future."
"This won't happen **for** ages, if ever, but I hope to..."

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

"In **a** perfect world, I would almost certainly not have..."
"If you were in **my** place, I'm sure you would also..."

Giving reasons phrases

"**The** main reason why I feel that way is..."
"This is probably due **to** my upbringing."

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

"It's difficult to explain **in** English, but..."
"It's tricky to describe even in **my** own language), but..."
"**The** usual translation is 'afternoon nap'.
"... which is **a** kind of snack."
"**In** other words,..."
"That is **to** say,..."
"To put that **another** way,..."

Ending (long) answers phrases

- “I could go **on**.”
- “I generally choose fruit, nuts, and so **on**.”
- “I bought wallpaper, paint, and stuff **like** that.”
- “That’s **the** main thing.”
- “I think that **about** covers it.”
- “Is that what you wanted **to** know?”

Talking about your education phrases

- “I was fairly good **at** maths at high school.”
- “I’m studying for **an** MBA.”
- “I graduated **from** high school two years ago.”
- “I majored **in** Physics.”
- “I didn’t go **to** college or university.”

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc) phrases

- “I come **from** a small village in the southeast of my country.”
- “My hometown is about seventy miles **from** London.”
- “I live **in** the suburbs of my country’s second city.”
- “I’m looking for a place **in** the town centre.”
- “I’m moving **into** a new flat next month.”
- “I don’t spend much time **in** my neighbourhood.”
- “I’d like to buy **my** own place in the next few years.”
- “I live near the top of a high-rise block **of** flats.”
- “I grew up **on** the outskirts of a medium-sized industrial town.”
- “I live **on** the second floor of an apartment block.”
- “I was brought up in a small town **on** the south coast of country.”
- “I moved **out** of my family home when I was nineteen, but I might move back in.”
- “I have lived most of my life in **the** countryside.”
- “I want to move nearer **to** the city centre.”
- “I live **with** my parents.”
- “I shared a flat **with** three friends from uni.”

Talking about people/ relationships phrases

- “I take **after** my father.”
- “I really look **like** my mother. We have almost the same eyes and nose.”
- “My personality is similar **to** my grandfather’s.”
- “I didn’t get on well **with** my older brother.”

Talking about festivals and celebrations phrases

- “Special costumes are worn **by** the performers.”
- “The festival lasts **for** twelve days.”
- “We get presents **from** our parents.”
- “The most famous festival is **in** the summer.”
- “I take part **in** it every summer.”
- “We give presents **to** our teachers.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

“It takes place **in** late summer.”

Talking about transport and travel phrases

“I usually travel **by** tram.”

“I took the bullet train **from** Kobe to Tokyo.”

“It takes over **an** hour on foot, so I tend to hire a bike.”

Talking about movies and TV phrases

“It’s on Channel 9 **at** seven o’clock.”

“My favourite movie was directed **by** Will Smith.”

“It’s based **on** a novel by Kazuo Ishiguro.”

“Since I started streaming, I hardly ever switch **on** my TV.”

“It’s a prequel **to** the Batman movies.”

Talking about music phrases

“It was a big hit **at** the end of the 90s.”

“Most of my favourite music is **from** the 1980s.”

“It was **in** the top ten a couple of years ago.”

“I can play **the** violin fairly well.”

“I usually listen **to** chillout music.”

Talking about work phrases

“I’m just **an** office worker, but I also have a side job, which is writing romantic fiction.”

“I’m working on a big project **at** the moment.”

“I’m responsible **for** developing new advertising campaigns.”

“I’m **in** charge of shipping.”

“I report **to** the head of HR in Singapore.”

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

“I don’t have **any** actual hobbies, but I’m quite interested in history.”

“I hate cooking, so I eat **out** most weekends.”

“I go **out** for a few drinks on Friday night, and go clubbing on Saturdays.”

“I spend **some** of my free time renovating my flat.”

“I’d quite like to take **up** gardening, if I can move somewhere with a garden.”

Meanings/ Uses of prepositions and determiners answer key

day/ date – on

deadline/ time limit – by

leaving somewhere/ starting point – from

length of time – for

more than a few and less than a lot – some

none – (not) any

not at home – out

one/ any one/ one of many – a/ an

point in time/ clock time – at

similar – like

somewhere inside a space/ somewhere within a larger time such as a season – in

this/ that/ you know which one/ only one – the

together – with

topic/ subject – about

way of doing something (travelling, etc) – by

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One error correction pairwork

Work with someone with the other worksheet, with one Student A worksheet and one Student B worksheet per group. Without showing your worksheets to each other, find differences between your worksheet and your partner's, decide which one is correct each time, and change yours if it is wrong.

Useful phrases for doing the activity

(I can't hear any difference.) Can you repeat...?/ Can you say... again?

Did you say... (or...)?

The difference is.../ Yours says... but mine says...

I think mine/ yours is right/ wrong because...

Hint: You each need to correct half of your sentences, meaning fifteen mistakes each.

Check your answers as a class.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student A

Phrases for talking about your name

“Please call me Alex. It’s short of Alexander.”

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn’t clear, etc)

“Sorry I still don’t understand. Can you rephrase the question?”

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

“In actually fact, I have more than a plan. I’m flying to New York tomorrow.”

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it’s challenging, unusual, etc)

“That’s a tricky one. I guess that I would probably say that...”

Vague answers/ Weak answers

“As much as I remember, my brother and I never fought about toys.”

Strong language/ Strong answers

“To be perfectly frankly, I can’t find anything good to say about my hometown.”

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

“I’m not sure how well I can explain this in English, but the direct translation is...”

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

“I absolutely love snowboarding, and I don’t mind skiing.”

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

“I’m especially good at playing the bongos.”

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

“I almost go to the gym at the weekend, apart from when I have visitors.”

Talking about now phrases

“I’m working on an especially important project at the moment.”

Talking about the distant past phrases

“When I was a young child, I used to collect matchboxes, badges, and stuff like that.”

Talking about the recent past phrases

“I last saw him the week before last week, at a work do.”

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

“I have ever met quite a few famous people.”

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

“Actually, I’m meeting up with some friends to go out for a drink.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about your plans phrases

“I have a plan to go to the US to do a Master’s in Geography the year after next.”

Talking about desires phrases

“I don’t know if I ever really will or not, but I really like to have my own olive farm.”

Talking about predictions phrases

“I don’t have any plans, but I will probably try to buy a flat in the next few years.”

Talking about the near future phrases

“A French friend of mine is coming to Tokyo in two days.”

Talking about the distant future phrases

“I hope to have set up my own business by the time I retire”

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

“If I’d had a different teacher, I probably would enjoyed it more.”

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

“I suppose yes.”

Giving reasons phrases

“The main reason why I feel that way is because of being bitten by one.”

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

“In other words, it’s a way of marking an important stage in people’s lives.”

Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong information phrases

“Ah no, that’s wrong. In reality, I didn’t rent it, I just borrowed it.”

Ending (long) answers phrases

“I could keep on, but you get the general idea.”

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc)

“I was brought up in a suburb on the outskirts of my country’s second city.”

Talking about people/ relationships

“When it comes to personality, I take after my brother.”

Talking about music phrases

“I usually listen music on my smartphone during my commute”

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

“I take up most of my free time with cooking and keeping in touch with my family.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student B

Phrases for talking about your name

“Please call me Alex. It’s short for Alexander.”

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn’t clear, etc)

“Sorry I still don’t understand. Please rephrase the question.”

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

“In actual fact, I have more than a plan. I’m flying to New York tomorrow.”

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it’s challenging, unusual, etc)

“That’s tricky one. I guess that I would probably say that...”

Vague answers/ Weak answers

“As far as I remember, my brother and I never fought about toys.”

Strong language/ Strong answers

“To be perfectly frank, I can’t find anything good to say about my hometown.”

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

“I’m not sure how good I can explain this in English, but the direct translation is...”

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

“I absolutely like snowboarding, and I don’t mind skiing.”

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

“I’m especially well at playing the bongos.”

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

“I almost always go to the gym at the weekend, apart from when I have visitors.”

Talking about now phrases

“I’m working on an especially important project at this moment.”

Talking about the distant past phrases

“When I was young child, I used to collect matchboxes, badges, and stuff like that.”

Talking about the recent past phrases

“I last saw him the week before last, at a work do.”

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

“I have met quite a few famous people.”

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

“Actually, I have an appointment with some friends to go out for a drink.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about your plans phrases

“I’m planning to go to the US to do a Master’s in Geography the year after next.”

Talking about desires phrases

“I don’t know if I ever really will or not, but I’d really like to have my own olive farm.”

Talking about predictions phrases

“I don’t have any plans, but I will possibly try to buy a flat in the next few years.”

Talking about the near future phrases

“A French friend of mine is coming to Tokyo after two days.”

Talking about the distant future phrases

“I hope to have set up my own business by time I retire”

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

“If I’d had a different teacher, I probably would’ve enjoyed it more.”

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

“I suppose so.”

Giving reasons phrases

“The big reason why I feel that way is because of being bitten by one.”

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

“In other word, it’s a way of marking an important stage in people’s lives.”

Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong information phrases

“Ah no, that’s wrong. In really, I didn’t rent it, I just borrowed it.”

Ending (long) answers phrases

“I could go on, but you get the general idea.”

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc)

“I brought up in a suburb on the outskirts of my country’s second city.”

Talking about people/ relationships

“When it comes to personality, I take after my father.”

Talking about music phrases

“I usually listen to music on my smartphone during my commute”

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

“Cooking and keeping in touch with my family take up most of my free time.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

All errors stage

All of these are wrong, so check that you have corrected them.

Phrases for talking about your name

“Please call me Alex. It’s short of Alexander.”

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn’t clear, etc)

“Sorry I still don’t understand. Please rephrase the question.”

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

“In actually fact, I have more than a plan. I’m flying to New York tomorrow.”

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it’s challenging, unusual, etc)

“That’s tricky one. I guess that I would probably say that...”

Vague answers/ Weak answers

“As much as I remember, my brother and I never fought about toys.”

Strong language/ Strong answers

“To be perfectly frankly, I can’t find anything good to say about my hometown.”

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

“I’m not sure how good I can explain this in English, but the direct translation is...”

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

“I absolutely like snowboarding, and I don’t mind skiing.”

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

“I’m especially well at playing the bongos.”

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

“I almost go to the gym at the weekend, apart from when I have visitors.”

Talking about now phrases

“I’m working on an especially important project at this moment.”

Talking about the distant past phrases

“When I was young child, I used to collect matchboxes, badges, and stuff like that.”

Talking about the recent past phrases

“I last saw him the week before last week, at a work do.”

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

“I have ever met quite a few famous people.”

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

“Actually, I have an appointment with some friends to go out for a drink.”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about your plans phrases

“I have a plan to go to the US to do a Master’s in Geography the year after next.”

Talking about desires phrases

“I don’t know if I ever really will or not, but I really like to have my own olive farm.”

Talking about predictions phrases

“I don’t have any plans, but I will possibly try to buy a flat in the next few years.”

Talking about the near future phrases

“A French friend of mine is coming to Tokyo after two days.”

Talking about the distant future phrases

“I hope to have set up my own business by time I retire”

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

“If I’d had a different teacher, I probably would enjoyed it more.”

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

“I suppose yes.”

Giving reasons phrases

“The big reason why I feel that way is because of being bitten by one.”

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

“In other word, it’s a way of marking an important stage in people’s lives.”

Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong information phrases

“Ah no, that’s wrong. In really, I didn’t rent it, I just borrowed it.”

Ending (long) answers phrases

“I could keep on, but you get the general idea.”

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc)

“I brought up in a suburb on the outskirts of my country’s second city.”

Talking about people/ relationships

“When it comes to personality, I take after my brother.”

Talking about music phrases

“I usually listen music on my smartphone during my commute”

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

“I take up most of my free time with cooking and keeping in touch with my family.”

Work together to correct all the mistakes above. Then check with the previous sheets.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorm at least two suitable phrases into each category below.

Phrases for talking about your name

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

Talking about now phrases

Talking about the distant past phrases

Talking about the recent past phrases

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talking about your plans phrases

Talking about desires phrases

Talking about predictions phrases

Talking about the near future phrases

Talking about the distant future phrases

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions

Giving reasons phrases

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong information phrases

Ending (long) answers phrases

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc)

Talking about people/ relationships

Talking about music phrases

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

Look above, brainstorm more, then compare as a class and/ or with lists of phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part One the same or different

Warmer

Take turns choosing a topic from below and asking your partner exactly three questions on that topic before crossing it off. Try to use a mix of tenses, e.g. a mix of different past, present and future forms, or asking your partner to speculate/ imagine.

Name

Work and studies

Travel

Accommodation/ Hometown

Arts and media

Foreign languages

Free time/ Hobbies/ Interests

Friends and family

Future plans

Health and fitness

Technology and the Internet

Ask about any topics above which you can't understand or couldn't make three questions about.

Take turns asking any questions below which you didn't ask in the previous activity. Note that some questions have the same meaning, so be careful not to ask (exactly) the same thing to the same person.

Mixed Speaking Part One questions

- Can I check your name?
- Do you have any plans for the weekend?
- Do you have any plans to live abroad?
- Do you like going to the cinema?
- Do you like going to the cinema?
- Do you like reading news online?
- Do you prefer to get your news online?
- Do you think you will live abroad someday?
- How do you most like to travel?
- How do you pronounce your name?
- How important is sport for you?
- How important is exercise to you?
- How is exercise important to you?
- How long are you planning to continue studying English?
- How long do you think you will continue studying English?
- How long have you been living in your present home?
- How long have you lived in your current home?
- How long have you spent abroad?
- How many times have you been abroad?
- How much time have you spent abroad?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

- In what ways is exercise important to you?
- Is there any hobby which you want to take up?
- Is there any hobby you'd like to start doing in the future?
- What are you going to do at the weekend?
- What are your plans for the coming weekend?
- What do you do to keep fit?
- What do you like about going to the cinema?
- What is the area near your home like?
- What is the most important sport for you? (Why?)
- What is your favourite means of transport?
- What is your hometown like?
- What is your neighbourhood like?
- What kind of art do you like?
- What kind of exercise do you do?
- What level of English do you hope to have in ten years?
- What level of English do you think you will have in ten years' time?
- What sort of visual art do you like?
- What would be the perfect job for you?
- What would be your dream job?
- What would you like me to call you?
- What would your ideal job be?
- When did you last meet up with your school friends?
- When was the last time you met up with your school friends?
- Where are you from?
- Where did you first meet your best friend?
- Where do you come from?
- Where have you come from (today)?
- Where is your hometown?
- Where were you the first time you met your best friend?
- Which members of your family do you have a good relationship with?
- Which people in your family do you get along with?
- Who in your family do you get on well with?
- Would you like to see anything at the cinema?
- Would you live abroad if you could?

Try to find questions above which mean (exactly) the same thing. If you are not sure if they are slightly different or not, think about what your answers to each question would be.

Find some examples above of questions which seem similar but have different meanings (and therefore will have quite different or very different answers).

Ask about any questions above which you aren't sure about the meaning of or aren't sure how to answer.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Part One: IELTS Speaking Part One questions the same or different

Decide if the question on one line have exactly the same meaning (S) or different meanings (D). If there are more than two, they are all the same or all different.

- A) Can I check your name?/ How do you pronounce your name?/ What would you like me to call you?
- B) Do you prefer to get your news online?/ Do you like reading news online?
- C) How do you most like to travel?/ What is your favourite means of transport?
- D) How important is exercise to you?/ How is exercise important to you?
- E) How is exercise important to you?/ In what ways is exercise important to you?
- F) How long do you think you will continue studying English?/ How long are you planning to continue studying English?
- G) How long have you been living in your present home?/ How long have you lived in your current home?
- H) How long have you spent abroad?/ How much time have you spent abroad?
- I) How much time have you spent abroad?/ How many times have you been abroad?
- J) Is there any hobby you'd like to start doing in the future?/ Is there any hobby which you want to take up?
- K) What are you going to do at the weekend?/ What are your plans for the coming weekend?
- L) What are your plans for the weekend?/ Do you have any plans for the weekend?
- M) What do you like about going to the cinema?/ Do you like going to the cinema?
- N) What is the area near your home like?/ What is your neighbourhood like?
- O) What is your neighbourhood like?/ What is your hometown like?
- P) What is the most important sport for you? (Why?)/ How important is sport for you?
- Q) What kind of art do you like?/ What sort of visual art do you like?
- R) What kind of exercise do you do?/ What do you do to keep fit?
- S) What level of English do you hope to have in ten years?/ What level of English do you think you will have in ten years' time?
- T) What would your ideal job be?/ What would be your dream job?/ What would be the perfect job for you?
- U) When did you last meet up with your school friends?/ When was the last time you met up with your school friends?
- V) Where are you from?/ Where do you come from?/ Where is your hometown?
- W) Where are you from?/ Where have you come from (today)?
- X) Where did you first meet your best friend?/ Where were you the first time you met your best friend?
- Y) Who in your family do you get on well with?/ Which members of your family do you have a good relationship with?/ Which people in your family do you get along with?
- Z) Would you like to see anything at the cinema?/ Do you like going to the cinema?
- AA) Would you live abroad if you could?/ Do you think you will live abroad someday?/ Do you have any plans to live abroad?

Hint: 13 lines above should be marked with D for different

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

The ones in **bold** below are different (D). Make sure you know what the differences are.

- A) **Can I check your name?/ How do you pronounce your name?/ What would you like me to call you?**
- B) **Do you prefer to get your news online?/ Do you like reading news online?**
- C) How do you most like to travel?/ What is your favourite means of transport?
- D) **How important is exercise to you?/ How is exercise important to you?**
- E) How is exercise important to you?/ In what ways is exercise important to you?
- F) **How long do you think you will continue studying English?/ How long are you planning to continue studying English?**
- G) How long have you been living in your present home?/ How long have you lived in your current home?
- H) How long have you spent abroad?/ How much time have you spent abroad?
- I) **How much time have you spent abroad?/ How many times have you been abroad?**
- J) Is there any hobby you'd like to start doing in the future?/ Is there any hobby which you want to take up?
- K) What are you going to do at the weekend?/ What are your plans for the coming weekend?
- L) **What are your plans for the weekend?/ Do you have any plans for the weekend?**
- M) **What do you like about going to the cinema?/ Do you like going to the cinema?**
- N) What is the area near your home like?/ What is your neighbourhood like?
- O) **What is your neighbourhood like?/ What is your hometown like?**
- P) **What is the most important sport for you? (Why?)/ How important is sport for you?**
- Q) What kind of art do you like?/ What sort of visual art do you like?
- R) What kind of exercise do you do?/ What do you do to keep fit?
- S) **What level of English do you hope to have in ten years?/ What level of English do you think you will have in ten years' time?**
- T) What would your ideal job be?/ What would be your dream job?/ What would be the perfect job for you?
- U) When did you last meet up with your school friends?/ When was the last time you met up with your school friends?
- V) Where are you from?/ Where do you come from?/ Where is your hometown?
- W) **Where are you from?/ Where have you come from (today)?**
- X) Where did you first meet your best friend?/ Where were you the first time you met your best friend?
- Y) Who in your family do you get on well with?/ Which members of your family do you have a good relationship with?/ Which people in your family do you get along with?
- Z) **Would you like to see anything at the cinema?/ Do you like going to the cinema?**
- AA) **Would you live abroad if you could?/ Do you think you will live abroad someday?/ Do you have any plans to live abroad?**

Work in groups of three or four. Choose one line and ask all those questions to your partners, then give feedback on if they were answered correctly, thinking carefully about their meanings. The people answering can't look at the worksheet.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Part Two: Comparing/ contrasting phrases presentation

Thinking about what you said in the discussion above, brainstorm as many different words and phrases as you can into the gaps below. At least four different things are possible in each gap.

This question is about nicknames etcetera (,/.) _____
this question is just about the pronunciation.

These two questions are _____ the same.

These two questions are _____ different.

The _____ difference
between the two questions is that is this one is a prediction while this one is a desire.

A _____
difference between these two is that this one is hypothetical but this one is about reality.
Compare your ideas with those below the fold.

-----fold-----

a bit
a tiny bit
almost
almost exactly
almost totally
but
considerable
exactly
fairly
great
however
in contrast
main
more or less
most important
most obvious
most striking
nearly
slight
small
substantial
tiny
totally
very
whereas
while

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Suggested answers

(NOT... X in italics and brackets means that it doesn't fit in the gap)

This one is about nicknames etc ____, **whereas/ , while/ , but/ . However,/ . In contrast,** ____ this one is just about the pronunciation.

(NOT On the other hand X NOT On the contrary X NOT though X)

These two are ___**exactly/ almost exactly/ almost/ nearly/ more or less** ___ the same.

(NOT a little X NOT fairly X)

These two questions are _**totally/ almost totally/ very/ fairly/ a bit/ a tiny bit** ___ different.

The ___ **most striking/ most obvious/ most important/ main** ___ difference between the two is that is this one is a prediction while this one is a desire.

A ___**great/ considerable/ substantial/ slight/ small / tiny** ___ difference between these two is that this one is hypothetical but this one is about reality.

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Part Three: Functional language in Speaking Part One answers the same or different

Do the same with these phrases that you could use in Speaking Part One, marking each line with S for the same meaning or D for different meanings.

1. Can you repeat the question?/ Can you rephrase the question?
2. Can you repeat the question?/ Can you say that again?
3. Could you say that another way?/ Can you rephrase the question?
4. Sorry, what does... mean?/ Excuse me, what do you mean by...?
5. Do you mean...?/ Are you asking...?
6. I'm afraid I still don't understand the question./ I'm sorry but I'm still not quite sure what the question means.

7. Let me think./ Let me see.
8. That's a difficult question./ That's a tricky one.
9. I've never really thought about that before./ No one's ever asked me that before.

10. I can't remember... exactly but.../ I don't precisely recall... but...
11. ... or something like that (anyway). / ... or something of that sort.
12. more or less/ approximately/ something like...

13. Sorry, I meant to say.../ Ah no, that's wrong. It's actually...

14. There is a word in my language.../ There is something in my country which we call...
15. The usual translation is.../ The direct translation is...
16. The direct translation is.../ The word-for-word translation is.../ The direct translation is...
17. ... which is a kind of.../ which is a bit like...

18. This is because.../ The (main) reason for that is...
19. I'm not sure why exactly, but.../ ...,for some reason or the other.
20. in order to.../ to...

21. I (totally) detest/ I loathe/ I really hate...
22. My least favourite/ My most hated...
23. I adore/ I really love...

24. Does that answer your question?/ Is that what you wanted to know?

What does each group of expressions above have in common? Can you think of any more with the same functions?

Test each other on all the things above, this time raising one of the two cards that you are given depending on whether they have the same or different meanings when your partner reads them out to you.

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Part 4: Comparing vocabulary in Speaking Part One questions and answers

Compare the expressions below. To make you use suitable comparing language, just discuss this time (**don't write what you decide**). However, you can put "?" next to ones you aren't sure about.

1. family name/ surname
2. first name/ given name/ Christian name
3. to spell/ a spell

4. hometown/ where you live/ your country
5. where you live/ your (local) area/ your neighbourhood
6. home/ house
7. where I live/ where I'm staying
8. house/ mansion
9. apartment/ flat
10. flat/ studio flat
11. student halls/ student dorm
12. narrow room/ small flat
13. I grew up/ I was brought up

14. brothers and sisters/ siblings
15. wife or husband/ partner
16. two families/ two family members
17. a member of my family/ a relative/ a relation
18. only child/ single

19. close friend/ good friend
20. good friend/ best friend/ oldest friend
21. get on with/ get on well with/ get along with/ have a good relationship with
22. workmate/ colleague/ co-worker
23. ex-classmate/ ex-colleague
24. fellow graduate/ fellow alumni

25. abroad/ overseas
26. to go on a trip/ to trip
27. meet up with/ go out with/ play with/ hang out with (my friends)
28. travel to and from work/ commute

29. party/ (going out for) drinks

30. cinema/ movie theater
31. films/ movies
32. movie theater/ theatre
33. sci-fi/ science fiction
34. rom-com/ romantic comedy
35. animation/ anime
36. costume drama/ historical drama
37. kind of movie/ type of movie/ sort of movie/ genre of movie

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38. exercise/ sport
39. free time/ leisure
40. hobbies/ interests
41. summer holiday/ summer vacation
42. public holiday/ vacation
43. days off/ holidays
44. tidy my flat/ clean my flat
45. like/ prefer/ would like

46. normally/ usually/ generally
47. rarely/ seldom/ hardly ever
48. once every six months/ twice a year
49. at the moment/ now/ currently/ presently
50. at the moment/ at that moment
51. nowadays/ these days
52. every time/ always
53. always/ all the time

54. the day before yesterday/ two days before
55. when I was younger/ when I was a child
56. when I was in primary school/ when I was an elementary school student
57. when I was 11 or 12/ when I was in my early teens
58. I last.../ The last time I... was...

59. in ten years/ in ten years' time
60. in two days/ the day after tomorrow
61. the week after next/ two weeks after
62. am planning to/ am going to
63. I'm planning to.../ I've arranged to...
64. I've arranged to.../ I'm... ing...
65. appointment/ date/ arrangement/ promise
66. I like/ I would like
67. I would like/ I want
68. I would like/ I hope/ I wish
69. I will/ I will probably/ I may...
70. I may/ I might...
71. I expect to.../ I'm sure I will...
72. I expect to.../ I'm looking forward to...

73. ideal/ perfect/ dream (job/ holiday/ home)
74. If you get the chance/ If you got the chance

What do the expressions in each group above have in common? Can you think of any more useful vocabulary in the same categories?

Cards to hold up

The same	Different
The same	Different
The same	Different
The same	Different
The same	Different
The same	Different
The same	Different
The same	Different

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IELTS Speaking Part One with the same meaning brainstorming

Write as many things as you can with the same meaning as each line below.

Brainstorm Speaking Part One questions with the same meaning

1. What is your favourite means of transport?
2. In what ways is exercise important to you?
3. How long have you been living in your present home?
4. How much time have you spent abroad?
5. Is there any hobby which you want to take up?
6. What are your plans for the coming weekend?
7. What is the area near your home like?
8. What sort of visual art do you like?
9. What kind of exercise do you do?
10. What would be the perfect job for you?
11. When was the last time (that) you met up with your school friends?
12. Where is your hometown?
13. Where were you the first time you met your best friend?
14. Which members of your family do you have a good relationship with?

Brainstorm Speaking Part One functional language with the same meanings

25. Can you repeat the question?
26. Could you say that another way?
27. Excuse me, what do you mean by...?
28. Do you mean...?
29. I'm sorry but I'm still not quite sure what the question means.
30. Let me see.
31. That's a difficult question.
32. I don't precisely recall... but...
33. ... or something of that sort.
34. more or less
35. Ah no, that's wrong. It's actually...
36. The usual translation is...
37. The direct translation is...
38. ... which is a kind of...
39. This is because...
40. I'm not sure why exactly, but...
41. in order to...
42. I (totally) detest
43. My most hated...
44. I really love...
45. Does that answer your question?

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Brainstorm Speaking Part One vocabulary with the same meaning

1. family name
2. Christian name

3. where you live
4. apartment
5. student dorm
6. I grew up

7. siblings
8. a member of my family

9. good friend
10. workmate
11. fellow graduate

12. abroad
13. journey to work

14. movie theater
15. movies
16. science fiction
17. romantic comedy
18. animation
19. historical drama
20. kind of movie

21. leisure
22. vacation

23. normally
24. seldom
25. twice a year
26. at the moment
27. nowadays

28. two days ago
29. when I was an elementary school student
30. when I was 13 or 14

31. in ten years' time
32. in two weeks
33. I've arranged to...
34. I want
35. I may
36. I expect to...

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Brainstorming useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part One

Write as many useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part One as you can in the spaces below (phrases you have heard other candidates using, phrases that you imagine would impress the examiner, etc). If you are competing, you will get a point for each phrase that no other groups wrote, and five points if it is not on the teacher's list.

Choose twelve things that you think no one else will have written, then share your ideas with the whole class.

Check the big list for things you wrote which are not on there, then ask about anything on those lists which you didn't think of and don't understand.

Circle the most useful phrases for you, then compare your circled phrases with someone else.

Try to use as many of those circled phrases as you can while you practise IELTS Speaking Part One.

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Phrases for talking about your name

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Answering questions whose meanings aren't 100% clear phrases

Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

Vague answers/ Weak answers

Strong language/ Strong answers

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

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Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

Talking about now phrases

Talking about the distant past phrases

Talking about the recent past phrases

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

Talking about your plans phrases

Talking about desires phrases

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Talking about predictions phrases

Talking about the near future phrases

Talking about the distant future phrases

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

Giving reasons phrases

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong information phrases

Ending (long) answers phrases

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Talking about your education phrases

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc) phrases

Talking about people/ relationships phrases

Talking about festivals and celebrations phrases

Talking about transport and travel phrases

Talking about movies and TV phrases

Talking about music phrases

Talking about your work phrases

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

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The big list of useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part One

The most useful phrases are top of each section. Phrases in italics and brackets () with NOT are not good in this part of the exam (and sometimes are not good English).

Phrases for talking about your name

"(My name is... but) please call me... (It means.../ It's short for.../ It comes from...)"

"It is pronounced... (like.../ as in...) (but some people also pronounce it as...)"

"(My real name is... but) everyone calls me... (because...)"

"(Officially I'm... but) I'm known as..."

"People call me PJ. It stands for..."

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

"Sorry (I still don't understand,) can you rephrase the question?"

"Sorry, (just to check) are you asking... (or...)"

"Sorry, could you say that again (a little more slowly)?"

"Sorry, could you repeat the first/ middle/ last part of the question?"

"(Can I just check?) Should I talk about... (or...)"

"If I understand (correctly), you want me to tell you...?"

"Can I talk about...?"

"Sorry, I didn't (really) catch the last part/ the middle part/ the last word/..."

"So, you want to know...?"

"Sorry, what does... mean?"

"I'm afraid I'm (still) not (quite) sure what the question means."

"So, does that mean I can talk about...?"

"Does that mean...?"

"(By.../ When you say...,) do you mean...?"

"I'm afraid I didn't understand the last word/ the last part of the question."

"Sorry but I've never heard of..."

"I'm afraid I've never come across the word... before."

"(At the end of the question) you said... What does that mean?"

"So, the question is what do I...?"

"Sorry, I'm not familiar with the word..."

"Could you say that another way?"

"I'm afraid I'm not clear if you are asking... or..."

(NOT "Sorry, what means...?" X)

(NOT "What?" X)

(NOT "I can't understand you" X)

(NOT "I can't understand what you are asking me" X)

(NOT "Sorry, please rephrase the question" X)

(NOT "Please repeat the question" X)

(NOT "I'm afraid but I'm still not quite sure what the question means." X)

Answering questions whose meanings aren't 100% clear phrases

"It depends what you mean by '...', but..."

"I don't know if this is what you are asking, but..."

"I guess you want to know..., in which case..."

"If '...' means..., then..."

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Commenting on the (mis)match between the question and your situation

"It's funny you should ask me that, because..."

"Actually (in my case),..."

"... not... exactly, but..."

"It's so strange that you asked me that, because..."

"There's no real... However,..."

"I don't think '...' is the right word for it, but..."

"I wouldn't describe it as '...', although..."

"Neither, really."

"The nearest thing to..."

"Can I talk about ... instead? (I don't really remember much about...)"

"Sorry but that question doesn't really make sense for me, due to..."

"As a matter of fact,..."

"Can I pick a third option?"

"I'm afraid I can't (really/ exactly) answer that question because..., but..."

(NOT "I'm afraid I can't answer that question." X)

Other commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

"That's a tricky one"

"No one's (ever) asked me that before"

"I've never thought about that before"

"That's an interesting question"

"It's difficult to choose just one (...), but I guess..."

"That's quite complicated, actually"

Vague answers/ Weak answers

"As far as I remember,..."

"I don't remember (exactly), but..."

"It's difficult to say for sure, but..."

"(It was a long time ago, but) I guess/ I reckon..."

"something like/ around/ approximately/ more or less/ about..."

"..., or something like that (anyway)"

"I don't remember it (myself), but from what I've been told (by my parents/ by...),..."

"Off the top of my head,..."

"It's in the region of..."

"Don't quote me on this, but..."

"If you asked me the same thing tomorrow, I'd probably have a different answer, but..."

"The only thing I can recall is..."

"... or something of that sort."

Strong language/ Strong answers

"To be frank,..." / "Frankly,..."

"To be (perfectly) honest,..."

"I would never say this to his/ her face, but..."

"(Just) between you and me,..."

"I wouldn't (usually) say this in public, but..."

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

"Hmmm let me think/ let me see"

"I'm not sure how well I can explain this (in English), but..."

"How can I best answer that question? Well,..."

"How can I (best) say this in English? Well,..."

"What's the best way to explain? Well,..."

"I'm not sure the (exact/ proper) English word/ English expression, but..."

"(If you ask me) I'd (probably/ have to) say that..."

"I'm just trying to remember."

Talking about likes and dislikes/ preferences phrases

"I (really/ absolutely/ totally) detest/ loathe..."

"I (absolutely/ really) love/ adore..."

"My (all-time/ least) favourite..."

"I'm (really) into..."

"I don't really like..."

"I'm a (great/ huge/ obsessive) fan of..."

"I'm (quite/ very/ not so) fond of..."

"I don't (really) mind..."

"I'm a (total/ complete/ bit of a)... fanatic/ geek/ obsessive."

"I (obsessively) follow..."

"I don't have any strong feelings about... (one way or the other)."

"My most hated..."

"I (especially/ really/ quite) like..."

"I'm (quite/ very/ extremely) interested in..."

"I (really) enjoy"

"I'm (completely) fed up with..."

(NOT "I absolutely like..." X)

(NOT "My most favourite... is..." X)

Explaining abilities/ skills/ strengths and weaknesses phrases

"I'm (especially/ incredibly/ extremely/ really/ pretty/ fairly) good/ bad at..."

"I'm (absolutely/ completely/ totally) excellent/ terrible/ awful at..."

"I can't get my head around..."

"I tried... but it was hopeless"

"... is my chosen specialist subject"

"... is my party trick"

"I'll (probably) never get the hang of..."

"... is (totally) beyond me"

"Everyone but me seems to be able to..."

Talking about habits/ routines phrases

"I always/ without fail/ almost always/ generally/ typically/ regularly/ very often/ quite often/ rarely/ hardly ever/ very seldom/ occasionally..."

"I spend (quite) a lot of time..."

"On my days off,..."

"In the evening(s),..."

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“once every two weeks/ once every three months/ ... everys”

“once a month or so/ ... a ... or so”

“When(ever) I have time/ get the chance/ can,...”

“I don't have a lot of time for...”

“every other day/ week/ month”

“After work/ school,...”

“In an average day/ week/ month/ year,...”

“On average,...”

“In general,...”

(NOT “once per a week” X)

(NOT “once a two weeks” X)

Talking about now phrases

“at the moment”/ “currently”/ “presently”/ “(right) now”/ “at this very moment”/ “as we speak”

(NOT “at that moment” X)

(NOT “at this moment” X)

Talking about the distant past phrases

“When I was a baby/ a toddler/ a pre-schooler/ a (young) child/ a tween/ a teenager/ a.....”

“When I was in my (early/ mid/ late) teens/ twenties/ thirties/s,...”

“When I was in (the first year of/ the ... year of) primary school/ kindergarten/”

“The first time I (ever)...”/ “I first...”

“For as long as I can remember,...”/ “As far back as I can remember,...”

“This was (well) before I remember, but...”

(NOT “When I was young child,...” X)

Talking about the recent past phrases

“the day before yesterday”/ “the week before last”/ “the... before...”

“I last...”/ “The last time I...”

“(just/ only) a couple of days ago/ the other day”

“in the last few days”

“recently”

“(early) this morning”

“(just) last night/ yesterday evening”

(NOT “a couple of days before” X)

Talking about experiences/ Linking the past and present phrases

“I have... once or twice/ a couple of times/ several times/ quite a few times/ more times than I can count/ ... times”

“I haven't... for ages.”

“In the last few days/ weeks/ months,...”

“I have never (ever)...”

“I've got used to...”

(NOT “I have ever...” X)

Talking about future arrangements (appointments, dates, etc) phrases

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"I'm meeting up with some friends and..." / "I'm ...ing with ... (and...)"

"I've (already) arranged to..."

"I have a date/ a meeting/ an appointment with... at... on..."

(NOT "I have an appointment with some friends to..." X)

(NOT "I will..." X)

Talking about your plans phrases

"I'm (probably) going to..."

"I'm planning to..."

"I'm thinking about/ I'm considering..."

"I've decided to..."

(NOT "I have a plan to..." X)

(NOT "I'm thinking to..." X)

Talking about desires phrases

"I'd (really) like to..." / "I'd (really) love to..."

"What I (really) want to do is..."

"My dream is to..."

"I have my heart set on..."

Talking about predictions phrases

"(It's difficult to predict but) I imagine/ I guess..."

"I may (well)/ might (well)..."

"I'll probably..."

"I (confidently/ fully) expect to (be able to)..."

"I could possibly..."

"Looking into my crystal ball, I see..."

(NOT "I can possibly..." X)

(NOT "I will possibly..." X)

(NOT "I would..." X)

Talking about the near future phrases

"the day after tomorrow" / "the week after next" / "the... after..."

"in the next couple of days/ few days/ ... days"

"in the (very) near future"

"any day now"

"(first thing) tomorrow morning"

"as soon as this test finishes"

"later (today)"

"(sometime/ very) soon"

"by the end of this week/ by the end of..."

(NOT "a couple of days after" X)

(NOT "a couple of days later" X)

(NOT "at 2050" X)

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Talking about the distant future phrases

“by the time I retire”

“someday”/ “sometime”/ “one day”

“in 20...”

“in the distant future”

“when I am old”

“This won’t happen for ages (if ever), but...”

Speculating/ Hypothesising/ Imagining (alternative universes, etc) phrases

“If things were different,...”/ “If things had been different,...”

“In a perfect world/ In an ideal world,...”

“If I could (have)...”

“If I had(n’t) (had to)...”

“... I would (have)...”

(More natural/ interesting) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

“Generally not.”/ “Not usually.”

“Not (so) much.”/ “Not (so) often.”

“I suppose so.”

“It depends (on...)”.

“(Yeah,) I guess.”

“Sure (, why not?)”

“Sort of.”/ “Kind of.”/ “Kinda.”

“That’s what I’ve been told.”/ “That’s what I’ve heard.”

“Not exactly.”

“Not right now.”

“Hardly (at all/ ever).”

“Fairly.”/ “Somewhat.”/ “Quite a lot.”

“Not as far as I remember.”

“Not as much as...”/ “Not like...”

“Not at all.”/ “Never.”

“I wouldn’t say...”

“Sometimes.”/ “From time to time.”

“Not according to...”

“Very.”/ “Extremely.”/ “(Quite) a lot.”

“Well, actually...”

“I wouldn’t necessarily call it...”

“Of course (not).”

“Probably (not).”

“Some people might say that.”

“Not if I can help it.”

“Maybe (someday).”

“You could say that.”

“As long as...”/ “Only if...”/ “Only when...”/ “Providing...”

“I may well.”

“Apart from...”

“I try to avoid it if I can.”

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“More or less.”
“Not by... standards.”
“Not compared to...”
“Not that you’d notice.”
“Nothing springs to mind.”
“Only if you compare it to...”/ “Only in comparison to...”
“Only in so far as...”
“That’s sometimes the case.”
“No way!”
“Are you kidding?”
“Not even once.”

Giving reasons phrases

“I’m not really sure why, but perhaps it’s because...”
“The (chief/ main) reason why (I feel that way) is...”
“This is (almost certainly) because...”
“... so I...”
“This is (probably) due to...”
“in order to...”
“so that...”
“for some reason or the other”

Explaining (more/ things that the examiner might not know or understand) phrases

“It’s difficult to explain (in English/ even in my own language), but...”
“The (direct/ literal/ usual/ best) translation is...”
“... which is a kind of/ a sort of...”
“In other words, ...”
“That is to say...”
“To put that another way, ...”
“i.e., ...”
“There is a word in my language...”
“There is something in my country which we call...”
“..., which can be translated as...”
“which is (a bit) like...”
“which looks/ smells/ tastes/ feels (something) like...”
“In my language, we say..., which means something like...”
“It’s similar to..., but...”
“... which I would define as...”

Changing your mind/ Correcting wrong information phrases

“Sorry, I meant to say...”
“Come to think of, it’s actually...”
“Ah no, that’s wrong. In reality, ...”

Ending (long) answers phrases

“and so on”

“and stuff like that”

“and that kind of thing”

“I could go on (but you get the general idea)”

“Does that answer your question?”

“I think that (about/ more or less/ almost) covers it”

“That’s the main thing”

“etcetera”

“Is that what you wanted to know?”

(NOT “Thank you for listening” X)

(NOT “That’s the end of my answer” X)

(NOT “That’s all” X)

Talking about your education phrases

“I graduated from....”

“I major(ed) in...”

“I’m studying for...”

“I was fairly good at....”

“I didn’t go to...”

“I dropped (out of)....”

Talking about places (hometown, accommodation, etc) phrases

“I come from a small village/ medium-sized town/ big city in...”

“My hometown is about ... from”

“I grew up on the outskirts of...”

“I was brought up...”

“I live on the ... floor of ...”

“I live with...”

“I moved out of my family home when I was...”

“I want to move...”

“I have lived most of my life...”

“I’m moving into a new....”

“I’d like to buy my own place...”

“I share(d) a flat with...”

“I live in the suburbs of....”

“I’m looking for a place in...”

Talking about people/ relationships phrases

“(When it comes to...), I take after my father/ mother/ grand....”

“I really look like.... We have almost the same”

“My personality is similar to my...”

“I didn’t get on/ get along (well) with...”

Talking about festivals and celebrations phrases

“The most famous festival is....”

“It takes place...”

“I take part in ... (almost) every”

“The festival lasts for....”

“Special costumes are worn (by...)”

“... get presents from ...”

Talking about transport and travel phrases

“I usually travel by...”

“I took ... from ... to ...”

“It takes minutes/ hours”

Talking about movies and TV phrases

“It’s on Channel... at ... o’clock on ...days.”

“My favourite movie was directed by...”

“It’s based on...”

“It’s a sequel/ prequel to...”

Talking about music phrases

“I usually listen to...”

“(Most of) my favourite music is...”

“It was a (big) hit...”

“I can play the... (fairly well/ very well/ a little/ but quite badly).”

“It was in the top ten/ twenty/ thirty...”

Talking about your work phrases

“I’m responsible for...”

“I’m in (joint) charge of...”

“I’m working on... at the moment.”

“I’m just... (but I also have a side job, which is...)”

“I report to...”

Talking about your free time/ leisure/ hobbies phrases

“I spend (some of/ much of/ most of) my free time...”

“I don’t have any actual hobbies, but...”

“I go out for...”

“I’d (quite/ really) like to take up...”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming useful vocabulary for IELTS Speaking Part One

Working in small groups, brainstorm at least three words or expressions into each of the categories below, avoiding basic language. If you are scoring, you'll get one point for each word or expression that no one else has thought of (with even small differences being okay) and five points for anything that is not in the list of suggested answers.

Share ten you are sure no one else thought of, copying useful language from the others.

Compare your words and expressions with those in the suggested answers list, sharing any extra vocabulary that you wrote with the class.

Underline the most useful vocabulary for you from your list and the suggested answers list, then use that vocabulary to find things in common with your partner(s).

Try to use that vocabulary to answer Speaking Part One questions, the first time looking at your list to help.

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Vocabulary for talking about names

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

Vocabulary for talking about music

Vocabulary for talking about work

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

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The big list of useful vocabulary for IELTS Speaking Part One

Vocabulary for talking about names

surname/ family name/ last name
first name/ given name/ Christian name
nickname
full name
middle name
named after
short for/ abbreviation
initials

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

(Ivy League/ vocational/ junior/ technical) college
(first/ bachelor's) degree/ BA/ BSc
doctorate/ PhD
Master's/ MA/ MBA/ MSc
preschool/ nursery school/ kindergarten
(primary/ elementary/ secondary/ high/ cram/ grad) school
uni
graduate from
major in
pass (with flying colours)
scrape through
drop out
(entrance/ national) exam/ (end of term) test/ finals
cram/ swot
(fellow) alumni
retake/ re-sit
learn by heart
freshman/ first year student
sophomore/ second year student
junior/ third year student/ final year student
postgrad/ postgraduate
take notes
revise/ revision/ review
be distracted/ drift off
concentrate/ focus

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

(high-rise) apartment block/ block of flats
birthplace
camper van/ RV
caravan
company accommodation/ company dorm
condo/ condominium
family home
hometown

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host family
(youth) hostel
local area/ neighbourhood
(shared/ detached/ terraced/ semi-detached) house
student halls/ dorms
(studio) flat/ (studio) apartment
grew up/ was brought up
suburb
outskirts
town centre/ city centre/ downtown
neighbourhood
residential area
my own place
move out/ leave home
top floor/ penthouse
easy access/ transport connections
natural light
ground floor
B&B/ bed and breakfast
holiday home/ second home
dream home
commuter town/ satellite town/ dormitory town
green spaces
my roots
village/ hamlet
rural
rundown
gentrified

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

(ex)classmate/ fellow student
(ex)colleague/ workmate/ co-worker
(best/ oldest/ good/ old/ close/ male/ female) friend/ bestie/ BFF
(distant/ close) relative/ relation/ member of my family
(not) get on (well) with/ get along (well) with
acquaintance
(direct) boss/ (line) manager
clash with
fellow graduate/ fellow alumni/ fellow...
in-laws/ mother-in-law/ sister-in-law/ father-in-law/ brother-in-law
housemate/ flatmate/ roommate
only child
take after
look like
extended family
ancestor
look up to

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generation gap
(maternal/ paternal) grandparents
tell off
strict
indulge/ indulgent
spoilt

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

coming of age (day)
(local/ summer/ traditional) festival
fireworks (display)
street stalls
wedding (ceremony/ reception)
dress up/ (special) costume
take part in
take place
parade/ procession
a toast
(high school) reunion
street party
marked by/ with

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

(night/ local/ long distance/ highway/ Greyhound) bus/ coach
public transport/ public transportation
(local/ commuter/ rapid/ express/ bullet/ sleeper) train
tram/ streetcar
abroad/ overseas/ foreign countries
on foot
(business/ day)trip
broaden your horizons
backpacking
hitchhike
(hire/ shopper/ mountain) bike/ bicycle

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

cartoon/ (Japanese) animation
rom-com
sci-fi
thriller
directed by
starring
based on
set in
sequel/ prequel
adaptation
costume drama/ historical drama

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current affairs
game show/ quiz show
murder mystery/ whodunit
reality TV
sit-com/ situation comedy
sketch show
soap opera
stand-up comedy
talk show
travel programme
wildlife documentary
follow
binge
boxset
streaming (app/ service)
couch potato
telly addict
channel hopping

Vocabulary for talking about music

(19)50s/60s/70s/80s/90s
chart music/ top ten (hits)
classical
country (and western)
crooners
dance/ EDM
easy listening
folk/ traditional (music)
girl band/ boy band
(Japanese) hip hop/ rap
(big) hit
indie/ alternative (rock)
love songs
(mainstream/ Japanese/ Korean/ K-/ bubble gum) pop
(Japanese/ gangster) rap/ hip hop
R&B
(classic/ hard) rock
rock'n'roll
world music
drown out/ block out

Vocabulary for talking about work

responsible for...
in charge of...
report to...
side job/ side hustle
office worker

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(data entry) clerk
(line/ middle) manager/ (direct) boss
get promoted
between jobs/ on the dole
lose your job
downsizing

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

interested in
take up
go out for...
day off
stay (at) home/ stay in
meet up with
unwind/ relax/ chill/ take it easy/ laze around
do the housework/ do my chores
go (window) shopping
have a lie-in/ catch up with my sleep
keep fit
tidy up
hang out with
stay up (late/ all night)
DIY/ household maintenance/ jobs around the house

IELTS Speaking Part Two section

See also:

- Ask and analyse 100 IELTS Speaking Part One questions (linking Part One to Parts Two and/ or Three) page 16
- IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases (linking Part One to Parts Two and/ or Three) page 29

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Analyse and write IELTS Speaking Part Two tasks

Part One: Analysis

After four minutes of personal questions in Speaking Part One, the examiner will say something like "Now I'd like you to speak on your own for one or two minutes. First you have one minute to prepare what you are going to say. You can make notes to help you if you like. Here is your topic sheet", and give you one card like those below.

Some typical Speaking Part Two (long turn) topics are the same as typical Speaking Part One topics (though they will never have the same topic in one exam). Match these tasks with ones with the same topic on the next page, then label each pair with its topic.

Describe your dream home. You should mention:

- Its location
- The outside
- The inside

And say how much difference you thinking living in such a place would make to your life.

Talk about something that you can cook. You should include:

- The ingredients
- The method of making it
- How it is eaten

And say how you feel about cooking this.

Give a one- or two-minute presentation on an instrument that you have tried to learn how to play, including in your answer:

- Why you tried to learn that instrument
- How you tried to learn
- How successful you were

And how you might have tried to learn in a more efficient way.

Speak for between one and two minutes about someone you got on well with at school, mentioning:

- How you first met
- What you had in common
- What you did together

And whether you have stayed in touch since school or not and why.

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Give a short presentation on a restaurant you have been to, mentioning:

- Its appearance
- Its atmosphere
- The service

And say who you would recommend it for.

Tell the examiner about a relative, including in your answer:

- Their relationship to you
- Their appearance
- Their personality

And say what similarities you think there are between that person and you.

Speak on your own about an exhibition you went to. Your answer should include:

- The topic of the exhibition
- Where it was
- How long you spent there

And how you now feel about that exhibition and why.

Speak about the house or flat you grew up in, including:

- How big it was
- Where it was
- What was nearby

And say how it compares to other places you have stayed.

What is similar about all the tasks above?

What differences are there between them?

How are the bullet points similar to each other?

How is the last (= fourth) question on each card different to the other three questions on that card? How are the fourth questions on different cards similar to each other?

Find examples of the things on the next page above, to see if they are true in all tasks (A), true in only some tasks (S) or not true in any tasks (N).

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- A phrase meaning “Tell me about...”
- Being asked to talk about a place, person, thing, time or action.
- Being asked to talk about one specific thing, e.g. one particular person.
- Being asked to talk about things in general, e.g. places that share some characteristic.
- Three sub-topics that you should speak about
- Four sub-topics that you should speak about
- Sub-topics starting with question words (= Wh words).
- Sub-topics not starting with question words (= Wh words).
- Sub-topics that need longer answers such as Why questions
- Sub-topics which are just yes/ no questions

Part Two: Question writing

Write similar tasks on these topics for students in another group to speak about, making sure that the tasks match the descriptions above:

- Hobbies and free time
- Hometown
- Sports and games/ Exercise
- Transport and travel
- Work and studies

Give the task to someone from another group, using this script:

“I’m going to give you a topic, and I’d like you to talk about it for one or two minutes. Before you speak, you have one minute to prepare what you are going to say. You can make notes to help you if you like. Here’s a pencil and some paper for making notes”.

“Here’s your topic on this task card. I’d like you to speak about (*only read the top line of the card*).”

(candidate prepares for one minute)

“OK. Now, remember that you have one or two minutes for this. Don’t worry if I interrupt you. I’ll tell you when the time is up. Can you start speaking now, please?”

(candidate speaks for one or two minutes)

“Thank you.”

(examiner asks one or two extra questions on the topic, e.g. “You said... Do you...?”)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

After discussing good and bad advice for someone doing Speaking Part Two in an IELTS exam, read through the tips below and cross off any which are not a good idea.

Before you start IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you think the topic is too difficult, ask for another one (“Sorry, can I change task?”, “I’m sorry but this is too difficult. Is there another choice?”, etc).
- In the very rare case that you really can’t talk about the topic, ask to talk about a different topic and explain why (“I’m afraid I can’t talk about this because I’ve never...”, “Sorry, the task says to talk about... but I haven’t experienced...”, etc).
- If there is anything on the question sheet you don’t understand, just ask (“Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?”, “Sorry. Could you explain this word here?”, etc)
- If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask (“The only thing I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?”, “Can I speak about...?”, “Is it okay to speak about...?”, “Is... a kind of...?”, “Does this topic include...?”, etc).
- The examiner will take the task card back before you start speaking, so you need to copy it or memorise it.
- It’s often best to brainstorm possible topics before you choose one.
- It’s usually best to write your notes in your own language to save time.
- It’s usually best to write your notes as a mind map.
- Write the beginning of your presentation out in full to read out when you start speaking (writing “I’m going to speak about my teacher when I was twelve. She...”, etc).
- You should generally use the whole minute to prepare, until you are asked to speak.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just start when you like.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just ask (“Can I start?”, “Is that one minute?”, “I think I’m ready”, “Shall I get started?”, etc).
- If you need extra time to prepare, just ask (“Just a moment, I’m nearly ready”, “Sorry, I just need to finish writing this”, “Sorry, I suddenly realised that I misunderstood the question. Can I have another minute?”, etc).

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should usually start by reading out the first words on the task sheet.
- It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time that you do a Speaking Part Two task (“I’d like to speak about...” “I’m going to talk about...”, “I’ve chosen to talk about...”, “I’ve decided to talk about...”, etc).
- A more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation (“I’m really glad I got this topic because...”, “There were many things I could have spoken about, but...”, “It’s a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...”, “The only thing I could think of to talk about was...”, “It was difficult to choose a topic but I finally settled on...”, etc).
- Starting formal presentations phrases are useful (“My presentation is divided into four parts”, “Thank you for inviting me here today”, etc).

The middle of IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should often correct yourself when you make language errors such as grammar mistakes (“Sorry, I should say...”, “Sorry for my bad grammar. I meant...”, “Sorry, that’s not correct. It should be...”, “Sorry, the past of ‘seek’ should be...”, etc).

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- You should usually only correct yourself if the information is wrong or would be difficult to understand (“Sorry, that’s wrong. Actually...”, “Come to think of it, it was actually...”, “I mean...”, “Sorry, maybe that doesn’t make sense. What I meant to say was...”, etc).
- You can show your range of language by rephrasing the words on the task sheet instead of repeating them.
- You have to deal with the four sub-topics in the same order as the task sheet.
- Make sure that you finish talking about all four sub-topics within two minutes.
- Make sure that you stick to the four sub-topics and make some progress through them (“Turning to the next question”, “And the next thing I’m supposed to talk about is...”, “And about...”, “Moving onto...”, etc).
- If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic (“Sorry, I should have been speaking about...”, “Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions...”, “Where was I? Oh yes...”, etc).
- Try to add extra interesting information that isn’t asked for on the task sheet (“By the way...”, “Going off topic for a second...”, “That reminds me of a funny story”, “Before I go on...”, etc).
- You should fill all silence if you can’t read your notes, can’t think of the right word in English, forget what you were going to say, need to look at the task sheet, etc (“Sorry, I’m just having problems...”, “Just a moment while I look at...”, “What was I going to say next? Oh yes...”, etc).
- If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so (“I’ve forgotten..., but...”, “As far as I remember...”, “My memory is a little hazy, but...”, etc).
- Because the four sub-topics are all related, you’ll probably have to refer back to what you said earlier (“As I just said...”, “Adding to what I said about...”, etc).
- You should ask questions to involve the examiner (“Do you know what I mean?”, “Do you know what... is?”, “Have you heard of...?”, “Did I already mention...?”, etc).

Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you’ve spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say (“What else can I say? Well, I suppose...”, “One more thing I could say about... is...”, “About... I could add that...”, “Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...”, etc).
- If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so (“That’s all I can think of to say”, “I think I’ve covered all four points”, “That about covers it”, etc).
- It’s normal to use ending business presentations or academic presentations language (“That brings me to the end of my presentation”, “That was all that I wanted to say today”, “That is all the time that I have to speak about this topic”, etc).
- If the examiner is trying to interrupt you, quickly finish off the rest of your presentation (“And anyway, in the end...”, “And to quickly answer the fourth question...”, etc).
- You need a final conclusion or summary at the end of your presentation (“In conclusion...”, “To sum all that up...”, etc).
- When you finish, it is worth checking if your speaking was okay (“How did I do?”, “Did that answer all four questions?”, “Was I mostly on topic?”, etc).

Check as a class or with the suggested answers.

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Suggested answers

The good tips are underlined, so please check if you chose others.

Before you start IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you think the topic is too difficult, ask for another one (“Sorry, can I change task?”, “I’m sorry but this is too difficult. Is there another choice?”, etc).
- In the very rare case that you really can’t talk about the topic, ask to talk about a different topic (“I’m afraid I can’t talk about this because I’ve never...”, “Sorry, the task says to talk about... but I haven’t experienced...”, etc).
- If there is anything on the question sheet you don’t understand, just ask (“Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?”, “Sorry. Could you explain this word here?”, etc)
- If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask (“The only thing I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?”, “Can I speak about...?”, “Is it okay to speak about...?”, “Is... a kind of...?”, “Does this topic include...?”, etc).
- The examiner will take the task card back before you start speaking, so you need to copy it or memorise it.
- It’s often best to brainstorm possible topics before you choose one.
- It’s usually best to write your notes in your own language to save time.
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- Write the beginning of your presentation out in full to read out when you start speaking (writing “I’m going to speak about my teacher when I was twelve. She...”, etc).
- You should generally use the whole minute to prepare, until you are asked to speak.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just start when you like.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just ask (“Can I start?”, “Is that one minute?”, “I think I’m ready”, “Shall I get started?”, etc).
- If you need extra time to prepare, just ask (“Just a moment, I’m nearly ready”, “Sorry, I just need to finish writing this”, “Sorry, I suddenly realised that I misunderstood the question. Can I have another minute?”, etc).

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should usually start by reading out the first words on the task sheet.
- It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time that you do a Speaking Part Two task (“I’d like to speak about...”, “I’m going to talk about...”, “I’ve chosen to talk about...”, “I’ve decided to talk about...”, etc).
- A more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation (“I’m really glad I got this topic because...”, “There were many things I could have spoken about, but...”, “It’s a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...”, “The only thing I could think of to talk about was...”, “It was difficult to choose a topic but I finally settled on...”, etc).
- Starting formal presentations phrases are useful (“My presentation is divided into four parts”, “Thank you for inviting me here today”, etc).

The middle of IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should often correct yourself when you make language errors such as grammar mistakes (“Sorry, I should say...”, “Sorry for my bad grammar. I meant...”, “Sorry, that’s not correct. It should be...”, “Sorry, the past of ‘seek’ should be...”, etc).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

- You should usually only correct yourself if the information is wrong or would be difficult to understand (“Sorry, that’s wrong. Actually...”, “Come to think of it, it was actually...”, “I mean...”, “Sorry, maybe that doesn’t make sense. What I meant to say was...”, etc).
- You can show your range of language by rephrasing the words on the task sheet instead of repeating them.
- You have to deal with the four sub-topics in the same order as the task sheet.
- Make sure that you finish talking about all four sub-topics within two minutes.
- Make sure that you stick to the four sub-topics and make some progress through them (“Turning to the next question”, “And the next thing I’m supposed to talk about is...”, “And about...”, “Moving onto...”, etc).
- If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic (“Sorry, I should have been speaking about...”, “Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions...”, “Where was I? Oh yes...”, etc).
- Try to add extra interesting information that isn’t asked for on the task sheet (“By the way,...”, “Going off topic for a second,...”, “That reminds me of a funny story”, “Before I go on,...”, etc).
- You should fill all silence if you can’t read your notes, can’t think of the right word in English, forget what you were going to say, need to look at the task sheet, etc (“Sorry, I’m just having problems...”, “Just a moment while I look at...”, “What was I going to say next? Oh yes...”, etc).
- If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so (“I’ve forgotten..., but...”, “As far as I remember...”, “My memory is a little hazy, but...”, etc).
- Because the four sub-topics are all related, you’ll probably have to refer back to what you said earlier (“As I just said,...”, “Adding to what I said about.....”, etc).
- You should ask questions to involve the examiner (“Do you know what I mean?”, “Do you know what... is?”, “Have you heard of...?”, “Did I already mention...?”, etc).

Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you’ve spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say (“What else can I say? Well, I suppose...”, “One more thing I could say about... is...”, “About... I could add that...”, “Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...”, etc).
- If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so (“That’s all I can think of to say”, “I think I’ve covered all four points”, “That about covers it”, etc).
- It’s normal to use ending business presentations or academic presentations language (“That brings me to the end of my presentation”, “That was all that I wanted to say today”, “That is all the time that I have to speak about this topic”, etc).
- If the examiner is trying to interrupt you, quickly finish off the rest of your presentation (“And anyway, in the end...”, “And to quickly answer the fourth question,...”, etc).
- You need a final conclusion or summary at the end of your presentation (“In conclusion,...”, “To sum all that up,...”, etc).
- When you finish, it is worth checking if your speaking was okay (“How did I do?”, “Did that answer all four questions?”, “Was I mostly on topic?”, etc).

Ask about any different choices you made, phrases you don’t understand, etc.

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Brainstorming stage

First of all without looking above, brainstorm useful phrases for the good tips below into the gaps.

In the very rare case that you really can't talk about the topic, ask to talk about a different topic and explain why:

If there is anything on the question sheet you don't understand, just ask:

If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask:

If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just ask:

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time that you do a Speaking Part Two task:

A more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation:

The middle of IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

You should usually only correct yourself if the information is wrong or would be difficult to understand:

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Make sure that you stick to the four sub-topics and make some progress through them:

If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic:

You should fill all silence if you can't read your notes, can't think of the right word in English, forget what you were going to say, need to look at the task sheet, etc:

If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so:

Because the four sub-topics are all related, you'll probably have to refer back to what you said earlier:

Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you've spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say:

If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so:

Check above, brainstorm more, then check your extra ideas as a class and/ or with lists of useful phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two disappearing text memory game

Take turns being the examiner and candidate with this task:

Examiner: "I'm going to give you a topic, and I'd like you to talk about it for one or two minutes. Before you speak, you have one minute to prepare what you are going to say. You can make notes to help you if you like. Here's your topic on this task card. I'd like you to speak about a time that you shopped or window-shopped in a particular street." (*The examiner gives the task below to the candidate*)

(*The candidate prepares this task for one minute*)

Describe a time that you shopped or window-shopped in a particular street.

You should talk about:

- the street's location
- what kinds of shops are there
- how long you spent there

And say if you would like to do the same thing in the same place again or not, and why.

Examiner: "OK. Now, remember that you have one or two minutes for this. Don't worry if I interrupt you. I'll tell you when the time is up. Can you start speaking now, please?" (*The candidate speaks for one or two minutes*)

Examiner: "Thank you." (*The examiner asks one or two extra questions on the topic, e.g. "You said... ..you...?"*)

Look at the model answer below and find similarities and differences to your answer (in terms of topics, amount of detail, tactics, functional language, etc). Then ask about anything in the text which you don't understand, think would be better another way, etc.

Work in groups. Look at the text your teacher tells you to. The first person reads out the whole text, then covers one word with a piece of paper (or changes it to white in an electronic copy).

The next person will then read the whole text, including the covered word(s), and cover one more word. Take turns reading out the text and covering words until the whole text is covered, you give up, or your teacher stops the game. You must say exactly what is written, even when other words would be correct.

After using all three texts and doing the brainstorming, do the speaking task again, trying to include all these functions in your answers:

Checking phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Getting back on topic phrases

Referring back to what you said before

Ending the Speaking Part 2 presentation

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two

Vague statements/ Soft statements

Adding extra info phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Text 1: Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two presentations disappearing text

Sorry,	can	I	check	my
choice	of	topic?	The	only
place	that	I	could	come
up	with	was	the	entrance
to	a	temple,	but	does
that	count	as	a	street?
Great,	I'll	pick	that,	then.
Well,	as	I	said,	I've
decided	to	talk	about	the
pedestrian -ised	street	that	runs	up
to	Senso-ji	temple	in	northeast -ern
Tokyo.	That	basically	answers	the
first	question,	but	I	could
add	that	it's	near	other
touristy	areas	like	the	river.

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Text 2: The body of IELTS Speaking Part Two presentations disappearing text

Turning	to	the	variety	of
stores,	they	mostly	sell	traditional
goods,	but	there	are	also
some	with	plastic	souvenirs	like
models	of	Tokyo	Tower.	So
tacky!	Anyway,	what's	the	next
question?	Just	a	moment	while
I	look	at	the	task
sheet.	Oh	yes,	the	length
of	time	I	was	there.
It's	difficult	to	remember	but
I	reckon	at	least	half
an	hour.	There	were	so
many	interesting	things,	what	to
buy	was	difficult	to	choose.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Text 3 – Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two presentations disappearing text

Have	I	answered	all	the
questions?	Let's	see.	Oh,	I'm
also	supposed	to	talk	about
visiting	again.	It	definitely	wouldn't
be	so	exciting	the	second
time,	but	I	guess	it'd
be	fun	if	I	took
someone	who	hadn't	been	there
before.	Well,	I	imagine	I
have	some	time	left,	so
what	else	can	I	say?
Well,	I	think	I've	covered
everything	and	my	mind's	gone
blank,	so	I'd	better	stop
there,	if	that's	okay.	-

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above for now, write as many useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Two as you can in each category below.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet and your choice of topic phrases

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

Getting back on topic phrases

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics/ four questions phrases

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

Look above for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class and/ or with a list of possible phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two key words list dictation

Student A

Choose one section below. Read out examples with that key word missing until your partner guesses the key word. They can only guess once per hint. If you run out of examples before they guess the key word, make up other examples with the same word missing (including non-exam examples if you need to).

a – “Can I just check something? Is a van with a bed in it a kind of accommodation?”/ “I’m sorry but can I ask a question about the task sheet?”/ “Sorry, I’m off topic. Just a moment, I’ll check the task sheet. Ah ha, I see. Well...”

about – “Sorry, is this third question asking about the location?”/ “Can I speak about my family home?”/ “So, with this task, am I allowed to talk about something in the future?”/ “That about covers it.”

as – “As far as the participants are concerned...”/ “As I said earlier when I was talking about how it happened...”/ “It was a very long time ago, but as far as I remember...”

at – “Just a moment while I look again at the task sheet.”/ “Taking another look at the task, I see that I should also talk about...”/ “It wasn’t at all difficult for me to choose what to talk about, because...”

check – “Sorry before I start preparing, can I just check if I understand the task?”/ “Sorry but can I check if what I’ve thought of matches this task?”/ “Can I just check? Would talking about my in-laws be off topic?”

does – “So, does that mean that I can talk about pre-school as well?”/ “Does this topic include my extended family?”/ “Sorry. Does a diet shake count as a sort of food?”/ “What does this bit say? Oh, yes...”

for – “Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions...”/ “There was one obvious choice of topic for me, which was my last boss, because...”/ “It was difficult to decide whether to talk about my mum or dad, but I went for the former because...”

get – “Shall I get started?”/ “Sorry but I seem to have gone slightly off topic. To get back to how I felt about it then...”/ “Anyway, to get back on track...”

got – “Just a second while I have another look at the task. OK. Got it now.”/ “I’m really glad I got this topic because...”/ “It’s a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...”

have/ ’ve – “So, I’ve chosen to speak about...”/ “Sorry, I should really have been talking about...”/ “Have I covered all four points? Oh, no...”/ “I’m pretty sure I’ve covered all four points.”/ “I think I’ve probably covered everything.”

my – “Just a minute while I check my notes.”/ “Sorry, I’m having problems reading my own handwriting. Ah yes...”/ “My memory is a little hazy, but I do recall...”

Swap worksheets and do the same, starting with the most difficult to guess examples.

Ask about anything which you can’t understand, think could have a different word, etc.

Without looking at this page, use each key word on the Key Words List to write at least two suitable phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Two. Your teacher will tell you if/ when you can look at the categories on the following page to help.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student B

Choose one section below. Read out examples with that key word missing until your partner guesses the key word. They can only guess once per hint. If you run out of examples before they guess the key word, make up other examples with the same word missing (including non-exam examples if you need to).

of – “The only suitable thing that I could think of to speak about is...”/ “I can’t think of anything else to write, so I’d like to make a start, if that’s allowed.”/ “I have had a couple of scary experiences, but the one that stands out is the one last year, because...”/ “I can’t think of anything else to say.”

off – “As I was saying before I went off topic,...”/ “Sorry, I’ve wandered off my original topic, which was...”/ “I seem to be going off topic, so I’d better stop there.”

okay – “Excuse me. Is it okay to speak about...?”/ “The only thing that I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?”/ “OK. I think I’m ready to start, if that’s okay.”

on – “What’s the next point on the task sheet? Oh yes,...”/ “It was quite difficult to choose a topic, but I finally settled on talking about my teddy.”/ “On the same topic,...”/ “Moving on to the question about the route there,...”

one – “There’s only one thing which I can talk about, which is...”/ “One more thing I could say about the history of it is...”/ “I have seen several accidents, but the one I’ve chosen to talk about is...”

or – “That’s more or less all I can think of to say.”/ “... or something of that sort.”
“..., or something like that anyway.”

the – “I can’t remember the name in English, but...”/ “What was the next question again? Oh yes,...”/ “The way I remember it now, it occurred...”/ “Answering the same question,...”/ “And the next thing that I’m supposed to talk about is...”

there – “There were many things I could’ve spoken about, but I chose...”/ “Can I stop there?”/ “What else is there to say about this? Well, I suppose...”

to – “OK. I’d like to speak about...”/ “Right. I’m going to talk about...”/ “Turning to the next question,...”/ “It’s difficult to explain, but...”/ “When it comes to problems that occurred,...”

was – “What was I going to say next? Oh yes,...”/ “It was a long time ago, but I reckon...”/ “Where was I? Oh yes,...”

what – “Sorry but I’m not sure what this final bullet point means.”/ “Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?”/ “Adding to what I just said about my recommendations,...”/ “Going back to what I said earlier about the original idea,...”

yet – “Have I answered all of the questions? Not yet. I also need to say...”/ “I don’t think I’ve talked about the length of time yet. Well,...”/ “Which part of the question haven’t I answered yet? Oh yes, this bit. Well,...”

you – “Sorry. Could you explain this word here?”/ “Well, I’ve decided to tell you about...”/ “My notes are ready, so I may as well get started, if you don’t mind.”

Swap worksheets and do the same, starting with the most difficult to guess examples.

Ask about anything which you can’t understand, think could have a different word, etc.

Without looking at this page, use each key word on the Key Words List to write at least two suitable phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Two. Your teacher will tell you if/ when you can look at the categories on the following page to help.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Key words list

a

about

as

at

check

does

for

get

got

have/ 've

my

of

off

okay

on

one

or

the

there

to

was

what

yet

you

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Write at least two suitable phrases for each category below. Your teacher will tell you if/ when you can use the key words and/ or phrases to help.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Checking your choice of topic phrases

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

Getting back on topic phrases

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two line by line brainstorming

Take turns being the examiner and candidate with this task:

Examiner: "I'm going to give you a topic, and I'd like you to talk about it for one or two minutes. Before you speak, you have one minute to prepare what you are going to say. You can make notes to help you if you like. Here's a pencil and some paper for making notes. Here's your topic on this task card. I'd like you to speak about a journey that you took with other people." *(The examiner gives the task below to the candidate)*

(The candidate prepares this task for one minute)

Describe a journey that you took with other people.

You should say:

- your destination
- who you went with, and why
- what you talked about during the journey

And say if you would have preferred to take that journey alone or not, and why.

Examiner: "OK. Now, remember that you have one or two minutes for this. Don't worry if I interrupt you. I'll tell you when the time is up. Can you start speaking now, please?"

(The candidate speaks for one or two minutes)

Examiner: "Thank you." *(The examiner asks one or two extra questions on the topic, e.g. "You said... Do you...?")*

You are going to look at a sample answer to the same task, but only little by little, after brainstorming what each line might be.

Look at just the top hint below, covering the rest of the text with a piece of paper, book, etc. (Or change the rest of the text to white if you are working with an electronic copy, for example in an online class).

Brainstorm suitable phrases for the function that you can see, choose the most suitable phrase, then reveal just the next section to see how similar it is to what you guessed. Brainstorm possible next lines for the candidate to say (skipping the examiner's parts) and choose the best/ the most likely. Look at the next hint (only) to see if you had the right idea, and brainstorm again if the hint is not similar to what you brainstormed before. Then reveal the next line. Continue the same line by line, always guessing before revealing the hint and the next line, until the end of that worksheet.

Ask about any phrases you don't understand, situations which don't seem typical, other phrases you thought of for the same situations, etc. Then do the brainstorming task.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The candidate checks the meaning of something on the task sheet
Excuse me. Before I start preparing, can I ask what one word means? Does “destination” mean the final point of the journey?
The candidate checks if their choice of topic matches the task
Sorry but the only journey like that which springs to mind was a day trip. Is a day trip a kind of journey? If so, can I talk about that?
The candidate prepares in silence for just under a minute, then asks if they can start early
... Okay, I think I’m ready to start, if that’s alright.
The candidate starts their presentation by saying which specific topic they chose (and maybe why)
The obvious choice of topic for me was a day trip I took a few years ago, because I was looking at photos from that journey again just the other day. So, I’d like to talk about a car trip I took in around 2017.
The candidate talks about one of the four sub-topics (referring to the task sheet, but rephrasing the words on it)
So, starting with the second question on here, about my companion, I went with my older brother. He’s about twelve years older than me, so this was a great chance to get to know each other again long after he had left home, and with us both as adults.
The candidate adds more information to the answer to the same question
The other relevant thing that I could say about him is that he is a very successful and busy entrepreneur, so we had to seize any time that he did have to do something together.
The candidate switches to another sub-topic on the card
As for where we went, it was to Salisbury Cathedral. It’s a particularly beautiful church in the southwest of England, not far from Stonehenge. It became famous recently because two Russian assassins claimed that their reason for visiting the UK was just to go there!

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The candidate gets back on topic
Sorry, I've gone a bit off topic. Anyway, the final goal was Salisbury, but we also stopped at a few nice villages that we passed through along the way.
The candidate asks the examiner to wait while they check their notes, then adds what is written there
Just a moment while I have a look at my notes. Sorry, I'm having problems reading my own handwriting. Ah yes, moving onto subjects we chatted about, I can't remember any specific conversations, but I do remember that he was planning his wedding at that time, so I'm sure we talked about that.
The candidate adds more on the same point
What else can I say about our chat? Well, I guess we must have also talked about football, because we always do. It wasn't a good season for our team, so it was almost certainly mostly complaining!
The candidate checks if they have finished or not and then switches to the remaining sub-topic on the card (including referring back to what they said earlier)
Have I covered all four points? Maybe not. What else do I have to talk about? Let me just have a look at the task sheet again. Oh, yes, if I have any regrets about going there together or not. Well, as I said earlier, it's not often I get the chance to spend time together with my big bro, so I definitely wouldn't want to have missed that chance.
The candidate fills silence while they think of other things to say, then goes back to an earlier topic and adds more on it
Are there any other important points that I missed? Let me think. Well, going back to what we covered in our conversations, I've just remembered that he'd read up on the history of the town, so I got a little lecture on that from him. However, I'm not sure you could really call that part a conversation!
The candidate finishes (because they really can't think of more to say)
Well, I think I've covered all four points and I really can't think of anything else to say, so can I stop there?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorm useful phrases into each space below. Phrases not above are also fine.
Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Checking your choice of topic phrases

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

Getting back on topic phrases

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

Find suitable phrases for the brainstorming in the dialogues, brainstorm more, then compare your extra phrases as a class and/ or with a list of phrases.

IELTS Speaking Part Two longer phrases card games

Instructions for teachers

*Give students just the edge (right-hand and left-hand) cards to put together to make basic phrases for giving IELTS Speaking Part Two presentations, then also give them the middle cards (in **bold**) to check and expand on their answers.*

If they get stuck, you can:

- say that if they can't put bold cards in the middle, they probably got the basic phrases wrong
- read out two of the parts of some of or all of the sentences

After checking their answers and doing the brainstorming, they can test each other by:

- reading out a phrase with one bit missing
- reading out one card and helping their partner make the whole phrase
- reading out the name of the function and helping their partner make suitable phrases

Students can then deal out all the cards and try to use phrases including those words in exam presentation tasks.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Cards to cut up/ Suggested answers

Sorry but I'm not sure what this	first/ second/ third/ last	bullet point means.
Sorry but	before I start preparing	can I just check if I understand the task?
The only thing	that/ which	I can think of to speak about is my teddy. Is that okay?
Sorry but I'm not sure if what I've thought of	really/ perfectly	matches this task. Can I check?
I'm	really/ so	glad I got this topic because...
It was difficult to choose a topic, but I	finally	settled on/ decided...
Just a moment while I look	again	at my notes. Oh, yes,...
Just a second while I	have another	look at the task sheet. OK. Got it.
I don't remember the location	very well/ very clearly	, but from what I do recall...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

It was a	very	long time ago, but as far as I remember...
Sorry, I seem to have gone	slightly/ completely	off topic. Getting back to the second question,...
Sorry, I should	really/ actually	have been talking about...
What else	can I say/ is there to say/ is relevant	? Well, I suppose I could add...
As I said	earlier/ a second ago	when I was talking about the venue,...
What's the next point	that I have to talk about/ on the task sheet	? Oh yes, the timing. Well,...
And the next thing	that I'm supposed	to talk about is the people there. Well,...
That's	absolutely/ more or less	all I can think of to say.
I think I've	probably	covered everything. Can I stop there?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking at the cards for now, write as many different phrases as you can for each of these functions. Many phrases not on the cards are also possible.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Checking your choice of topic phrases

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

Getting back on topic phrases

Adding extra info/ Referring back to what you said before phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

*Use the cards to help, starting with just the cards in **bold**.*

Check with an un-cut-up copy of the worksheet. It's in the same order as this sheet.

Brainstorm more, then check as a class or with lists of useful phrases.

Rephrasing in IELTS Speaking Part Two

Try to think of at least one way of rephrasing each of the words and phrases from IELTS Speaking Part Two tasks below. Especially if you can't think of a synonym, you can also write other ways of rephrasing such as examples and other parts of speech (the verb of the noun that is written below, etc). Because they are things that you say, you should also change "you" to "I" etc to make the lines about yourself.

how big

how long you have had it

how often

how you felt when you were making this choice

how you found it out

what it was like

what it looks like inside

what it was about

what sort

what you use it for

when

where it was held

where you went

who was at the meeting

who you do it with

whose party it was

why you remember it well

If your teacher tells you to, use the mixed answers to help.

Compare with the suggested answers, share any other ideas you had, then do the same with the second set of words from tasks to rephrase.

Mixed answers

- a description of it
- at what time
- how come it stays in my mind
- how I utilise it
- how it is decorated
- how it was
- how many ...s I have owned it for
- how many times a...
- how the décor looks
- its function
- its purpose
- my emotions at the moment of decision
- my feelings when I selected which one
- my fellow attendees
- my final destination
- my method of research
- my partner in the activity
- others who took part
- the appearance of the interior
- the area it covered
- the extent
- the frequency with which...
- the host
- the length of time it has been in my possession
- the location
- the participants
- the person who accompanies me
- the person who had the celebration
- the place it took place
- the place where I ended up
- the reason for it sticking in my head
- the schedule
- the size
- the subject (matter)
- the theme
- the timing
- the topic
- the venue
- the way I discovered it
- the way I heard about it
- what genre
- what I can tell you about it (so that you can picture it)
- what kind
- what variety of
- who you do it with

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Many other ways of rephrasing are possible, so please check if you wrote something different.

- how big – the size/ the extent/ the area it covered
- how long you have had it – the length of time it has been in my possession/ how many ...s I have owned it for
- how often – the frequency with which.../ how many times a...
- how you felt when you were making this choice – my emotions at the moment of decision/ my feelings when I selected which one
- how you found it out – the way I discovered it/ the way I heard about it/ my method of research
- what it was like – a description of it/ how it was/ what I can tell you about it (so that you can picture it)
- what it looks like inside – the appearance of the interior/ how the décor looks/ how it is decorated
- what it was about – the subject (matter)/ the topic/ the theme
- what sort – what kind/ what variety of/ what genre
- what you use it for – its purpose/ its function/ how I utilise it
- when – the timing/ the schedule/ at what time
- where it was held – the location/ the venue/ the place it took place
- where you went – my final destination/ the place where I ended up
- who was at the meeting – the participants/ my fellow attendees/ others who took part
- who you do it with – the person who accompanies me/ my partner in the activity
- whose party it was – the person who had the celebration/ the host
- why you remember it well – the reason for it sticking in my head/ how come it stays in my mind

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Second set

Try to think of at least one way of rephrasing each of the words and phrases from IELTS Speaking Part Two tasks below. Especially if you can't think of a synonym, you can also write other ways of rephrasing such as examples and other parts of speech (verb of the noun that is there, etc). Because they are things that you say, you should also make them about yourself (using "I", "my", etc).

a journey

a party

a perfect...

a person you admire

a song or piece of music

a teacher

a well-known person

a writer

an interest or hobby

during your childhood

electronic equipment

near where you live

someone in your family you like

someone you know

that made a strong impression on you

that you find interesting

the result of the discussion

who has influenced you

you would like to meet

Mixed answers

- a celebration
- a celebrity (...)
- a chart hit
- a colleague
- a dream...
- a family member who I'm fond of
- a famous man
- a free time activity
- a gadget
- a house warming
- a journalist
- a novelist
- a pastime
- a relative who I have a soft spot for
- a single
- a trainer
- a trip
- a voyage
- a wedding reception
- a widely recognised expert
- a woman who I respect
- an acquaintance
- an album track
- an educator
- an ideal...
- an instructor
- as a toddler
- I want to be introduced to
- I'd love to have the chance to come face to face with
- in my local area
- in my neighbourhood
- not far from my house
- somebody I look up to
- that blew my mind
- that intrigues me
- the consequence of the conversation
- the person who taught me (...)
- what happened because of that little chat
- when I was a kid
- which blew me away
- which fascinates me
- white goods
- who changed my life
- who inspired me to...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Many other ways of rephrasing are possible, so please check if you wrote something different.

- a journey – a trip/ a voyage
- a party – a celebration/ a house warming/ a wedding reception
- a perfect... – an ideal.../ a dream...
- a person you admire – somebody I look up to/ a woman who I respect
- a song or piece of music – a chart hit/ a single/ an album track
- a teacher – an educator/ a trainer/ an instructor/ the person who taught me (...)
- a well-known person – a famous man/ a widely recognised expert/ a celebrity (...)
- a writer – a journalist/ a novelist
- an interest or hobby – a free time activity/ a pastime
- during your childhood – when I was a kid/ as a toddler
- electronic equipment – a gadget/ white goods
- near where you live – in my neighbourhood/ in my local area/ not far from my house
- someone in your family you like – a family member who I'm fond of/ a relative who I have a soft spot for
- someone you know – an acquaintance/ a colleague
- that made a strong impression on you – that blew my mind/ which blew me away
- that you find interesting – which fascinates me/ that intrigues me
- the result of the discussion – the consequence of the conversation/ what happened because of that little chat
- who has influenced you – who changed my life/ who inspired me to...
- you would like to meet – I'd love to have the chance to come face to face with/ I want to be introduced to

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two tactics roleplay cards

Take five roleplay cards, choose one, then do that thing when you do an exam-style IELTS Speaking Part Two task, with your partner as the examiner. When you finish, your partner will try to guess what you were doing, then together discuss how good or bad that thing is, and what language you could use to do it if it would be good. Take one more roleplay card so that you still have five options next time, then listen to your partner doing the same thing. Repeat until your teacher stops you.

Ask for a different card (with no reason).

Ask for a different card (with a reason).

Check what the task means before you start preparing.

Write a list of possible topics before you choose one.

Draw a mind-map of suitable topics before you choose one.

Check if the topic that you have thought of is suitable or not before you start making notes.

Start speaking as soon as you think of a suitable topic (without preparing for one minute).

Think of a topic and then ask to start speaking straightaway.

Write notes on what you want to say (key words, etc) in English.

Write notes on what you want to say (key words, etc) in your own language.

Write ideas for what you could say as a mind map.

Write the start of your presentation in full sentences, and start speaking by reading that out.

Check what the task means before you start speaking.

Check if the topic that you have chosen is suitable before you start speaking.

Ask for more time when the examiner asks you to start.

Think in silence for a few seconds before you start speaking.

Fill silence while you think of what you want to say at the beginning of your presentation.

Start your presentation by reading words from the card.

Start like a formal business presentation.

Avoid the words on the card as much as possible (rephrasing, etc instead).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talk about a (slightly) different topic to what is on the card, explaining why.

Talk about a (slightly) different topic to what is on the card, without explaining why.

Talk about the topic for one or two minutes, but ignore the four sub-topics on the card.

Only talk about one of the four sub-topics.

Only talk about two of the four sub-topics.

Cover all four sub-topics on the card as quickly as possible, then stop.

Cover all four sub-topics on the card as fast as possible, then talk about other topics.

Cover all four sub-topics as fast as possible, then go back and add detail to those topics.

Cover all four sub-topics, but in a different order to how they are written on the card.

Briefly go off topic, then get back on topic again.

Point at the card as you refer to it.

Ask questions (about the examiner's understanding, experiences, etc).

Use phrases to move smoothly between the different sub-topics/ questions on the card.

Use phrases to fill silence while you remember or check what the sub-topics/ questions are.

Keep checking how long you have spoken for.

Use a phrase to end your presentation.

Just stop your presentation when you have nothing more to say (without special phrases).

When you finish, ask the examiner if that was long enough.

When you finish, check if you were on topic.

When you finish, check if your performance was okay.

When you finish, look at the whole list of roleplays and discuss as a class which are best and worst, then brainstorm useful phrases for the most useful.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two speaking for longer games

Choose one thing in the classroom and describe it one sentence at a time until your partner guesses what you are describing. To make it more fun and challenging, try to start with hints which are difficult to guess the answer from.

Choose one classroom object with your partner and take turns saying longer and longer descriptions of it, e.g. "It is made from wood", "It is made from brown wood", "It is made from dark brown wood", "It is made from dark brown wood and it is about 75 centimetres high", etc. Stop when anyone says something shorter or gives up.

Do the same but with longer and longer descriptions of the whole room.

When you have finished the longer descriptions of the room game, time yourself as you say the final description once more. Is it shorter or longer than Speaking Part Two?

Time each other as you do one of these describing the classroom tasks:

Describe a classroom that you study or have studied in. You should say:

- What it looks like
- What are the good things about it
- What are the bad things about it

And explain how it compares to other classrooms you have studied in before or since

Describe a classroom that you study or have studied in. You should say:

- Where it is
- What it is used for
- The main things that are in it

And say what you like about it, and why

Do the same three steps as above (describing in more and more detail, timing to check, set each other the Part Two task your partner gives you), but this time about a movie you have both seen.

Describe a film you saw which made an impression on you.

You should say:

- What film and what type of film it is
- When you saw it
- What your favourite part of the film is

And explain why it made an impression on you

Describe a movie you saw which you remember well.

You should say:

- Why you chose to watch it
- Where you saw it
- What you remember most about it

And say what made it more memorable than other films.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Set longer and longer tasks on the topic of music for each other, adding one extra question/ sub-topic to the card each time. Stop when someone can't think of any more sub-topics, or when someone doesn't mention one of their sub-topics within their time limit.

Describe some music you like.

You should say:

-

(First time, one question only, 30 seconds speaking)

-

_____ (plus 30 seconds)

-

_____ (plus 30 seconds)

-

_____ (plus 30 seconds)

-

_____ (plus 30 seconds)

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_____ (plus 30 seconds)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two extended speaking board game

A regular... that...	A relaxing... which...	An influential... which...	A memorable ... which...	START A person who...
A news story which...	<p style="text-align: center;">Instructions</p> <p><i>Place a counter (e.g. an eraser) or write your name on the "START" square. Write down a Part Two question about the topic in the square that your partner is on, including a more specific topic (after "which..." etc) and four questions/ sub-topics. After (exactly) one minute of preparation, time how long they speak (on topic), stopping them if they speak for more than two minutes. They can then move on this number of squares:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cut off after 2 minutes, with little or no silence or time off topic: 4 squares ● Cut off after 2 minutes, but with quite a lot of silence or time off topic/ More than one minute, with little or no silence or time off topic: 3 squares ● Cut off after 2 minutes, but with lots of silence or time off topic/ More than one minute, but quite a lot of silence or time off topic: 2 squares ● Less than 1 minute/ Cut off after 2 minutes, but mostly silence or off topic: 1 square ● Couldn't speak at all about the topic: 0 squares <p><i>Take turns doing the same for the topics of the squares each other are on. The winner will be the person who is furthest around the board when your teacher stops the game.</i></p>			A place where...
A work of art which...				A time when...
A piece of music that...				A thing that...
A newspaper which...				A free-time activity that...
A classmate or colleague who...				One of your possessions that...
An actor who...				A festival, ceremony or celebration that...
A website or app which...				A sport or exercise which...
A teacher who...				A relative who...
A writer who...				A movie which...
A shop that...				An electronic item which...
An interest of hobby that...				A television programme that...
A well-known... that...	An impressive... that...	A popular... that...	An important... that...	A useful... that...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two functions card game

Listen to your partner do a Speaking Part Two exam task and give a card to that person every time that they do that thing with different language to what anyone has said so far (or write their name on that card if the worksheet isn't cut up). Small differences to what people have said before are also okay. The winner is the person with most cards when all the cards have been used or the teacher stops the activity.

checking	checking	checking	checking
checking	checking	checking	checking
starting	starting	starting	starting
thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence
thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence	thinking aloud/ filling silence
vague/ soft statements	vague/ soft statements	vague/ soft statements	vague/ soft statements
vague/ soft statements	vague/ soft statements	vague/ soft statements	vague/ soft statements
getting back on topic	getting back on topic	getting back on topic	getting back on topic
adding extra info	adding extra info	adding extra info	adding extra info
adding extra info	adding extra info	adding extra info	adding extra info
referring to what you said before	referring to what you said before	referring to what you said before	referring to what you said before
referring to what you said before	referring to what you said before	referring to what you said before	referring to what you said before
moving through the sub-topics	moving through the sub-topics	moving through the sub-topics	moving through the sub-topics
moving through the sub-topics	moving through the sub-topics	moving through the sub-topics	moving through the sub-topics
ending	ending	ending	ending

Brainstorm suitable phrases for each of the functions above.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two functions board game

Work in groups of two or three students. Each place a counter (eraser, coin, etc) or write your name on the “START” square. Set a Speaking Part Two question on the topic that your partner is on, including writing four suitable sub-topics. Give them exactly one minute to prepare, then ask them to start speaking.

While you listen to their presentation, tick off the kinds of phrases below that they use, interrupting them if they go up to two minutes. Give one point for each of the functions below that they used. There are no extra points for using the same function twice in that turn, but it’s OK to say things you don’t really need to, such as checking something which you already understand, in order to cover more functions. They can then move that many squares on the board, e.g. five squares if they used five of the nine functions. Take turns setting each other questions and giving points for how many functions are used until your teacher stops the game. The winner is the one who has moved furthest around the board.

Table of functions to tick off as your partner uses them

Checking phrases														
Starting Speaking Part Two phrases														
Thinking aloud/ filling silence phrases														
Vague statements/ Soft statements														
Getting back on topic phrases														
Adding extra info on the same topic phrases														
Referring back to what you said before phrases														
Moving through sub-topics/ phrases														
Ending Speaking Part Two phrases														

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

A conversation that...	A vacation which...	A recipe that...	A household chore that...	START A person you have never met who...
An academic subject which...	<p style="text-align: center;">Phrases to use to move one square</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Checking phrases 2. Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases 3. Thinking aloud phrases/ Filling silence phrases 4. Vague statements/ Soft statements 5. Getting back on topic phrases 6. Adding extra info on the same topic phrases 7. Referring back to what you said before phrases 8. Moving through the four sub-topics/ four questions phrases 9. Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases 			A place where...
A child who...				An occasion when...
A party which...				An ornament or decoration that...
Some advice that...				A time of day when...
A gift that...				A food or drink that...
An idea which...				A day of the year which...
An artist who...				An activity which...
A sightseeing spot which...				A relation who...
Some countryside which...				A TV series that...
A story which...				A singer who...
A house or flat which...				A song that...
A trip that...				A foreign country that...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two meeting criteria board game

Work in groups of two or three students. Each place a counter (eraser, coin, etc) or write your name on the "START" square. Set a Speaking Part Two question on the topic in that square for the person whose turn it is, including a more specific topic (after "who/ that/ which...") and four suitable sub-topics/ questions about that topic. Give them exactly one minute to prepare (plus time to ask questions about the task and/ or their topic if they need it). As you listen to their presentation, tick off the criteria below that they meet. When they stop or you interrupt after two minutes, they can then move the number of squares on the board of the number of criteria that they met, e.g. five squares if they met five of the eight criteria. Take turns setting each other questions and judging your performances until your teacher stops you. The winner will be the person who has travelled furthest around the board.

Table with criteria to tick off

understood the task, or checked if they didn't														
spoke for at least a minute														
avoided repeating words/ rephrased														
moved through the sub-topics on the task sheet														
stayed on topic/ avoided going off topic														
avoided silence/ filled silence														
smoothly started, moved on and ended														
spoke for two minutes (until interrupted)														

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

An expensive... that...	A relaxing... which...	An influential... which...	An unforgettable ... which...	START A man or woman who...
A documentary which...	Criteria to meet and check 1. understood the task, or checked if they didn't understand it 2. spoke for at least one minute 3. avoided repeating words/ rephrased words that were said before and from the task sheet 4. moved through the sub-topics on the task sheet (in whatever order) 5. stayed on topic/ avoided going off topic 6. avoided silence/ filled silence 7. smoothly started, moved between topics and ended 8. spoke until they were interrupted after two minutes (going back to previous topics, etc)			A place where...
A painting or statue which...				A day when...
A piece of music that...				An object that...
A newspaper or magazine which...				A leisure activity that...
An ex-classmate or ex-colleague who...				A possession that...
An artist who...				A festival or celebration that...
Some software or an app which...				A healthy activity which...
A school teacher who...				A family member who...
A television personality who...				A film which...
A book that...				Some technology which...
A friend that...				A TV programme that...
A famous... that...				An exciting... that...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two dice game

Roll the dice between one and six times (depending on what your teacher tells you) and talk about topics that match those numbers below. As in the exam, you should speak about one specific thing (e.g. one particular shop), not things in general. If there are extra words in brackets, that part is optional. For example, you can talk about either a future plan or the future more generally if you roll a 5, because it says “future (plan)”.

First roll – topic

A person
A place
An action
A time/ A situation
An object/ A thing
(Free choice)

Second roll – time

(Recent) past
(Distant) past
Present (habit)
Present(ly/ Currently)
Future (plan)
Future (desire/ ambition)

Third roll, fourth roll and fifth roll – Three bullet points/ subtopics

What/ Which
When
Where
How
How often/ How many/ How much/ How far/ How well/ How...
Who/ Whose

Sixth roll – Extra (fourth) question at the end

Why
If... or not, and why
Whether... or not, and why
Your feelings
Comparisons
(Free choice)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two error correction pairwork

Student A

Without showing your worksheets, find differences between your worksheet and your partner's and change the incorrect one. There is always one correct version.

Useful phrases for doing the activity

(I can't hear any difference.) Can you repeat...?/ Can you say... again?

The difference is.../ Yours says... but mine says...

I think mine/ yours is right/ wrong because...

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Excuse me, what does this mean?

Sorry. Please explain this word here.

Checking your choice of topic phrases

It's not exactly my hometown, but shall I speak about where I was born?

The only thing that I can think of to speak about is a classmate. Is that okay?

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

OK. I think I got ready to start, if that's okay.

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

OK, I'd like to speak about my best friend in primary school.

So, I'm really glad I got the topic because...

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Please wait while I look again at the task sheet. Okay, got it. So,...

What was I going to say next? Oh yes, the timing. Well,...

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

I don't remember the location very well, but as far as I remember we were in...

Getting back on topic phrases

Anyway, I should actually be talking about the last time I went there, which was...

Sorry, I think I'm going off topic. I supposed to be talking about his character.

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Answering same question, I could also add that...

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Going back to that I said earlier about who it belonged to,...

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Moving on to the question about the later consequences,...

What's the next on the task sheet that I have to talk about? Oh yes,...

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

I think I have probably covered everything, so that's it, I guess.

I can't think of anything else to say. Can I stop there?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Answering particular wh- questions phrases

Answering who questions phrases

I first met my best friend when we were in the first year of primary school.

Answering where questions phrases

The event held in a community centre in my neighbourhood.

Answering when questions phrases

This happened to me a long time ago.

Answering how long questions phrases

It lasted a quite long time.

Answering how often question phrases

I almost do it at lunchtime.

Answering how + adjective questions phrases

The venue was absolutely huge.

Answering what... like questions phrases

From a distance, it is looking very old, but actually...

Answering why questions phrases

The main reason why I felt that way was...

Hint: Half of the lines on each worksheet (= thirteen lines on each) are incorrect.

Check your answers as a class or with the list of wrong phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student B

Without showing your worksheets, find differences between your worksheet and your partner's and change the incorrect one. There is always one correct version.

Useful phrases for doing the activity

(I can't hear any difference.) Can you repeat...?/ Can you say... again?

The difference is.../ Yours says... but mine says...

I think mine/ yours is right/ wrong because...

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Excuse me, what does it mean?

Sorry. Can you explain this word here?

Checking your choice of topic phrases

It's not exactly my hometown, but can I speak about where I was born?

The only that I can think of to speak about is a classmate. Is that okay?

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

OK. I think I'm ready to start, if that's okay.

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

OK, I like to speak about my best friend in primary school.

So, I'm really glad I got this topic because...

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Just a moment while I look again at the task sheet. Okay, got it. So,...

What I was going to say next? Oh yes, the timing. Well,...

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

I don't remember the location very good, but as far as I remember we were in...

Getting back on topic phrases

By the way, I should actually be talking about the last time I went there, which was...

Sorry, I think I'm going off topic. I'm supposed to be talking about his character.

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Answering the same question, I could also add that...

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Going back to what I said earlier about who it belonged to,...

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Moving on the question about the later consequences,...

What's the next point on the task sheet that I have to talk about? Oh yes,...

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

I think I probably cover everything, so that's it, I guess.

I can't think of any else to say. Can I stop there?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Answering particular wh- questions phrases

Answering who questions phrases

I first met my friend when we were in the first year of primary school.

Answering where questions phrases

The event was held in a community centre in my neighbourhood.

Answering when questions phrases

This happened to me a long time before.

Answering how long questions phrases

It lasted quite a long time.

Answering how often question phrases

I almost always do it at lunchtime.

Answering how + adjective questions phrases

The venue was absolutely big.

Answering what... like questions phrases

From a distance, it looks very old, but actually...

Answering why questions phrases

Main reason why I felt that way was...

Hint: Half of the lines on each worksheet (= thirteen lines on each) are incorrect.

Check your answers as a class or with the list of wrong phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

All errors stage

The phrases below are incorrect, so make sure you corrected them on your worksheets.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Excuse me, what does it mean?

Sorry. Please explain this word here.

Checking your choice of topic phrases

It's not exactly my hometown, but shall I speak about where I was born?

The only that I can think of to speak about is a classmate. Is that okay?

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

OK. I think I got ready to start, if that's okay.

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

OK, I like to speak about my best friend in primary school.

So, I'm really glad I got the topic because...

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Please wait while I look again at the task sheet. Okay, got it. So,...

What I was going to say next? Oh yes, the timing. Well,...

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

I don't remember the location very good, but as far as I remember we were in...

Getting back on topic phrases

By the way, I should actually be talking about the last time I went there, which was...

Sorry, I think I'm going off topic. I supposed to be talking about his character.

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Answering same question, I could also add that...

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Going back to that I said earlier about who it belonged to,...

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Moving on the question about the later consequences,...

What's the next on the task sheet that I have to talk about? Oh yes,...

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

I think I probably cover everything, so that's it, I guess.

I can't think of any else to say. Can I stop there?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Answering particular wh- questions phrases

Answering who questions phrases

I first met my friend when we were in the first year of primary school.

Answering where questions phrases

The event held in a community centre in my neighbourhood.

Answering when questions phrases

This happened to me a long time before.

Answering how long questions phrases

It lasted a quite long time.

Answering how often question phrases

I almost do it at lunchtime.

Answering how + adjective questions phrases

The venue was absolutely big.

Answering what... like questions phrases

From a distance, it is looking very old, but actually...

Answering why questions phrases

Main reason why I felt that way was...

Work together to correct all the mistakes above, then check with your corrected copies of the previous worksheets.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

First of all without looking above, write at least two suitable phrases in each space below.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Checking your choice of topic phrases

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

Getting back on topic phrases

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Answering particular wh- questions phrases
Answering who questions phrases

Answering where questions phrases

Answering when questions phrases

Answering how long questions phrases

Answering how often question phrases

Answering how + adjective questions phrases

Answering what... like questions phrases

Answering why questions phrases

Look at the first worksheet, brainstorm more, then compare your extra phrases as a class or with lists of phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Two

Brainstorm at least three phrases into each of the gaps below, avoiding simple language if you can. If you are scoring, you will get one point for each suitable phrase that no other group wrote, and five points for any okay phrase which isn't in the answer key. If your teacher gives you a list of key words, you can use that to help, but first try with no help.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

Checking your choice of topic phrases

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

Getting back on topic phrases

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

Referring back to what you said before phrases

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

Answering particular wh- questions phrases
Answering who questions phrases

Answering where questions phrases

Answering when questions phrases

Answering how long questions phrases

Answering how often question phrases

Answering how + adjective questions phrases

Answering other how questions phrases

Answering what... like questions phrases

Answering why questions phrases

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

Choose ten phrases which you think no one else will have thought of. Then compare as a class, noting down any useful phrases from other groups which you didn't think of.

Compare with a list of useful phrases, then share any of your phrases which are not there.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The big list of useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Two

The most useful phrases are near the top of each section and underlined.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

"Sorry. Could you explain this word (here/ which I'm pointing at)?"

"Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?"

"Sorry but I'm not sure what this (first/ second/ third/ last) bullet point means."

"Sorry, what does this word mean?"

"Sorry, is this (first/ second/ third/ final) question asking about...?"

"Sorry (before I start preparing), can I (just) check if I understand the task?"

"I'm sorry but (before I go on) can I ask a question about the task sheet?"

"Sorry, can I just check? Would... be an example of...?"

Checking your choice of topic phrases

"(It's not exactly..., but) can I speak about...? (Great. I'll pick that, then)"

"Excuse me. (I'm not sure if it is really..., but) is it okay to speak about...?"

"The only thing (that/ which) I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?"

"Sorry. Does... count (as a sort of...)? (Really? How about...?)"

"So, does that mean that I can talk about...?"

"Sorry. Can I check my choice of topic? Is... a kind of...?"

"Can I just check? Would... be off topic?"

"So, with this task, am I allowed to talk about...?"

"Sorry but I'm not sure if what I've thought of (really/ perfectly) matches this task. (The only thing that comes to mind is...)"

"Does this topic include...?"

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

"(OK.) I think I'm ready (to start, if that's okay)."

"(Sorry,) can I start?"

"Shall I get started?"

"Is that one minute?"

"My notes are ready, so I may as well get started (if you don't mind)."

"I can't think of anything else (to write), so I'd like to (make a) start (if that's allowed)."

"I reckon I've done enough prep to be able to talk about it (whenever you are ready)."

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

"(OK.) I'd like to speak about..."

"(Right.) I'm going to talk about..."

"(So,) I've chosen to speak about..."

"I'm (really) glad that I got this topic because..."

"I'm so pleased that this is the topic because..."

"It's a strange coincidence (that) I got this topic because (just) the other day..."

"The only (suitable) thing I could think of to speak about is..."

"There were many things I could've spoken about, but I chose..."

"It was (really/ quite) difficult to choose a topic, but I (finally) settled on..."

"I ... a few/ several/ quite a lot of/ many ...s, but the one I'd like to talk about is..."

"I ... a couple of/ quite a few/ so many ...s, but the one that stands out is... because..."

"The obvious choice of topic for me was... because..."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

“(Well,) I’ve decided to tell you about...”

“The topic that (first) sprang to mind was...”

“There’s only one thing which I can talk about, which is...”

“It wasn’t (at all) difficult for me to choose what to talk about. I chose... due to...”

“It was difficult to decide whether to talk about... or... but I went for... because...”

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

“Just a moment while I look (again) at the task sheet.”

“Just a minute while I check my notes.”

“Just a second while I (have another) look at the task (OK. Got it now.)”

“What was I going to say (next)? Oh yes,...”

“Let me (just) have a look at the task sheet again.”

“I can’t remember the name in English, but...”

“I’m not sure how to say it in English, but...”

“It’s difficult to explain, but...”

“What does this bit say? Oh, yes,...”

“What was the next question again? Oh yes,...”

“Sorry, I’m having problems reading my (own) handwriting. Ah yes,...”

“Why? That’s a good question, why?? Well, I guess...”

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don’t remember well, etc)

“I don’t remember ... (very well/ exactly), but ...”

“(It was a very long time ago, but) as far as I remember, ...”

“(It was ages ago, but) I reckon...”

“The way I remember it (now), ...”

“I can’t recall whether... or... not, but probably...”

“a kind of...”

“some sort of...”

“My memory is (a little) hazy, but...”

“..., or something like that (anyway)”

“... or something of that sort.”

Getting back on topic phrases

“As I was saying (before I went off topic), ...”

“Sorry but I seem to have gone (slightly/ completely) off topic. Getting back to...”

“Where was I? Oh yes, ...”

“Sorry, I should (really/ actually) have been talking about...”

“Anyway, to get back on track, ...”

“Sorry, (I think) I’m going off topic. Just a moment while I see what I should’ve been describing. Ah ha, I see. Well, ...”

“Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions, ...”

“Sorry, I’ve wandered off my original topic, which was...”

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

“Adding to what I (just) said (about...),...”

“What else (can I say/ is there to say/ should I say about that/ is relevant)? Well, I suppose...”

“One more thing I could say about... is...”

“On the same topic,...”

“About... I could add that...”

“The other relevant thing which I could say about... is...”

“And what else should I say? Well, I didn't mention...”

“Answering the same question,...”

“Connected to that,...”

“Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...”

Referring back to what you said before phrases

“As I said (earlier) (when I was talking about...),...”

“Going back to what I said (before/ earlier) (about...),...”

“I already (basically) answered the question... (when I said that...), but I could add that...”

“Although I said earlier that..., it's also true that...”

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

“Starting with...”

“Turning to the next question,...”

“Moving on to the question about.....”

“As for...”

“What's the next point (that I have to talk about/ on the task sheet)? Oh yes,...”

“Have I answered all of the questions? Not yet. I also need to say...”

“And the next thing (that I'm supposed) to talk about is...”

“I don't think I've talked about... yet. Well,...”

“When it comes to.....”

“Regarding.....”

“And about.....”

“As far as ... is concerned,...”

“The other thing that I'm meant to talk about is... Well,...”

“Have I covered all four points? Oh, no...”

“Which part of the question haven't I answered (yet)? Oh yes, this bit. Well,...”

“Taking an(other) look at the task sheet, I see that I should also talk about...”

Answering particular wh- questions phrases

Answering who questions phrases

One of my...

A... of mine

An ex-.../ A former.../ My then...

My fellow...

Somebody who I...

A (close/ distant) relation/ relative

An acquaintance

The participants/ The attendees

My... in-law

Answering where questions phrases

the location

the venue

be held

take place

my (final) destination

in my neighbourhood

in my hometown

(really/ fairly) near/ close to...

(not so) far from...

Answering when questions phrases

(quite) a long time ago/ ages ago

the day before yesterday/ the ... before last

the day after tomorrow/ the ... after next

from ... to .../ between ... and...

by ... (at the latest)

Answering how long questions phrases

for ages

for quite a while/ for quite a long time

not for long

since (the beginning of/ middle of/ end of)...

Answering how often question phrases

always/ all the time

virtually always

almost always

usually/ generally/ typically

(very) often

occasionally/ from time to time

hardly ever

almost never

virtually never

never ever

once/ twice/ ... times a day/ week/ month/ quarter/ year/...

once every two/ three/ four/... ..s

every...

every other...

(bi-/ semi-) annual

quarterly

monthly

weekly

(twice-)daily

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Answering how + adjective questions phrases

extremely/ exceedingly/ so

really/ very

pretty/ rather

fairly

somewhat

slightly/ a bit/ a little/ a little bit/ not very/ not so

very slightly/ a tiny bit/ hardly at all

not at all

Answering other how questions phrases

The (best/ only) way is...

by (way of/ using)...

The method I...

Answering what... like questions phrases

(At first sight/ From the outside/ From a distance) it looks/ seems/ appears...

Its (outward) appearance...

I could describe it as...

If you can picture...

Answering why questions phrases

because (of)...

due to...

The (main/ chief) reason...

There are many reasons, including...

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

"That's (absolutely/ more or less) all I can think of to say."

"I think I've (probably) covered everything."

"Are there any other important points that I missed? I don't think so, so..."

"I can't think of anything else to say."

"Can I stop there? (My mind has gone blank.)"

"That about covers it."

"(Umm), that's it (I reckon)."

"I seem to be going off topic, so I'd better stop there."

"I could go on about this forever, but I think that covers these four points."

"I'm pretty sure I've covered all four points."

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Key words for IELTS Speaking Part Two

Use the words below to brainstorm useful phrases and/ or when doing IELTS Speaking Part Two tasks.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

can/ could	sorry	first/ second/ third/ last
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Checking your choice of topic phrases

can	okay	sort
check	topic	task

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

ready	start(ed)	if
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Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

I'm	about	choose/ chose(n)/ choice
topic	because	thing(s)
one	decide(d)	difficult

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

just	while	ah/ oh
what	but	sorry

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Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don't remember well, etc)

remember/ memory/ recall	but	something
ago	sort/ kind	of

Getting back on topic phrases

was	topic	sorry
should	back	off

Referring back to what you said and adding extra info phrases

add(ing)	say/ said	same
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Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

next	question(s)	about
yet	all	a/ another

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

think	cover(s/ed)	stop
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Suggested phrases with those key words

Many other phrases are possible, so please check if you have other ideas.

Checking the meaning of the task sheet phrases

1. "Sorry. Could you explain this word (here/ which I'm pointing at)?"
2. "Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?"
3. "Sorry but I'm not sure what this (first/ second/ third/ last) bullet point means."
"Sorry, what does this word mean?"
"Sorry, is this (first/ second/ third/ final) question asking about...?"
"Sorry (before I start preparing), can I (just) check if I understand the task?"
"I'm sorry but (before I go on) can I ask a question about the task sheet?"

Checking your choice of topic phrases

4. "(It's not exactly..., but) can I speak about...? (Great. I'll pick that, then)"
5. "Excuse me. (I'm not sure if it is really..., but) is it okay to speak about...?"
6. "The only thing (that/ which) I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?"
7. "Sorry. Does... count (as a sort of...)? (Really? How about...?)"
8. "So, does that mean that I can talk about...?"
9. "Sorry. Can I check my choice of topic? Is... a kind of...?"
"Can I just check? Would... be off topic?"
"So, with this task, am I allowed to talk about...?"
"Sorry but I'm not sure if what I've thought of (really/ perfectly) matches this task. (The only thing that comes to mind is...)"
"Does this topic include...?"

Asking to start early phrases (optional)

10. "(OK.) I think I'm ready (to start, if that's okay)."
11. "(Sorry,) can I start?"
"Shall I get started?"
"My notes are ready, so I may as well get started (if you don't mind)."
"I can't think of anything else (to write), so I'd like to (make a) start (if that's allowed)."
"I reckon I've done enough prep to be able to talk about it (whenever you are ready)."

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two phrases

12. "(OK.) I'd like to speak about..."
13. "(Right.) I'm going to talk about..."
14. "(So,) I've chosen to speak about..."
15. "I'm (really) glad that I got this topic because..."
16. "I'm so pleased that this is the topic because..."
17. "It's a strange coincidence (that) I got this topic because (just) the other day..."
18. "The only (suitable) thing I could think of to speak about is..."
19. "There were many things I could've spoken about, but I chose..."
20. "It was (really/ quite) difficult to choose a topic, but I (finally) settled on..."
"The obvious choice of topic for me was... because..."
"(Well,) I've decided to tell you about..."
"I ... a few/ several/ quite a lot of/ many ...s, but the one I'd like to talk about is..."
"I ... a couple of/ quite a few/ so many ...s, but the one that stands out is... because..."
"The topic that (first) sprang to mind was..."

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“There’s only one thing which I can talk about, which is...”

“It wasn’t (at all) difficult for me to choose what to talk about. I chose... due to...”

“It was difficult to decide whether to talk about... or... but I went for... because...”

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases

21. “Just a moment while I look (again) at the task sheet.”

22. “Just a minute while I check my notes.”

23. “Just a second while I (have another) look at the task (OK. Got it now.)”

24. “What was I going to say (next)? Oh yes,...”

“Let me (just) have a look at the task sheet again.”

“I can’t remember the name in English, but...”

“I’m not sure how to say it in English, but...”

“It’s difficult to explain, but...”

“What does this bit say? Oh, yes,...”

“What was the next question again? Oh yes,...”

“Sorry, I’m having problems reading my (own) handwriting. Ah yes,...”

Vague statements/ Soft statements (if you don’t remember well, etc)

25. “I don’t remember ... (very well/ exactly), but ...”

26. “(It was a very long time ago, but) as far as I remember,...”

“(It was ages ago, but) I reckon...”

“The way I remember it (now),...”

“I can’t recall whether... or... not, but probably...”

“a kind of...”

“some sort of...”

“My memory is (a little) hazy, but...”

“..., or something like that (anyway)”

“... or something of that sort.”

Getting back on topic phrases

27. “As I was saying (before I went off topic),...”

28. “Sorry but I seem to have gone (slightly/ completely) off topic. Getting back to...”

“Where was I? Oh yes,...”

“Sorry, I should (really/ actually) have been talking about...”

“Anyway, to get back on track,...”

“Sorry, (I think) I’m going off topic. Just a moment while I see what I should’ve been describing. Ah ha, I see. Well,...”

“Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions,...”

“Sorry, I’ve wandered off my original topic, which was...”

Adding extra info phrases (if you want to speak for longer, forgot something, etc)

29. “Adding to what I (just) said (about...),...”

30. “What else (can I say/ is there to say/ should I say about that/ is relevant)? Well, I suppose...”

31. “One more thing I could say about... is...”

32. “On the same topic,...”

“About... I could add that...”

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“The other relevant thing which I could say about... is...”

“And what else should I say? Well, I didn't mention...”

“Answering the same question,...”

Referring back to what you said before phrases

33. “As I said (earlier) (when I was talking about...),...”

34. “Going back to what I said (before/ earlier) (about...),...”

35. “I already (basically) answered the question... (when I said that...), but I could add that...”

“Although I said earlier that..., it's also true that...”

Moving through the four sub-topics/ questions phrases

36. “Starting with...”

37. “Turning to the next question,...”

38. “Moving on to the question about...,...”

39. “What's the next point (that I have to talk about/ on the task sheet)? Oh yes,...”

40. “Have I answered all of the questions? Not yet. I also need to say...”

41. “And the next thing (that I'm supposed) to talk about is...”

42. “I don't think I've talked about... yet. Well,...”

43. “And about...,...”

“The other thing that I'm meant to talk about is... Well,...”

“Have I covered all four points? Oh, no...”

“Which part of the question haven't I answered (yet)? Oh yes, this bit. Well,...”

“Taking a(nother) look at the task sheet, I see that I should also talk about...”

Ending the Speaking Part Two presentation phrases

44. “That's (absolutely/ more or less) all I can think of to say.”

45. “I think I've (probably) covered everything.”

46. “Are there any other important points that I missed? I don't think so, so...”

“I can't think of anything else to say.”

“Can I stop there? (My mind has gone blank.)”

“That about covers it.”

“I seem to be going off topic, so I'd better stop there.”

“I could go on about this forever, but I think that covers these four points.”

“I'm pretty sure I've covered all four points.”

Test each other on the phrases above:

- Read out phrases from one section with the underlined key words missing for your partner to complete
- Read out phrases from one section with different words missing for your partner to complete
- Say the heading of one section and help your partner make suitable phrases by giving them key words, etc

IELTS Speaking Part Three section

See also:

- Ask and analyse 100 IELTS Speaking Part One questions (linking Part One to Parts Two and/ or Three) page 16
- IELTS Speaking Part One coin games (for Parts One and Three) page 93
- IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases (linking Part One to Parts Two and/ or Three) page 29

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IELTS Speaking Part Three discuss and agree

Part One: IELTS Speaking Part Three sentence completion discuss and agree

Choose gapped sentences from the pages below and use them to write at least five sentences that you both agree with on topics like the ones on this list, circling or crossing out the words in brackets depending on whether you want to use them or not.

- Nature/ The environment
- Shopping/ Consumerism
- Technology
- Competitiveness
- Fame/ Celebrity
- Health and fitness
- Money
- Advertising/ Marketing
- Business
- Communities/ Society
- Decision making
- Education/ Training
- Families
- Friendship/ Meeting people
- History/ Heritage
- Innovation/ Coming up with ideas
- Lifestyles
- (Business) meetings
- Possessions
- Timekeeping and waiting
- Skills/ Abilities
- Helping people
- Newspapers/ The press
- Films/ Cinema
- Free time/ Hobbies
- Gifts/ Gift giving
- Reading
- Travel/ Commuting/ Tourism
- TV
- Work/ Careers

Say some sentences you wrote to another group or the whole class and see if they agree.

Ask about any sentences that you couldn't understand or couldn't think of how to complete, working together as a class to complete the sentences in ways that others agree with each time.

Part Two: IELTS Speaking Part Three topics discuss and agree

Find opinions in common with another partner, this time only using the topics above to help (without the sentence stems below to help, but using similar language if you can).

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Checking/ Clarifying phrases

I (really/ still) don't understand _____.

Commenting on the question phrases

_____ is a (very/ quite/ slightly) difficult topic.

Giving (strong and weak) opinions phrases

It seems (fairly/ very/ extremely) obvious to me that _____.

I'm (absolutely/ almost) certain that _____.

From what I've heard (from friends/ on the news), _____.

Recommendations language

I would(n't necessarily/ personally/ probably/ strongly) recommend _____.

The authorities (really/ probably) should (consider/ think about) _____.

Agreeing with statements phrases

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I (completely/ totally/ wholeheartedly) agree that/ with _____.

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I can (probably) accept _____.

_____ seems to make (some) sense.

_____ sounds like it could (possibly/ conceivably) _____.

Disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I (really) don't agree with _____ (at all).

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I (partly/ partially) agree with _____, but _____.

I can see why (some/ many/ most/ almost all) people think that _____,

but _____.

Supporting your arguments phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments phrases

The (chief/ main/ principal/ only) reason why I oppose _____ is _____.

_____ is (almost certainly/ probably/ mainly) because (of) _____.

_____ is (almost always/ usually/ often) caused by _____.

_____ would have (positive/ negative/ mixed) effects on _____.

Personal experience phrases

In my (personal/ limited/ own/ own personal) experience, _____.

I have (always/ generally) found that _____.

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

I saw a programme on _____ (just the other day/ a while ago) in which _____.

(Almost/ Virtually/ Absolutely) everyone I know _____.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Giving examples phrases

(Probably/ Almost certainly) the best example of _____ is _____.

Talking about importance phrases

_____ is (absolutely) vital/ essential/ crucial (for/ in order to _____).

_____ is (incredibly/ very/ fairly/ not so/ not very/ not at all) important (if you want to _____).

Speculating phrases

_____ is (absolutely/ almost) certain to happen.

_____ is (extremely/ very/ fairly) likely to occur.

_____ could (possibly/ conceivably) take place.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

The (vast) majority of _____.

A (very/ fairly) large number of _____.

(Very/ Extremely) few _____.

Looking at both sides phrases

One (potential/ likely/ great/ possible) benefit of _____ is _____.

Comparing and contrasting phrases

The (biggest/ main/ only/ sole) difference between _____ and _____ is _____.

_____ is (far/ considerably/ slightly) more _____ than _____.

Talking about how many/ how much/ to what extent phrases

(Far/ A few) too many _____.

Talking about trends/ changes phrases

_____ has (recently) improved (a large amount/ considerably/ slightly).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage 1

Without looking above, put as many words as you can into each gap below. Words not above may also be possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases

I (_____) don't understand....

Commenting on the question phrases

... is a (_____) difficult topic.

Giving (strong and weak) opinions phrases

It seems (_____) obvious to me that...

I'm (_____) certain that...

From what I've heard (_____),...

Recommendations language

I would(_____) recommend...

The authorities (_____) should (consider/ think about)...

Agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I (_____) agree that/ with...

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I can (_____) accept...

... seems to make (_____) sense.

... sounds like it could (_____)...

Disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I (_____) don't agree with... (_____).

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I (_____) agree with..., but...

I can see why (_____) people think that... but....

Supporting your arguments phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments phrases

The (_____) reason why I oppose... is...

... is (_____) because (of)...

...is (_____) caused by...

...would have (_____) effects on...

Personal experience phrases

In my (_____) experience,...

I have (_____) found that...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

I saw a programme on... (_____) in which...
(_____) everyone I know...

Giving examples phrases

(_____) the best example of... is...

Talking about importance phrases

... is (_____) vital/ essential/ crucial (for/ in order to...).

... is (_____) important (if you want to...).

Speculating phrases

... is (_____) certain to happen.

... is (_____) likely to occur.

... could (_____) take place.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

The (_____) majority of...

A (_____) large number of...

(_____) few...

Looking at both sides phrases

One (_____) benefit of... is....

Comparing and contrasting phrases

The (_____) difference between... and... is....

... is (_____) more... than...

Talking about how many/ how much/ to what extent phrases

(_____) too many...

Talking about trends/ changes phrases

... has (recently) improved (_____).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Mixed answers

Use these words to help with the brainstorming task above. Some can be used more than once.

a few	a large amount
a while ago	absolutely
almost	almost all
almost always	almost certainly
always	at all
biggest	chief
completely	conceivably
considerably	extremely
fairly	far
from friends	generally
great	incredibly
just the other day	likely
limited	main
mainly	many
mixed	most
-n't necessarily	negative
not at all	not so
not very	often
on the news	only
own	own personal
partially	partly
personal	personally
positive	possible
possibly	potential
principal	probably
quite	really
slightly	sole
some	still
strongly	totally
usually	vast
very	virtually
wholeheartedly	

Check above. Other answers may be possible, so please check if you put them in a different place.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage 2

Without looking above, write as many different phrases as you can in each category below.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases

Commenting on the question phrases

Giving opinions phrases

Recommendations language

Agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Supporting your arguments phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments phrases

Personal experience phrases

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Speculating phrases

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Looking at both sides phrases

Comparing and contrasting phrases

Talking about how many/ how much/ to what extent phrases

Talking about trends/ changes phrases

Look above for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare as a class or with lists of phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Good and bad answers in IELTS Speaking Part Three

Take turns asking each other these questions, not looking here when you are answering:

- Are people in your country generally interested in learning foreign languages, do you think?
- Are people in your country worried about light pollution?
- Are there times when it's better to just accept stress rather than try to fight it?
- At what age do you think children should be put into different classes depending on their academic ability?
- Can you contrast the dangers of driving with those of taking a plane?
- Can you compare young people's attitude to marriage to that of previous generations?
- Can you explain why some people are naturally more cheerful?
- Can you give some examples of ways in which ordinary people could do more to help save the environment?
- Can you think of any bad effects of dams?
- Could you describe how people in your country find out about politicians before voting?
- Do you believe that starting foreign language lessons from very young is a good idea?
- Do you believe that people your age in your country are too risk adverse?
- Do you think environmental controls in your country are getting better or worse?
- Do you think being forced to mix with people is always a good thing for people who lack social skills?
- Do you think it is okay for families to make unwilling children continue studying music?
- Do you think it is possible for adults to pick up foreign languages without conscious effort?
- Do you think it's good for boys and girls to be taught different ways?
- Do you think that people's energy consumption is changing?
- Do you think that primary schools' approach to education is about right?
- Do you think that schools should use more technology in class?
- Do you think the government should tell people when there is even a small chance of an earthquake the next day?
- How important are genes in deciding someone's intelligence, do you think?
- Do you think there is a danger that rising sea levels could directly affect this city?
- How have people's views on divorce changed over the last 50 years in your country?
- How much do you think the government should get involved in how parents raise their children?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of wind turbines?
- What can be done to stop global warming, do you think?
- What is the biggest mental problem in your country, do you think?
- Why do some people resist road safety measures like seatbelts and strict speed limits?

When you finish, ask about any questions you can't understand, are not sure how to answer, etc.

Listen to your teacher read questions from the list above and some ways that people might answer them. Write down or call out the best answer (depending on what your teacher tells you). The other options are usually clearly bad, so if you aren't sure which is best, choose the one which is left when you have eliminated the others.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Circle the best answer to each of the questions below. If you aren't sure, cross off as many bad answers as you can and choose from the ones which are left.

Are people in your country generally interested in learning foreign languages, do you think?

- A) Yes, I'm really interested in learning foreign languages.
- B) Yes, people in my country are interested in learning foreign languages.
- C) Yes, almost everyone I know wants to learn how to speak English, Chinese, etcetera.
- D) I'm not sure about people generally, but almost everyone I know wants to learn how to speak English, Chinese, etcetera.

Are people in your country worried about light pollution?

- A) What?
- B) Light what?
- C) I've never heard of light pollution.
- D) Sorry, I've never heard of light pollution. Could you explain what it is?
- E) I'm afraid I've never even heard the term light pollution before. Please define it for me and give me some examples.

Are there times when it's better to just accept stress rather than try to fight it?

- A) No, there aren't.
- B) To be honest, I don't think so. In my limited experience, stress is always a bad thing.
- C) I'm really sorry to disagree with you, but I think you are wrong. In my limited experience, stress is always a bad thing.

At what age do you think children should be put into different classes depending on their academic ability?

- A) Ten years old.
- B) I'm no expert on this.
- C) I'm no expert on this, but I would probably say that ten is about right.

Can you contrast the dangers of driving with those of taking a plane?

- A) Actually, I saw a TV programme on this just a couple of weeks ago. It said that driving a car is much more dangerous, like about 100 times riskier or something.
- B) According to Fred Smith on the documentary entitled "The Risks of Real Life", broadcast on NHK television at 9 p.m. on July 2nd 2016, driving is 134.34% riskier than travelling by air.

Can you compare young people's attitude to marriage to that of previous generations?

- A) Sorry, what does young people mean?
- B) Sorry, does young people mean people in their twenties?
- C) I'm not certain about teenagers, but if that includes people in their twenties I would say that it isn't very different. I get the impression that most people still believe that everyone should get married and that it is natural for men and women to have very different roles.

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Can you explain why some people are naturally more cheerful?

- A) I've never really thought about that before.
- B) I've never really thought about that before. I guess DNA is the main cause, but upbringing could well be almost as important.
- C) I've never really thought about that before. I believe that it is fifty three percent genes and forty seven percent upbringing.

Can you give some examples of ways in which ordinary people could do more to help save the environment?

- A) Well, I suppose most people rarely buy organic food. More of that would probably be a little help.
- B) Well, I suppose most people rarely buy organic food. More of that would probably be a little help. And we certainly use far too many plastic bags.
- C) Firstly, people should buy organic food. Secondly, people should use fewer plastic bags. Thirdly, people should travel less. Fourthly, people should switch off all electrical items when they aren't using them.

Can you think of any bad effects of dams?

- A) They block fish and animals from following their usual routes up and down the river.
- B) So many! To give just one example, they block fish and animals from following their usual routes up and down the river.

Could you describe how people in your country find out about politicians before voting?

- A) It's very difficult to generalise.
- B) It's very difficult to generalise, but I assume that television news is still the most common place for the majority of people.

Do you believe that starting foreign language lessons from very young is a good idea?

- A) Absolutely! I really think it is incredibly important. Personally, I have found it really difficult to learn English at this age, so I wish I had started earlier.
- B) Hmm, that's a difficult question. I really think it is incredibly important. Personally, I have found it really difficult to learn English at this age, so I wish I had started earlier.

Do you believe that people your age in your country are too risk adverse?

- A) Sorry, can you say that again a little more slowly?
- B) Sorry, I didn't understand the last word. You said risk something.

Do you think environmental controls in your country are getting better or worse?

- A) I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject.
- B) I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject. However, the air seems to be cleaner than when I was a child.
- C) I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject. However, the air seems to be cleaner than when I was a child, so that would seem to suggest that they are improving at least a little.

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Do you think being forced to mix with people is always a good thing for people who lack social skills?

- A) I am totally against this idea. This is because I strongly believe that being made to do this will lead to them hating social situations more.
- B) There are both advantages and disadvantages to this approach. The main advantage is that they will get a chance to improve their social skills. I am totally against this idea. This is because I strongly believe that being made to do this will lead to them hating social situations more.

Do you think it is okay for families to make unwilling children continue studying music?

- A) I don't have any personal experience of this, but I would imagine that it's fine. Most kids change their minds about what they like and don't like all the time anyway.
- B) Hmmmm. Let me think. Let me see. That's a difficult question. That's a tricky one. No one has ever asked me that before. I've never thought about that before. Well, I would imagine that it is fine.

Do you think it is possible for adults to pick up foreign languages without conscious effort?

- A) In my personal experience, it definitely isn't. I've tried it, but I found that actual study was much more effective, at least for me.
- B) In my personal experience, it definitely isn't. I started learning English when I was thirteen and studied for 6 years in school but I only seriously started when I was 22. I tried to just do free conversation for the first eighteen months, but that didn't work. Then I bought some grammar books and studied much harder and that worked much better. Since 2011 I have always used that technique, including in the last twelve months when I was trying to prepare for IELTS.

Do you think it's good for boys and girls to be taught different ways?

- A) What? Are you serious? No way! You've got to be kidding!
- B) Absolutely not. That would almost certainly result in an unfair advantage for either males or females.
- C) Although I can understand your point of view, I'm afraid I have to disagree with you. That would almost certainly result in an unfair advantage for one group or the other.

Do you think that people's energy consumption is changing?

- A) How would I know? That's not something I've ever read about or heard anything about.
- B) That's not something I've ever read about or heard anything about but I would hope that people think more about the environment nowadays and so cut down on their use of electricity at least a little.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Do you think that primary schools' approach to education is about right?

- A) Well, there are some discipline problems nowadays and some of the materials are a bit out of date. Nevertheless, in my opinion it mostly has a good balance between serious studying and more creative lessons.
- B) Well, there are some discipline problems nowadays and some of the materials are a bit out of date. On the other hand, in my opinion it mostly has a good balance between serious studying and more creative lessons.

Do you think that schools should use more technology in class?

- A) That's a good idea.
- B) That could possibly be a good idea. It can't hurt, anyway.

Do you think the government should tell people when there is even a small chance of an earthquake the next day?

- A) Without a doubt. I strongly agree with your idea.
- B) Without a doubt. I'm positive that it would have a good effect on people's peace of mind.

How important are genes in deciding someone's intelligence, do you think?

- A) Hmm, no one has ever asked me that before. I'd tend to say that it's not so important. For one thing, twins often have totally different characters.
- B) Hmm, I've never thought about that before. I'd tend to say that it is not so important. For one thing, twins often have totally different characters.

Do you think there is a danger that rising sea levels could directly affect this city?

- A) That's a difficult question. I'm not sure how much sea levels are supposed to rise, but if it's more than a metre that would definitely be an issue.
- B) I read something about that, but I'm afraid I can't remember what the conclusions were.
- C) I'm not sure how much sea levels are supposed to rise, but if it's more than a metre that would definitely be an issue.

How have people's views on divorce changed over the last 50 years in your country?

- A) I've never seen any actual research on this, but I'd say that they've changed quite a lot.
- B) I've never seen any actual research on this, but I'd say that they've become a lot more liberal.

How much do you think the government should get involved in how parents raise their children?

- A) Wow, that's a tricky one! There must be very different points of view on this, but I would say very little. In the vast majority of cases, it's better to let the parents decide.
- B) Wow, that's a tricky one! There must be very different points of view on this, but I would say that they should decide a policy on physical punishment of children because there is no reason why families should have different amounts of this.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

What are the advantages and disadvantages of wind turbines?

- A) The good points is that they don't produce CO2 or pollution. The only drawback I can think of is that they can spoil the view.
- B) Although there are both advantages and disadvantages, I think that overall they are a good thing because they don't produce CO2 or pollution.

What can be done to stop global warming, do you think?

- A) Yes, I think it can definitely be halted. We just need to all work together.
- B) Well, we can do all kinds of things, both as individuals and as voters. For instance, we could make sure we stop buying things that we probably won't use.

What is the biggest mental problem in your country, do you think?

- A) There are several options, but stress appears to be the main issue.
- B) Actually, this is exactly what I have been researching. There are several options, but stress appears to be the main issue.

Why do some people resist road safety measures like seatbelts and strict speed limits?

- A) That's a good question! Because they are idiots?
- B) That's a good question! Because they are idiots? Only joking! The only thing I can come up with is that it makes them feel like a little child being told what to do by their parents.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

*The ones in **bold** are the best answers. Make sure that you understand why the others are bad responses.*

Are people in your country generally interested in learning foreign languages, do you think?

Yes, I'm really interested in learning foreign languages.

Yes, people in my country are interested in learning foreign languages.

Yes, almost everyone I know wants to learn how to speak English, Chinese, etcetera.

I'm not sure about people generally, but almost everyone I know wants to learn how to speak English, Chinese, etcetera.

Are people in your country worried about light pollution?

What?

Light what?

I've never heard of light pollution.

Sorry, I've never heard of light pollution. Could you explain what it is?

I'm afraid I've never even heard the term light pollution before. Please define it for me and give me some examples.

Are there times when it's better to just accept stress rather than try to fight it?

No, there aren't.

To be honest, I don't think so. In my limited experience, stress is always a bad thing.

I'm really sorry to disagree with you, but I think you are wrong. In my limited experience, stress is always a bad thing.

At what age do you think children should be put into different classes depending on their academic ability?

Ten years old.

I'm no expert on this.

I'm no expert on this, but I would probably say that ten is about right.

Can you contrast the dangers of driving with those of taking a plane?

Actually, I saw a TV programme on this just a couple of weeks ago. It said that driving a car is much more dangerous, like about 100 times riskier or something.

According to Fred Smith on the documentary entitled "The Risks of Real Life", broadcast on NHK television at 9 p.m. on July 2nd 2016, driving is 134.34% riskier than travelling by air.

Can you compare young people's attitude to marriage to that of previous generations?

Sorry, what does young people mean?

Sorry, does young people mean people in their twenties?

I'm not certain about teenagers, but if that includes people in their twenties I would say that it isn't very different. I get the impression that most people still believe that everyone should get married and that it is natural for men and women to have very different roles.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Can you explain why some people are naturally more cheerful?

I've never really thought about that before.

I've never really thought about that before. I guess DNA is the main cause, but upbringing could well be almost as important.

I've never really thought about that before. I believe that it is fifty three percent genes and forty seven percent upbringing.

Can you give some examples of ways in which ordinary people could do more to help save the environment?

Well, I suppose most people rarely buy organic food. More of that would probably be a little help.

Well, I suppose most people rarely buy organic food. More of that would probably be a little help. And we certainly use far too many plastic bags.

Firstly, people should buy organic food. Secondly, people should use fewer plastic bags. Thirdly, people should travel less. Fourthly, people should switch off all electrical items when they aren't using them.

Can you think of any bad effects of dams?

They block fish and animals from following their usual routes up and down the river.

So many! To give just one example, they block fish and animals from following their usual routes up and down the river.

Could you describe how people in your country find out about politicians before voting?

It's very difficult to generalise.

It's very difficult to generalise, but I assume that television news is still the most common place for the majority of people.

Do you believe that starting foreign language lessons from very young is a good idea?

Absolutely! I really think it is incredibly important. Personally, I have found it really difficult to learn English at this age, so I wish I had started earlier.

Hmmm, that's a difficult question. I really think it is incredibly important. Personally, I have found it really difficult to learn English at this age, so I wish I had started earlier.

Do you believe that people your age in your country are too risk adverse?

Sorry, can you say that again a little more slowly?

Sorry, I didn't understand the last word. You said risk something.

Do you think environmental controls in your country are getting better or worse?

I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject.

I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject. However, the air seems to be cleaner than when I was a child.

I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject. However, the air seems to be cleaner than when I was a child, so that would seem to suggest that they are improving at least a little.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Do you think being forced to mix with people is always a good thing for people who lack social skills?

I am totally against this idea. This is because I strongly believe that being made to do this will lead to them hating social situations more.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to this approach. The main advantage is that they will get a chance to improve their social skills. I am totally against this idea. This is because I strongly believe that being made to do this will lead to them hating social situations more.

Do you think it is okay for families to make unwilling children continue studying music?

I don't have any personal experience of this, but I would imagine that it's fine. Most kids change their minds about what they like and don't like all the time anyway.

Hmmmm. Let me think. Let me see. That's a difficult question. That's a tricky one. No one has ever asked me that before. I've never thought about that before. Well, I would imagine that it is fine.

Do you think it is possible for adults to pick up foreign languages without conscious effort?

In my personal experience, it definitely isn't. I've tried it, but I found that actual study was much more effective, at least for me.

In my personal experience, it definitely isn't. I started learning English when I was thirteen and studied for 6 years in school but I only seriously started when I was 22. I tried to just do free conversation for the first eighteen months, but that didn't work. Then I bought some grammar books and studied much harder and that worked much better. Since 2011 I have always used that technique, including in the last twelve months when I was trying to prepare for IELTS.

Do you think it's good for boys and girls to be taught different ways?

What? Are you serious? No way! You've got to be kidding!

Absolutely not. That would almost certainly result in an unfair advantage for either males or females.

Although I can understand your point of view, I'm afraid I have to disagree with you. That would almost certainly result in an unfair advantage for one group or the other.

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Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

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Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

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That's a good question! Because they are idiots? Only joking! The only thing I can come up with is that it makes them feel like a little child being told what to do by their parents.

After doing the brainstorming task below, test each other on the language:

- Do the same listening for the best option activity
- Do the same, but repeating back the best option
- Listen to a question and a bad option and try to make a better answer
- Listen to a question and try to answer well
- Listen to the name of a category in the brainstorming and try to make suitable phrases
- Listen to some vocabulary which is rephrased in the answer above and try to rephrase it (with other ways not above also possible)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above for now, write at least two or three suitable phrases in each of the gaps below. Many answers not above are also okay.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases

Giving opinions phrases

Strong opinions phrases

Giving weak opinions phrases/ Hedging language

(Strongly and weakly) agreeing with the idea/ statement phrases

(Strongly or weakly) disagreeing with the idea/ statement phrases

Supporting your arguments phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments (cause and effect, etc) phrases

Personal experience phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Generalising (about people in your country etc) phrases

Looking at both sides phrases

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Look above for suitable language. There is often also useful language in the wrong options and some things can go in more than one place above. Brainstorm more, then compare your answers as a class and/ or with a list of phrases.

Try to find examples of rephrasing (= different words in the answer which mean the same as the answers in the question) as you can above, then practise rephrasing in answers to some real exam questions.

Suggested answers

Phrases not in the example answers above are in italics below. Many more phrases are possible, so if you wrote something different, please check with your teacher.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Could you explain what... is?

Does... mean...?

If that includes..., then...

Sorry, can you say that again a little more slowly?

Sorry, does... include...?

Sorry, I didn't understand the last word. You said... something.

Sorry, I've never heard of...

Sorry, what does... mean?

By... do you mean...?

Can you give an example (of...)?

I'm afraid I'm not familiar with the word...

I'm sorry but I've never come across the word...

Sorry, can I just check? Would... be an example of...?

Sorry, can you repeat the first/ last part of the question?

Sorry, can you rephrase the question?

Sorry, could you say that another way?

When you say..., do you mean...?

Sorry, I didn't catch...

Giving opinions phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

... certainly...

... obviously...

I really think...

I strongly believe that...

I'm positive that...

It definitely...

That would almost certainly...

To be honest,...

... clearly...

Frankly (speaking),...

I'm (absolutely) certain that...

I'm (completely) convinced that...

In my honest opinion,...

It seems clear to me that...

It seems obvious to me that...

There is (absolutely) no doubt that...

To be (perfectly) frank,...

Without (the shadow of) a doubt,...

Giving weak opinions phrases

... at least a little.

... at least for me.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

... could well be...
... or something (like that).
Although there are both advantages and disadvantages,...
I assume...
I don't have any personal experience of this, but...
I don't know much about this but...
I get the impression that...
I guess...
I suppose...
I think that overall...
I would imagine that...
I would probably say that...
I'd tend to say that...
I'm afraid I know absolutely nothing about this subject. However,...
I'm afraid I know almost nothing about this topic, but...
I'm no expert on this, but...
I'm not certain about..., but...
I'm not sure about..., but...
I've never seen any actual research on this, but I'd say that...
In my humble opinion,...
In my limited experience,...
It's very difficult to generalise, but...
That could possibly...
That would seem to suggest that...
That's not something I've ever read about or heard anything about but...
There must be very different points of view on this, but...
We didn't really study this at school but...
As far as I know,...
I don't have much experience of this, but...
I personally feel that ...
I'm afraid I know very little about this, but...
I'm not (very) familiar with this topic, but...
My first thought on the top is...
My initial reaction is...
This is just my opinion, but...
This is only my opinion, but...
To the best of my knowledge,...

(Strongly or weakly) agreeing with the idea/ statement phrases

Absolutely!
I strongly agree with that idea.
Without a doubt.
... makes sense to me.
I partially agree with...
I partly agree with...
I share the opinion that...
I totally agree with...

I would support the idea of...

(Strongly or weakly) disagreeing with the idea/ statement phrases

Absolutely not.

Although I can understand that point of view,...

I am totally against this idea.

(To be honest,) I don't think so.

I can't agree with...

I don't agree with... at all.

I don't really agree with...

I don't really think that...

I have a different opinion to...

I really don't agree with...

I'm not sure that I agree with...

I'm sure many people feel that way, but...

There's no way I can accept that...

Supporting your arguments phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments (cause and effect, etc) phrases

...lead to...

...result in...

It would have a (positive) effect on...

This happens because of...

This is caused by...

This is due to the fact that...

This is due to...

Personal experience phrases

I found that...

In my (personal/ limited/ own) experience,...

Personally, I have found...

I generally find that...

This happened to me when...

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Almost everyone I know...

Actually, I saw a TV programme on this just a couple of weeks ago.

According to...

I read something about that, but I'm afraid I can't remember...

I read a book which said...

I saw on YouTube that...

I've never experienced this myself, but...

My friend/ teacher told me that...

Giving examples phrases

To give (just) one example,...

For instance,...

For one thing,...

... etcetera.

Probably the best example of this is...

... and so forth.

... and so on.

... and that kind of thing.

... and things like that.

..., e.g....

..., for example,...

Talking about importance phrases

(absolutely) vital/ essential/ crucial

(incredibly/ very/ fairly/ not so/ not very/ not at all) important

Generalising (about people in your country etc) phrases

...mostly

In the vast majority of cases,...

Most...

The majority of...

... often...

... usually/ generally...

A great deal of...

A large number of...

Almost all...

In general,...

Many...

Looking at both sides phrases

Nevertheless,...

On the other hand,...

The good points are that...

The only drawback I can think of is...

It can also be said that...

Looking at it another way,...

Nonetheless,...

One advantage/ benefit/ selling point/ positive factor is...

One disadvantage/ drawback/ negative aspect/ bad point is...

There are both pros and cons.

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Hmmm,...

I've never (really) thought about that before.

Let me see.

Let me think.

No one has ever asked me that before.

That's a difficult question.

That's a good question!

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

That's a tricky one.

The only thing I can come up with is that...

Well,...

Wow, that's a tricky one!

How can I best say this in English?

It's difficult to say, but...

It's hard to say (for sure), but...

What's the best way to answer that?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

After discussing what tips you would give someone about IELTS Speaking Part Three, cross out the tips below that you don't agree with.

Dealing with difficult questions/ communication problems in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's usually best to pretend that you fully understood and answer what you think the question might be.

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's best to use silence, body language or a short general phrase ("Pardon?", "One more time, please", "Say again", etc).

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's best to be specific about what the problem was ("Sorry, could you rephrase the question?", "Sorry, I didn't catch the last part", "Sorry, could you say that again a little more slowly?", "Sorry but I've never heard of...", etc).

If you think you probably understand but aren't sure, ask a Yes/ No question to check ("Sorry, just to check, are you asking...?", "Should I talk about...?", "If I understand correctly, you want me to give my opinion on...?", etc).

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is vague, you can show that in your answer ("I guess that... means..., in which case...", "It depends what you mean by..., but...", "Assuming by... you mean..., then...", etc).

If you still don't understand after the question has been repeated, ask again ("Sorry, I'm still not sure what I should say", "I'm really sorry, but can you explain what... means?", etc).

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

You should try to avoid all silence. To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can comment on the question ("That's a tricky one", "I've never really thought about that before", "That's an interesting question", "That's quite complicated, actually", "That's rather a deep question", "Wow! That's a really big question", etc).

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can ask yourself questions ("How can I best start to answer that question? Well,...", "What's the best way to explain my opinion? Well,...", "How can I best say this in English? Well I guess,...", etc).

Giving opinions in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

To make it easier to answer questions without thinking time, it's best to stick to simple general opinions phrases ("I think...", "In my opinion,...", "From my point of view,...", etc).

To show your range of language and really communicate your opinions, it's best to use strong opinions language or weak opinions language ("It seems clear to me that...", "Frankly speaking,...", "I'd definitely say that...", "I'm no expert on this, but...", "This is only my personal opinion, but...", "I would guess that...", etc).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Because this is an academic English test, it's best to always use soft, polite language to agree and disagree with the examiner ("I suppose that what you say could be right", "Sorry, but I'm not sure that I completely agree with your opinion", etc).

To show your range of language and really communicate your opinions, you should use a range of strong and weak agreement and disagreement to match what you really think ("That makes complete sense", "I can't argue with that", "I feel more or less the same way as the people who say that", "I can probably accept that", "That sounds reasonable", "There is no way that... would work", "I can't see any merit in...", "I don't really agree that...", "I partly agree with..., but...", etc).

Supporting your arguments in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

You should usually give reasons for your opinions ("The main reason why I feel this way is...", "because of...", "due to the fact that...", etc).

You should support most of your arguments with examples from your own experience ("For example, I mostly like...", "In my case, I have never experienced...", etc).

To show your range of language and really support your arguments, you should use a range of logical arguments ("This generally leads to...", "This is often caused by...", etc), personal experience ("In my limited experience,..." "Personally, I generally find that...", "This happened to me once when...", etc), other sources of your knowledge ("According to...", "I read a book which said...", etc), examples ("To give just one example,..." "Maybe the most relevant example of this is...", etc), talking about importance ("It is absolutely vital for...", "It is incredibly important in order to achieve...", etc), speculating ("It is almost certain to happen", "It is very likely to occur", etc), generalising ("Almost all young adults...", "The vast majority of millennials...", etc), looking at both sides ("One possible drawback is...", "On the other hand,..." etc), comparing and contrasting ("... is far more...er than...", "... is substantially more... than...", etc), and talking about trends/ changes ("... has recently worsened", "I predict a recovery", etc).

Short and long answers in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

Because the examiner will probably ask a follow-up question if your first answer is short, you should generally answer Yes/ No questions with "Yes" or "No".

Although the examiner will probably ask follow-up questions if your first answer is short, you can show your range of language and communicate more by avoiding just "Yes" and "No" ("You could say that", "Not so much", "I suppose so", "That's what I've heard", "Not exactly", "Not as far as I know", etc).

You should make your answers as long as you can ("And the fourth reason why I feel that way is...", "What else can I say about that topic? Oh yes,..." etc).

You can stop whenever you have answered the question, but if you feel like you haven't explained enough, for example that the reasons for your opinion might not be clear, you should explain more ("In other words,..." "To put it another way,..." "In addition, we need to consider..." "We also mustn't forget..." "Specifically,..." etc).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

The underlined ones are good tips. Please ask about any that you classified differently.

Dealing with difficult questions/ communication problems in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's usually best to pretend that you fully understood and answer what you think the question might be.

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's best to use silence, body language or a short general phrase ("Pardon?", "One more time, please", "Say again", etc).

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's best to be specific about what the problem was ("Sorry, could you rephrase the question?", "Sorry, I didn't catch the last part", "Sorry, could you say that again a little more slowly?", "Sorry but I've never heard of..." , etc).

If you think you probably understand but aren't sure, ask a Yes/ No question to check ("Sorry, just to check, are you asking...?", "Should I talk about...?", "If I understand correctly, you want me to give my opinion on...?", etc).

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is vague, you can show that in your answer ("I guess that...means..., in which case...", "It depends what you mean by..., but...", "Assuming by... you mean..., then...", etc).

If you still don't understand after the question has been repeated, ask again ("Sorry, I'm still not sure what I should say", "I'm really sorry, but can you explain what... means?", etc).

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

You should try to avoid all silence. To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can comment on the question ("That's a tricky one", "I've never really thought about that before", "That's an interesting question", "That's quite complicated, actually", "That's rather a deep question", "Wow! That's a really big question", etc).

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can ask yourself questions ("How can I best start to answer that question? Well...", "What's the best way to explain my opinion? Well...", "How can I best say this in English? Well I guess...", etc).

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Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

To show your range of language and really communicate your opinions, you should use a range of strong and weak agreement and disagreement to match what you really think ("That makes complete sense", "I can't argue with that", "I feel more or less the same way as the people who say that", "I can probably accept that", "That sounds reasonable", "There is no way that... would work", "I can't see any merit in...", "I don't really agree that...", "I partly agree with..., but...", etc).

Supporting your arguments in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

You should usually give reasons for your opinions ("The main reason why I feel this way is...", "because of...", "due to the fact that...", etc).

You should support most of your arguments with examples from your own experience ("For example, I mostly like...", "In my case, I have never experienced...", etc).

To show your range of language and really support your arguments, you should use a range of logical arguments ("This generally leads to...", "This is often caused by...", etc), personal experience ("In my limited experience...", "Personally, I generally find that...", "This happened to me once when...", etc), other sources of your knowledge ("According to...", "I read a book which said...", etc), examples ("To give just one example...", "Maybe the most relevant example of this is...", etc), talking about importance ("It is absolutely vital for...", "It is incredibly important in order to achieve...", etc), speculating ("It is almost certain to happen", "It is very likely to occur", etc), generalising ("Almost all young adults...", "The vast majority of millennials...", etc), looking at both sides ("One possible drawback is...", "On the other hand...", etc), comparing and contrasting ("... is far more...er than...", "... is substantially more... than...", etc), and talking about trends/ changes ("... has recently worsened", "I predict a recovery", etc).

Short and long answers in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

Because the examiner will probably ask a follow-up question if your first answer is short, you should generally answer Yes/ No questions with "Yes" or "No".

Although the examiner will probably ask follow-up questions if your first answer is short, you can show your range of language and communicate more by avoiding just "Yes" and "No" ("You could say that", "Not so much", "I suppose so", "That's what I've heard", "Not exactly", "Not as far as I know", etc).

You should make your answers as long as you can ("And the fourth reason why I feel that way is...", "What else can I say about that topic? Oh yes...", etc).

You can stop whenever you have answered the question, but if you feel like you haven't explained enough, for example that the reasons for your opinion might not be clear, you should explain more ("In other words...", "To put it another way...", "In addition, we need to consider...", "We also mustn't forget...", "Specifically...", etc).

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, write suitable phrases to match each tip below in the gaps. Many phrases not above are also possible.

Dealing with difficult questions/ communication problems in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

If you aren't sure what the question means, it's best to be specific about what the problem was (_____

_____).

If you think you probably understand but aren't sure, ask a Yes/ No question to check (_____

_____).

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is vague, you can show that in your answer (_____

_____).

If you still don't understand after the question has been repeated, ask again (_____

_____).

Thinking aloud/ Filling silence in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

You should try to avoid all silence. To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can comment on the question (_____

_____).

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can ask yourself questions (_____

_____).

Giving opinions in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

To show your range of language and really communicate your opinions, it's best to use strong opinions language or weak opinions language (_____

_____).

To show your range of language and really communicate your opinions, you should use a range of strong and weak agreement and disagreement to match what you really think (_____

_____).

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Supporting your arguments in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

You should usually give reasons for your opinions (_____

_____).

To show your range of language and really support your arguments, you should use a range of logical arguments (_____),
personal experience (_____),
other sources of your knowledge (_____),
examples (_____),
talking about importance (_____),
speculating (_____),
generalising (_____),
looking at both sides (_____),
comparing and contrasting (_____),
and talking about trends/ changes (_____).

Short and long answers in IELTS Speaking Part Three tips and useful phrases

Although the examiner will probably ask follow-up questions if your first answer is short, you can show your range of language and communicate more by avoiding just “Yes” and “No” (_____

_____).

You can stop whenever you have answered the question, but if you feel like you haven't explained enough, for example that the reasons for your opinion might not be clear, you should explain more (_____

_____).

Check above, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class.

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IELTS Speaking Part Three longer phrases card games

Instructions for teachers

Give students just the edge (right-hand and left-hand) cards to put together to make basic phrases for answering IELTS Speaking Part Three questions, then also give them the middle cards (in **bold**) to check and expand on their answers. If they get stuck, you can:

- tell them that if they can't put bold cards in the middle somewhere, they probably got the basic phrases wrong
- read out two three parts of some of or all of the sentences

After they check their answers as a class or with the answer key and do the brainstorming, they can test each other by:

- reading out a phrase with one bit missing
- reading out one part and helping their partner make the whole phrase
- helping their partner make suitable phrases for the function that they say the name of

Students can then deal out all the cards and try to use phrases including those words in their answers to Speaking Part Three questions.

Cards to cut up/ Suggested answers

If I'm right	in thinking	that 'green' means 'eco-friendly', then I'd say...
Wow, that a	really	big question!
I'm	absolutely	certain that the best idea is...
I'm no expert	on this	, but I guess that...
If I were in charge, I would	-n't necessarily/ personally/ strongly	recommend investing...
I feel	exactly/ just/ more or less	the same way.

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It's the first time I've heard that point of view but I	totally/ really don't/ don't really/ partially/ mostly	agree with that opinion.
I think it is a good idea. The	chief/ main/ principal	reasons for supporting it are...
In my	personal/ limited/ own/ own personal	experience, I have found that...
Actually, I saw a programme on this	just last week/ the other day	in which they said...
To give	just	one example of that working in practice,...
This is	absolutely	vital in order to help people...
According to some data in a book I read recently, the	vast	majority of millennials highly value...
One	potential/ likely/ big/ additional	benefit of more training for hotel staff is...
Frankly, there is	far/ much/ considerably/ slightly	too much overcrowding to be able to...
Discipline in schools has	massively/ significantly/ slightly	deteriorated, maybe due to...
I mustn't forget to	also	mention the other selling point, which is...

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Brainstorming stage

First of all without looking at the cards, write at least two useful phrases for each of these categories. Many phrases not on the cards are also possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

Giving weak opinions phrases

Recommendations language

(Strongly and weakly) agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

(Strongly and weakly) disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

Personal experience phrases

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Looking at both sides phrases

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

*Use the cards to help, starting with just the middle cards in **bold**.*

Compare with the suggested answers, brainstorm more, then compare your extra answers as a class or with lists of phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Many more phrases are possible for each, so check if you wrote something different.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

"If I'm right (in thinking) that 'green' means 'eco-friendly', then I'd say..."

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

"Wow, that's a (really) big question!"

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

"What's the best way to explain (my opinion)? Well..."

Giving opinions phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

"I'm (absolutely) certain that the best idea is..."

Giving weak opinions phrases

"I'm no expert (on this), but I guess that..."

Recommendations language

"If I were in charge, I would(n't necessarily/ personally/ strongly) recommend investing..."

(Strongly and weakly) agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

"I feel (exactly/ just/ more or less) the same way."

"It's the first time I've heard that point of view but I (totally/ mostly) agree with that opinion."

(Strongly and weakly) disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

"It's the first time I've heard that point of view but I (really don't/ don't really/ partially) agree with that opinion."

Supporting your arguments phrases/ Phrases to answer specific kinds of questions

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

"I think it is a good idea. The (chief/ main/ principal) reasons for supporting it are..."

Personal experience phrases

"In my (personal/ limited/ own/ own personal) experience, I have found that..."

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

"Actually, I saw a programme on this (just last week/ the other day) in which they said ..."

Giving examples phrases

"To give (just) one example of that working in practice,..."

Talking about importance phrases

"This is (absolutely) vital in order to help people..."

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

"From what I've read, the (vast) majority of millennials highly value..."

Looking at both sides phrases

"One (potential/ likely/ big/ additional) benefit of more training for hotel staff is..."

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

"Frankly, there is (far/ much/ considerably/ slightly) too much overcrowding to be able to..."

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

"Discipline in schools has (massively/ significantly/ slightly) deteriorated, maybe due to...."

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

"I mustn't forget to (also) mention the other selling point, which is....."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Making IELTS Speaking Part Three questions games

Brainstorming IELTS Speaking Part Three questions challenge

Choose a card below. Take turns asking and answering questions matching that card until someone gives up, asks the same question, or asks a question that is unsuitable because:

- it requires particular knowledge/ specialist knowledge
- it is more like a Speaking Part One question (a personal question about that person, not about the world more generally)

Take turns doing the same with other cards until your teacher stops you. If you are scoring, the last person to make a suitable question based on each card gets one point. Your teacher will tell you if you should just use one kind of card, use any card you like, or move through the different kinds of cards.

Ask about any cards that you had difficulty making questions from, working together to make suitable questions every time.

Do the same with the cards face down

Do the same, but combining a topic card and one other card each time.

IELTS Speaking Part Three ask and tell coin games

Make a question connected to one of the cards, then flip a coin to see if you can ask that question to someone else (heads) or have to answer that question yourself (tails, for "tell").

IELTS Speaking Part Three truth or dare

Make a Speaking Part Three question connected to one of the cards and ask it to someone else. Then decide if you want the same question back (= "truth"), or if you will answer a different question from that person connected to the same card (= "dare"). If you choose "dare", you must answer the first question that they make, as long as it is connected to that card.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Topic cards

Nature	Consumerism	Tech	Competitiveness
Fame/ Celebrity	Health and fitness	Money	Marketing
Business	Communication	Education/ Training	History/ Heritage
Innovation/ Ideas	Possessions	Time	Forecasting
Abilities/ Skills	Helping people	The press	Games
Reading	Commuting	Careers	Feedback

Type of question cards

<i>People (your age) in your country</i>	<i>Advantages and/ or disadvantages</i>	<i>Comparing/ Contrasting</i>
<i>Yes/ No questions</i>	<i>Statements to agree or disagree with</i>	<i>Talking about trends/ changes</i>
<i>Future predictions/ forecasts</i>	<i>Cause and effect/ consequences</i>	<i>Ranking how good/ important/ ...</i>
<i>(Discussing/ Giving) advice/ recommendations</i>	<i>Problems and solutions</i>	<i>Reasons/ Motivations/ Justifications</i>

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Question stem cards

Are people in your country...?
Are there any negative effects of...?
Are there times when...?
At what age do you think...?
Can you compare/ contrast... ?
Can you give some examples of...?
Do you agree that...?
Do you believe that... is a good idea?
Do you think ...is getting better or worse?
Do you think it's okay for ... to...?
Do you think it's possible (for...) to...?
Do you think that ...is changing?
Do you think that... is about right?
Do you think that it's better to... or...?
Do you think... will... in the future?
Do you think that the government should...?
Do you think there are too many...?
Do you think... should...?
Do you think there is a danger that...?
How can... be encouraged to...?

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How easy is it to...?
How important is/ are..., in your opinion?
How much do you think the government should get involved in...?
In what ways do ...benefit society?
In what ways has/ have... changed (in the last... years)?
Is... a problem where you live?
Some people say that... Do you agree or disagree?
What advice would you give someone who...?
What are the main reasons why people...?
What can be done to...?
What do you think about ...in your country?
What do you think motivates... to...?
What effects... have on...?
What is the best way to...?
What is the biggest ...problem facing your country, do you think?
What kind of influence can... have on...?
What (possible) difficulties can people have...?
Who do you think should...?

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Strong and weak opinions in IELTS Speaking Part Three

Part One: Strong and weak opinions simplest responses

Without looking below for now, listen to your teacher read out opinions phrases and race to raise the correct card that you were given depending on what you think about the strength of each phrase.

Write “W” for “weak” or “S” for “strong” next to each section below. Ones in the same section always have the same strength.

Check your answers as a class, then play the same holding up cards game in groups.

Underline the words which make the phrases strong or weak.

Tell your partner a key word and tell them if the phrase is strong or weak and help them make the phrase.

Cards to hold up

Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong
Weak	Strong

Strong and weak opinions phrases to classify

A clear benefit of this is...

A huge benefit of this is...

A potential benefit of this is...

A possible benefit of this is...

I do think that...

I really think that...

Although there are also arguments against, my personal opinion is...

Not many people (will) agree with me but I think...

As far as I know,...

Based on (just) my own experience,...

Based on the little that I remember (from my school days/ on the topic),...

From what I've heard...

At a guess, I'd say...

I (would) guess that...

I'm not sure but I (would) imagine that...

I certainly don't believe that ...

I really don't agree with that idea that...

I don't have any data on this, but...

I don't have much experience of this, but...

I don't know (very) much about this topic, but...

I don't see how anyone can deny that...

I don't think anyone can doubt that...

I have (absolutely) no doubt that...

I don't really agree with the idea that...

I don't think that it's such a good idea to...

I haven't heard much about this before, but...

I haven't read much about this subject, but...

I know this is a minority view, but...

I personally feel that ...

I reckon...

I suppose...

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I firmly believe that...

I strongly believe that...

I have always found that...

I have a lot of experience of this, and...

I tend to think that...

I'd probably say that...

I totally agree with the view that...

I'd definitely say that...

I'd need to look into this more, but I'd say that...

I'm afraid I know very little about this topic, but...

I'm (absolutely) certain that...

I'm (absolutely) positive that...

I'm (completely/ totally) convinced that...

I'm no expert (on this), but I believe...

I'm not (very) familiar with this topic, but...

I've never (even/ really) thought about this before, but I'd say that...

I'm not (very) sure about this, but...

I'm not sure that it's a good idea to...

In my honest opinion,...

It can't be denied that...

Without (the shadow of) a doubt,...

In my humble opinion,...

In my limited experience,...

In my very limited experience,...

It could (perhaps) be said that...

It could possibly...

It might be a good idea to...

It's a fairly good idea to...

We probably should...

We could...

It seems clear to me that...

It seems obvious to me that...

It will definitely lead to...

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It's (absolutely) crucial to...
It's (absolutely) essential to...
It's (absolutely) vital to...
It's incredibly important to...

It's difficult to say (for sure), but...
It's hard to know for sure, but...

My first thoughts are...
My initial reaction is...
My personal impression is...
Off the top of my head,...

Obviously...
The vast majority of people...
There is (absolutely) no doubt that...

On balance,...
On the whole,...
Overall,...

Some people will disagree with me, but I believe...
The arguments for are also very convincing, but I'd say that...
There is a lot to be said for the opposite point of view, but if I had to choose...

This is just my own view, but...
This is only my opinion, but...

This is the first time I've (ever) come across this issue, but...
To the best of my knowledge,...

To be (perfectly) frank,...
To be honest,...
Frankly (speaking),...

We definitely should...
We must...
We really should...

It's an excellent idea to...
It's an awful idea to...

I partially agree with the view that...
I mostly agree with the view that...

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Part Two: Make the opinions stronger and weaker

Add words or change words below to make the phrases below both weaker and stronger.

Weaker		Stronger
	In my opinion,...	
	I think that...	
	I believe that...	
	I'd say that...	
	I think that it's a good idea to...	
	I don't think it's a good idea to...	
	We should...	

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Weaker		Stronger
	I agree with the view that...	
	I don't agree with the idea that...	
	In my experience,...	
	A benefit of this is...	
	It's important to...	
	The majority of people...	
	It will lead to...	

Use the key words on the next page to help with the brainstorming task above. Some words can be used more than once.

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Key words for making opinions phrases stronger or weaker

- absolutely
- always
- at all
- awful
- certainly
- clear
- could
- crucial
- definitely
- do
- essential
- excellent
- extensive
- fairly
- firmly
- guess
- honest
- huge
- humble
- imagine
- incredibly
- just
- limited
- might
- mostly
- must
- only
- possible
- potential
- probably
- really
- strongly
- such
- sure
- terrible
- totally
- very
- vital

Make sure that you have used each word above at least once.

Check your answers as a class or with the suggested answers. Other answers might be possible, but some combinations are not, so please check if you wrote something different.

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Suggested answers

Weaker		Stronger
In my humble opinion,.../ This is just my opinion but.../ This is only my opinion, but...	<i>In my opinion,...</i>	<i>In my honest opinion,...</i>
<i>I'm not sure but I think that.../ I suppose/ I guess/ I imagine... (NOT I probably think that... X)</i>	<i>I think that...</i>	<i>I really think that.../ I do think that... (NOT I strongly think that...X)</i>
<i>I beliiiiieve that...</i>	<i>I believe that...</i>	<i>I strongly believe that.../ I firmly believe that....</i>
I'd probably say that.../ I'd guess that.../ I'd imagine that...	I'd say that...	I'd definitely say that...
I think that it could be a good idea to.../ I think that it's a fairly good idea to...	I think that it's a good idea to...	I think that it's an excellent idea to.../ I'm sure that it's an excellent idea to.../ I really think that's a good idea to.../ I think that it's certainly a good idea to...
I don't think it's such a good idea to...../ I'm not sure that it's a good idea to...	I don't think it's a good idea to...	I think it's a terrible idea to.../ I think it's an awful idea to...
I think we probably should.../ We could.../ It might be a good idea to...	We should...	We really should.../ We have to.../ We must.../ We definitely should...
I mostly agree with the view that...	I agree with the view that...	I totally agree with the view that...
I don't really agree with the idea that...	I don't agree with the idea that...	I really don't agree with the idea that... (at all).
In my (very) limited experience...	In my experience,...	I have a lot of experience of this and.../ In my extensive experience of this.../ I have always found that...
A possible benefit of this	A benefit of this is...	A clear benefit of this is.../ A

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is.../ A potential benefit of this is...		huge benefit of this is...
It's fairly important to.../ It might be important to...	It's important to...	It's incredibly important to.../ It's (absolutely) crucial to.../ It's (absolutely) vital to.../ It's (absolutely) essential to...
Many people.../ A good number of people...	The majority of people...	The vast majority of people.../ Almost everyone.../ Virtually everyone...
It will probably lead to.../ It might (well) lead to.../ It could (possibly) lead to... (NOT It would lead to... X)	It will lead to...	It will definitely lead to...

Test each other on the phrases above:

- Read out a phrase and help your partner to make it stronger or weaker
- Read out a key word and help your partner make an opinions phrase from it, then see if they can make it stronger or weaker
- Read out a phrase with a key word missing and see if your partner can read back the whole phrase

Use as many phrases above as you can while you answer IELTS Speaking Part Three questions and/ or discuss questions from IELTS Writing Part Two.

Tick off key words from the key words list as you use phrases with those words while you discuss IELTS Speaking Part Three questions and/ or IELTS Writing Part Two questions.

Before you answer a Speaking Part Three question, flip a coin to decide if your answer should be strong (heads) or weak (tails).

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Yes no questions in IELTS Speaking Part Three games

Warmer – Don't say yes or no game

Take turns asking each other Yes/ No questions made from the question stems below. You lose point if you say "Yes" or "No", get one point if you answer (truthfully) without those words, and get a second point if your answer is different to any answer so far. Answers with similar words to "yes" and "no" such as "not" and "Sure" are okay.

IELTS Speaking Part Three yes/ no question stems

- Are people in your country generally interested in...?
- Are people in your country worried about ...?
- Are there any negative effects of...?
- Are there times/ occasions when...?
- Do you agree that...?
- Do you believe that people your age in your country...?
- Do you believe that... is a good idea?
- Do you think... is always a good thing?
- Do you think it's okay for ... to...?
- Do you think it's possible (for...) to...?
- Do you think it's good/ better/ best for... to...?
- Do you think it would be a good idea for... to...?
- Do you think it's a good thing that...?
- Do you think that ...is/ are changing?
- Do you think that... is about right?
- Do you think that... will become more... (in the future)?
- Do you think... will... in the future?
- Do you think that the government should...?
- Do you think there are too many...?
- Do you think... should...?
- Do you think there is a danger that...?
- Do you think young people...?
- Do you think your government is doing enough to...?
- Is... a problem where you live?
- Is ... becoming...?
- Should... (or not)?
- Some people say that... Do you agree?
- Would you say that...?

Ask about any sentence stems that you couldn't make questions out of, questions which you are not sure that you answered correctly, etc.

Perhaps after changing partner, try to use as many of the words below as you can when you answer more questions with the same question stems. The underlined ones are probably most useful.

Discuss what makes a good answer to a yes/ no question in IELTS Speaking Part Three.

Try to remember the phrases below for avoiding just yes and no.

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"I think so"

"I'd say so"

"Generally not."/ "Not usually."

"Not (so) much."/ "Not (so) often."

"I suppose so."

"It depends (on...), but generally...."

"(Yeah,) I guess."

"Sure (, why not?)"

"Sort of."/ "Kind of."

"That's what I've been told."/ "That's what I've heard."

"Not (...) exactly."

"Not right now."

"Hardly (at all/ ever)."

"Fairly."/ "Somewhat."/ "Quite a lot."

"Not as far as I know."

"Not as much as..."/ "Not like..."

"Not at all."/ "Never."

"I wouldn't say that."

"I wouldn't go that far."

"Perhaps."

"Sometimes."/ "From time to time."

"Not according to..."

"Very."/ "Extremely."/ "(Quite) a lot."

"Well, actually..."

"I wouldn't necessarily say..."

"I think that (...) would be going (a bit) too far."

"Of course (not)."

"Probably (not)."

"You could say that."

"As long as..."/ "Only if..."/ "Only when..."/ "Providing..."

"More or less."

"Not by... standards."

"Not that you'd notice."

"Only if you compare it to..."/ "Only in comparison to..."

"Only in so far as..."

"That's sometimes the case."

"No way!"

"In some ways."

"In a manner of speaking."

"Not what I would call..."

"Clearly."

"Absolutely."

"There are."

"Not that I know of."

"Not any that I've heard about."

"Quite a lot."

"I don't."

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Choose good descriptions from this list:

- as long as possible
- natural length/ whatever length is needed to really answer the question
- as short as possible
- just yes or no
- just yes or no + subject + auxiliary verb ("Yes, I have", etc)
- avoiding saying yes or no whenever possible
- sometimes not saying yes or no, depending on your true situation
- mostly thinking about the grammatically correct answer to the question
- mostly thinking about what the questioner wants to know
- sometimes adding something extra after answering the question (reasons, etc)
- often adding something extra after answering (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)
- usually adding something extra after answering (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)
- always adding something extra after answering (reasons, examples, exceptions, etc)

Take turns asking questions from here for three minutes, answering naturally this time.

- Are people in your country generally interested in politics?
- Are people in your country worried about pollution?
- Are there any negative effects of more and more people going to university?
- Are there occasions when governments should give money to private businesses?
- Are there times when teachers abuse their power?
- Do you agree that global warming is the biggest problem facing this country?
- Do you believe that people in your country emphasise learning English too much?
- Do you believe that banning petrol cars is a good idea?
- Do you think dedication to your work is always a good thing?
- Do you think it's okay for police officers to usually carry guns?
- Do you think it's possible for good teachers to completely change their bad students?
- Do you think it's good for children to go on summer camps without their families?
- Do you think it's better for less academic students to drop academic subjects?
- Do you think it's best for governments to stay out of business as much as possible?
- Do you think it would be a good idea to have an international tax?
- Do you think it's a good thing that voice activation is becoming more common?
- Do you think that people's love lives are changing?
- Do you think that the level of tax in your country is about right?
- Do you think that computer games will become more respected as art (in the future)?
- Do you think that we will find solutions to global warming in the future?
- Do you think that the government should ask voters for their opinions more often?
- Do you think there are too many levels of management in most companies?
- Do you think the rich elderly should pay more for the services that they use?
- Do you think there is a danger that we could have a war between superpowers?
- Do you think young people have too little respect for older people?
- Do you think your government is doing enough to train people whose jobs disappear?
- Is youth crime a problem where you live?
- Is social media becoming more important?
- Should parents be able to choose between different state schools (or not)?
- Some people say that we should prioritise living on other planets. Do you agree?
- Would you say that the internet is getting worse?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Rephrasing in IELTS Speaking Part Three

Take turns asking each other questions made from these question stems on Speaking Part Three issues like the environment, consumerism, technology, fame, money, communication, innovation, and timekeeping.

- Are people in your country generally interested in...?
- Are people in your country worried about ...? –
- Are there times when it's better to...?
- Can you contrast... with...?
- Can you explain why...?
- Can you think of any bad effects of ...?
- Do you believe that people your age in your country...?
- Do you believe that... is a good idea?
- Do you think ...is getting better or getting worse?
- Do you think it is okay for ... to...?
- Do you think it is possible for... to...?
- Do you think that the government should...?
- Do you think that... is about right?
- Do you think there are too many...?
- Do you think your government is doing enough to...?
- Do you think... is always a good thing?
- How can... be encouraged to...?
- How has ...changed over the last 50 years in your country?
- How important is..., in your opinion?
- How much do you think the government should get involved in...?
- In what ways do ...benefit society?
- Is... a problem where you live?
- Some people say that... Do you agree or disagree?
- What advice would you give...?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of...?
- What are your predictions for ... in the next few years?
- What can be done to stop..., do you think?
- What do you think ...will be like in 50 years' time?

Discuss what you think was good about your answers, and what could have been better.

How well did you show your range of language in your answers?

Did you generally avoid repeating words from the questions in your answers?

Ask about any question stems above which you couldn't make questions out of, are not sure that you answered well, that you repeated words from in your answer, etc. Work together to rephrase the key words in it as much as possible each time.

After doing the matching tasks below, change partner and ask and answer questions made from the same stems, this time in exam format.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

First of all with no help, work together to rephrase the underlined words in as many ways as possible. If you can't think of synonyms, you can also use opposite words with "not", different parts of speech, examples, etc.

- Are people in your country generally interested in...?
- Are people in your country worried about ...? –
- Are there times when it's better to...?
- Can you contrast... with...?
- Can you explain why...?
- Can you think of any bad effects of ...?
- Do you believe that people your age in your country...?
- Do you believe that... is a good idea?
- Do you think ...is getting better or getting worse?
- Do you think it is okay for ... to...?
- Do you think it is possible for... to...?
- Do you think that the government should...?
- Do you think that... is about right?
- Do you think there are too many...?
- Do you think your government is doing enough to...?
- Do you think... is always a good thing?
- How can... be encouraged to...?
- How has ...changed over the last 50 years in your country?
- How important is..., in your opinion?
- How much do you think the government should get involved in...?
- In what ways do ...benefit society?
- Is... a problem where you live?
- Some people say that... Do you agree or disagree?
- What advice would you give...?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of...?
- What are your predictions for ... in the next few years?
- What can be done to stop..., do you think?
- What do you think ...will be like in 50 years' time?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Mixed answers

Match these words and expressions to the underlined parts above:

- (morally/ ethically) acceptable
- according to some/ if you listen to a part of the population/ share the opinion/ have a different opinion
- altered
- compare/ find differences between/ describe differences between...
- concerned about/ anxious about/ stressed out by/ nervous about/ fretting about
- consequences/ results
- correct/ at the right level (of...)
- essential/ vital/ crucial
- excessive/ more than enough/ an overabundance of/ an oversupply of
- feasible/ likely/ conceivable
- forecast/ expectations/ in the near future/ by the end of this decade
- how/ do good for/ improve/ have a positive influence on
- how/ steps can be taken/ processes can be set in motion/ halt/ prevent/ cut out
- how/ the state of/ the situation of/ 50 years from now/ half a century from now/ in five decades/ in the 2070s
- in what way/ by what method
- into/ fascinated by
- invariably/ in all situations
- is worthwhile/ is a sensible course of action/ makes sense/ would work/ would be effective/ would achieve something
- issue/ difficulty
- more or less/ approximately
- negative/ unfortunate/ undesirable
- occasions/ situations/ preferable to
- ought to
- people in their early twenties/ young adults/ middle aged people/ my generation/ generation.../ millennials
- progressing/ improving/ worsening/ deteriorating
- pros/ benefits/ good points/ positive aspects/ cons/ drawbacks/ bad points/ negative aspects
- since the 1970s/ over the last half a century/ over the last five decades
- sufficient(ly)
- suggestion(s)/ recommendation(s)/ tip(s)
- the (main/ chief/ principal) reason(s) for/ justifications for
- the party in power/ the cabinet/ the authorities/ the ruling party
- the population of.../... people/ people in... / my fellow...s
- to what extent/ at what level/ have a role in/ take part in
- usually/ typically/ in general/ mostly

Check your answers as a class or with the suggested answers. Many other ways of rephrasing are possible, so please check if you wrote something different in the first rephrasing stage.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

- Are people in your country generally interested in...? – the population of.../... people/ people in... / my fellow...s + usually/ typically/ in general/ mostly + into/ fascinated by
- Are people in your country worried about ...? – concerned about/ anxious about/ stressed out by/ nervous about/ fretting about
- Are there times when it's better to...? – occasions/ situations/ preferable to
- Can you contrast... with...? – compare/ find differences between/ describe differences between...
- Can you explain why...? – the (main/ chief/ principal) reason(s) for/ justifications for
- Can you think of any bad effects of ...? – negative/ unfortunate/ undesirable + consequences/ results
- Do you believe that people your age in your country...? – people in their early twenties/ young adults/ middle aged people/ my generation/ generation.../ millennials
- Do you believe that... is a good idea? – is worthwhile/ is a sensible course of action/ makes sense/ would work/ would be effective/ would achieve something
- Do you think ...is getting better or getting worse? – progressing/ improving/ worsening/ deteriorating
- Do you think it is okay for ... to...? – (morally/ ethically) acceptable
- Do you think it is possible for... to...? – feasible/ likely/ conceivable
- Do you think that the government should...? – the party in power/ the cabinet/ the authorities/ the ruling party + ought to
- Do you think that... is about right? – more or less/ approximately + correct/ at the right level (of...)
- Do you think there are too many...? – excessive/ more than enough/ an overabundance of/ an oversupply of
- Do you think your government is doing enough to...? – sufficient(ly)
- Do you think... is always a good thing? – invariably/ in all situations
- How can... be encouraged to...? – in what way/ by what method
- How has ...changed over the last 50 years in your country? – altered + since the 1970s/ over the last half a century/ over the last five decades
- How important is..., in your opinion? – essential/ vital/ crucial
- How much do you think the government should get involved in...? – to what extent/ at what level/ have a role in/ take part in
- In what ways do ...benefit society? – how/ do good for/ improve/ have a positive influence on
- Is... a problem where you live? – issue/ difficulty
- Some people say that... Do you agree or disagree? – according to some/ if you listen to a part of the population/ share the opinion/ have a different opinion
- What advice would you give...? – suggestion(s)/ recommendation(s)/ tip(s)
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of...? – pros/ benefits/ good points/ positive aspects/ cons/ drawbacks/ bad points/ negative aspects
- What are your predictions for ... in the next few years? – forecast/ expectations/ in the near future/ by the end of this decade
- What can be done to stop..., do you think? – how/ steps can be taken/ processes can be set in motion/ halt/ prevent/ cut out
- What do you think ...will be like in 50 years' time? – how/ the state of/ the situation of/ 50 years from now/ half a century from now/ in five decades/ in the 2070s

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three answering without silence practice

Ask your partner a question using one of these question stems. They will try to answer without any silence, and preferably without any thinking time. After they finish, try to guess how much what they said matches their real opinions with sentences like "I think that is about 70% your real opinion" and "I don't think that is your real opinion at all".

- At what age do you think...?
- Do you think ...is getting better or worse?
- Do you think... is always a good thing?
- Do you think it's okay for ... to...?
- Do you think it's possible (for...) to...?
- Do you think that... is about right?
- Do you think that... will become more... (in the future)?
- Do you think that the government should...?
- Do you think there are too many...?
- Do you think... should...?
- Do you think young people...?
- How important is/ are..., in your opinion?
- How much do you think the government should get involved in...?
- How should...?
- Should... (or not)?
- Some people say that... Do you agree or disagree?
- What are the main reasons why people...?
- What can be done to...? (Do you think that is likely?)
- What do you think about ...in your country?
- What is the best way to...?
- What is the biggest ...problem facing your country, do you think?
- Who do you think should...?
- Would you say that...?

Ask each other similar questions, but this time try to give your own real opinions, filling any silence until you can think of what your views are.

Which of the two tactics that you tried (using what might not be your real opinions so you can answer the question straightaway, or filling silence while you think about your real opinion) is usually best? Why?

What can you say to fill silence until you are ready to give your (real) opinion?

Compare your ideas with those on the next page.

Use as many of those phrases as you can while you answer other Speaking Part Three questions. Your partner will give feedback on which were best/ most natural each time.

Try to remember as many of those kinds of phrases as you can, check below, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas with a list of phrases and/ or as a class.

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

"That's a tricky one."

"I've never thought about that before."

"That's an interesting question."

"That's quite complicated, actually."

"That's rather a deep question."/ "That's quite a philosophical question."

"Wow! That's a (really) big question."

Giving weak opinions phrases

"I'm no expert (on this), but..."

"I don't know (very) much about this topic, but..."

"This is just/ only my (personal) opinion, but..."

"I (would) guess that..."

"I (would) imagine that..."

"I'm not sure but I think that..."

"(I guess) I'd (probably) say that..."

"I'm not (very) familiar with this topic, but..."

"That's not something I've ever read or heard anything (at all) about, but..."

"There must be very different points of view on this, but..."

"We didn't (really) study this at school, but..."

"Some people will disagree with me, but..."

"My initial reaction is..."

"My first thoughts on the topic are..."

"I might have a different answer if I had more time to think about it, but..."

"It could (perhaps) be said that..."

"On balance,..."

"On the whole,..."

"Overall,..."

"The first thing that comes to mind when I think about this question is..."

"You could say that..."

"I assume..."

"At a guess, I'd say..."

"Based on the little that I remember (from my school days/ on the topic),..."

"I haven't heard much about this before, but..."

"I haven't read much about this subject, but..."

"I'd need to look into this more, but I'd say that..."

"I'm afraid I know very little about this topic, but..."

"This is the first time I've (ever) come across this issue, but..."

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

"Hmmm let me think/ let me see."

"I'm not sure how well I can explain this (in English), but..."

"How can I (best) (start to) answer that question? Well,..."

"What's the best way to explain (my opinion)? Well,..."

"I'm not sure the (exact/ proper) English word/ English expression, but..."

"(If you ask me) I'd (probably/ have to) say that..."

"How can I (best) say this in English?"

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three tactics roleplay cards

Take five roleplay cards, choose one, then do that thing when you answer IELTS Speaking Part Three questions from your partner. Whenever they think they know, your partner will try to guess what you were doing/ what your card says. If they are wrong, continue doing the same thing, more extremely if you can. If they are right, together discuss how good or bad that thing is, and what language you could use to do it if it is good. Take one more roleplay card, then listen to your partner doing something from their card. Take turns doing the same until your teacher stops you.

Ask the examiner to repeat or rephrase each question.

Ask the examiner to explain one or more words in each question.

Check what you should do to answer each question/ what kind of answer is needed.

Use just facial expressions to show you don't understand.

Think aloud as you decide what to say.

Comment on how hard every question is (with a different phrase each time if possible).

Comment on how strange each question is (with a different phrase each time if possible).

Say how little you know about the topic before answering each question.

Address the examiner personally ("I agree with you", "You might think that, but...", etc).

Always give strong or weak answers (avoiding language that isn't clearly one or other).

Start every answer with "I think..."

Give at least two contrasting arguments for each topic (looking at both sides, etc).

Give just your opinions, without reasons/ support for your arguments.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Give reasons each time, always starting with “This is because...”

Give a reason for every answer, using different language as much as you can.

Give (very) soft/ weak answers (weakly disagreeing, etc).

Give (very) strong answers (strong opinions, etc).

Support every opinion with personal experience.

Support every opinion with logical arguments (cause and effect, etc).

Support every opinion with data (making up the stats if you don't know any relevant ones).

Support every opinion by quoting other people (friends, authors, etc).

Support every opinion with examples.

Compare and contrast in every answer (to other places, related topics, etc).

(Partly or totally) change your mind/ opinion each time (halfway through or at near the end).

Apologise for all of your answers (for lacking evidence, being controversial, etc).

Add something extra to the end of each answer (extra support, further explanation, etc).

After you answer, add something extra on the same topic (not related to the question).

When you finish, look at the list of roleplays and discuss which are best and worst, and brainstorm useful phrases to do the good things.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three coin games

Warmer: Speaking Parts One and Three coin game

Flip a coin and your partner will ask you one of two possible question types:

Heads = a personal question (about you, your family, etc, like Speaking Part One)

Tails = a discussion question about the world more generally (society, people your age in your country, etc, like Speaking Part Three)

Speaking Part Three question stems coin game

Choose a row from below, perhaps by choosing a random number. Flip a coin to decide if you will answer a question on the left (heads) or on the right (tails). Your partner will ask you a question starting with the words in that box, for example "Do you have any plans for the weekend?" if you chose the first row and then got tails, plus maybe a follow-up question if your first answer was quite short.

Take turns doing the same until your teacher stops you. You can use the same question stem again later, but make sure that you ask a different question using it.

Speaking Part Three ask and tell coin game

Make a question from the list below, then flip a coin to see if you can ask the question to someone else, or if you have to answer your own question:

Heads = Ask (= Ask the question to someone else, plus maybe a follow-up question)

Tails = Tell (= Answer your own question, plus maybe a follow-up question)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Typical Speaking Part Three question stems

1	How popular is/ are...in your country?	Are people in your country (generally)...?
2	Can you compare... to...?	Can you contrast... with...?
3	Can you give some examples of...?	Can you explain why...?
4	Do you think that ...is changing?	Do you think ...is getting better or worse?
5	Can you think of any bad effects of ...?	Do you think that... is about right?
6	At what age do you think...?	Do you believe that people your age...?
7	Do you believe that... is a good idea?	Do you think it's good for... to...?
8	Do you think it is okay (for...) to...?	Do you think... is always a good thing?
9	Do you think that the government should...?	Do you think your government is doing enough to...?
10	How do... benefit from...?	What are the advantages and disadvantages of...?
11	What could be the consequences of...?	Do you think there is a danger that...?
12	Do you think... should...?	Is it sometimes good to...?
13	Would... be better if...?	Are there times when it's better to...?
14	In a global world, should...?	Should (all)... be expected to...?
15	Some people say... What do you think?	Do you think it is true that...?
16	Is it better to... or...?	Is it more important (for...) to... or...?
17	Do you think it is possible for... to...?	How can people...?
18	How has ...changed over the last 50 years in your country?	What are your predictions for ... in... years?
19	Why do some people prefer not to...?	What is the appeal of...?
20	How important is..., in your opinion?	How much do you think the government should get involved in...?
21	Do you think men and women...?	Is it natural for... to...?
22	In what ways do people need to...?	What can... learn from...?
23	Sometimes... What do you think...?	What makes some people...?
24	Is... a problem where you live?	What can be done to stop..., do you think?
25	Today,... Is this a good thing, in your view?	In the past,... Is this a good thing, do you think?
26	What do you think about ...in your country?	What do you think ...will be like in 50 years' time?
27	What (...) has had the greatest impact on...?	What role does... play in...?

Ask about any questions above which you couldn't understand, couldn't understand the difference between, couldn't make questions out of, couldn't answer, etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three functions board game

Work in groups of two or three students. Each place a counter (eraser, coin, etc) or write your name on the "START" square. Ask a typical Speaking Part Three question on the topic in the square that your partner is on. While you listen to their answer, tick off the kinds of phrases below that they use. Give them one point for each of the functions below that they used. There are no extra points for using a function twice, but it's okay to say things that you don't really need to, such as checking something which you already understand, in order to cover more functions. They can then move that many squares on the board, e.g. four squares if they used four of the seven functions. Take turns setting each other questions and giving points for how many functions you use until your teacher stops the game. The winner is the person who has moved furthest around the board.

Table of functions to tick off as your partner uses them

Checking/ Clarifying phrases														
Thinking aloud/ Filling silence phrases														
Strong or weak opinions phrases														
Looking at both sides phrases														
Personal experience phrases														
Supporting opinions in other ways phrases														
Adding to/ Extending your answer phrases														

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Television and movies	Weather/ Climate	Career planning	Feedback/ Surveys	START Nature/ The environment
Commuting	Suggested question stems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are people in your country ...? ● Are there occasions when...? ● Can you explain why...? ● Do you agree that...? ● Do you think it's possible (for...) to...? ● Do you think that... is about right? ● Do you think the government should...? ● Do you think there are too many...? ● Do you think there is a danger that...? ● How can... be encouraged to...? ● How important is/ are..., in your opinion? ● How do(es)... differ from...? ● How should...? ● In what ways do ...benefit society? ● Is... a problem where you live? ● Is... becoming...? ● Some people say that... Do you agree? ● To what extent are people influenced by...? ● What reasons might people have for...? ● What are your predictions for...? ● What can be done to...? ● What could be the consequences of... be? ● What do you think about ...in your country? ● What do you think motivates... to...? ● What is the biggest ... problem facing..? ● What kind of influence can... have on...? ● What problems can people have...? ● What would be the advantages of...? 			Shopping/ Consumerism
Tourism/ International travel				Technology
The theatre				Competitiveness
Reading				Fame/ Celebrity
Gift giving				Health and fitness
Newspapers and magazines				Money
Helping people				Advertising/ Marketing
Forecasting				Business
Time/ Timekeeping				Childhood
Possessions				Communication
Lifestyles				Communities/ Society
Innovation/ Ideas				History/ Heritage

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three meeting criteria board game

Work in groups of two or three students. Each place a counter (eraser, coin, etc) or write your name on the "START" square. Ask a Speaking Part Three question starting with those words to the person whose turn it is. As you listen to their answer, tick off the criteria below that they meet. When they stop, they can then move the number of squares on the board of the number of criteria that they met, e.g. five squares if they met five of the nine criteria. Take turns setting each other questions and judging your performances until your teacher stops you. The winner will be the person who has travelled furthest around the board.

Table with criteria to tick off

understood the question, or if not checked														
talked generally (not just personally)														
fully answered the question														
stayed on topic														
statements clearly strong or weak (not vague)														
gave reason(s)														
different support (experiences, quotes, data, etc)														
showed a range of language (by rephrasing, etc)														
avoided silence														

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

What is the best way to...?	What is the biggest problem facing...?	Who do you think should...?	Would you say that...?	START Are people in your country...?
What can be done to stop...?	<p style="text-align: center;">Suggested topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature/ The environment 2. Shopping/ Consumerism 3. Technology 4. Competitiveness 5. Fame/ Celebrity 6. Health and fitness 7. Money 8. Advertising/ Marketing 9. Business 10. Communication 11. Communities/ Society 12. Decision making 13. Education/ Training 14. History/ Heritage 15. Innovation/ Coming up with ideas 16. Lifestyles 17. (Business) meetings 18. Possessions 19. Timekeeping and waiting 20. Forecasting 21. Skills/ Abilities 22. New experiences 23. Helping people 24. Newspapers/ The press 25. Reading 26. Theatre 27. Tourism 28. Travel/ Commuting 29. Work/ Careers 30. Feedback 			Are there any negative effects of...?
Why do some people...?				At what age do you think...?
What are the disadvantages of...?				Can you compare... to...?
Some people say... Do you agree?				Can you contrast... with...?
Is... a problem where you live?				Can you explain why...?
In what ways do(es)... benefit society?				Do you agree that...?
How important is/ are...?				Do you believe... is a good idea?
How has/ have... affected...?				Do you think... is getting better or worse?
How has... changed in the last 50 years?				Do you think... is always a good thing?
How easy is it to...?				Do you think it's okay for... to...?
How can... be encouraged to...?				Do you think it's possible for... to...?
Do you think there is a danger that...?	Do you think... should...?	Do you think that... will... in the future?	Do you think that... is about right?	Do you think that ... is changing?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three prepositions and determiners pairwork

Student A

Work in groups with one Student A and one Student B in each group, sharing a worksheet if there are more than two students. Look at your worksheet but don't show it to the person with the opposite worksheet. Choose one of the sections on your worksheet and read out examples with the word in **bold** missing. Continue giving examples with the same word missing until your partner correctly guesses which one word is missing from all of those examples. They can **only guess once per hint**. If they haven't guessed when you have read out all the example sentences in that section on your worksheet, **make up your own extra example sentences with the same word missing** until they get the right word. If there are still some examples left in that section when they guess correctly, you can come back and use the other clues later.

A

"That's rather **a** deep question."

"That's **a** tricky one."

"According to **a** friend of mine,..."

"That is definitely not **a** real solution."

"There are **a** huge number of..."

ABOUT

"Can I just check? Should I talk **about** the past, present and/ or future?"

"I've never thought **about** that before."

"I don't know very much **about** this topic, but..."

"The authorities could think **about** introducing a new..."

"The first thing that comes to mind when I think **about** this question is..."

AN

"Could you say that **another** way?"

"Sorry, can I just check? Would a technical college be **an** example of...?"

"That's **an** interesting question."

"That's **an** absolutely awful idea."

"There is **an** excessive number of..."

ANY

"I can't see **any** merit in..."

"I don't have **any** personal experience of this, but..."

"I've never seen **any** actual research on this, but I'd say that..."

"I don't think **anyone** can doubt that..."

"Not **any** that I've heard about."

AS

"I feel exactly just the same way **as** those people."

"Not **as** far as I know."

"As far **as** I know,..."

"**As** a consequence of this..."

"This topic is connected to the environment **as** well."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

AT

"I don't agree **at** all."

"**At** least for me."

"Looking **at** it another way,..."

"Hardly **at** all."

"Or, looking **at** the wider picture,..."

BY

"**By** coincidence, I watched a documentary on just this subject in which they said..."

"It depends what you mean **by** 'important', but..."

"Assuming **by** 'how' you mean 'in what manner', then..."

"**By** 'green', do you mean...?"

"This is often caused **by** people worrying too much about..."

FOR

"**For** instance,..."

"It is incredibly important **for** young people who want to..."

"**For** me, personally,..."

"There are lots of these, **for** example,..."

FROM

"Judging just **from** the few toddlers that I know,..."

"Looked at **from** another point of view, it should be clear that..."

"Those two things have almost nothing in common apart **from** their connection to..."

"**From** time to time."

IN

"I'm not sure how well I can explain this **in** English, but..."

"It is absolutely essential **in** order to be able to achieve..."

"If I were **in** charge, I'd almost certainly bring in a new..."

"**In** general, the retired..."

"**In** complete contrast, in other countries people tend to..."

"**In** addition, we need to consider..."

Swap worksheets and do the same, making sure that you start with the most difficult sections and examples (because your partner has already seen them).

Ask about any sentences that you don't understand, think could have other words in the place in bold, etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Student B

Work in groups with one Student A and one Student B in each group, sharing a worksheet if there are more than two students. Look at your worksheet but don't show it to the person with the opposite worksheet. Choose one of the sections on your worksheet and read out examples with the word in **bold** missing. Continue giving examples with the same word missing until your partner correctly guesses which one word is missing from all of those examples. They can **only guess once per hint**. If they haven't guessed when you have read out all the example sentences in that section on your worksheet, **make up your own extra example sentences with the same word missing** until they get the right word. If there are still some examples left in that section when they guess correctly, you can come back and use the other clues later.

MANY

"There are **many** reasons for my opinion, but the main one is..."

"Not **many** people will agree with me, but..."

"**Many** people share that opinion, but..."

"Very **many** elderly people make a habit of..."

MUCH

"They don't share **much**, but one thing that is the same is..."

"I'm not sure how **much** evidence there is to support that idea."

"Not as **much** as I'd like."

"It doesn't matter **much** in terms of long term effects, but..."

"This effect is **much** bigger than..."

MY

"What's the best way to explain **my** opinion? Well,..."

"In **my** limited experience,..."

"In **my** honest opinion,..."

"This is just **my** personal opinion, but..."

OF

"The best course **of** action would probably be..."

"Probably the best example **of** this is..."

"The vast majority **of** millennials..."

"Sorry, could you repeat the last part **of** the question?"

"In a manner **of** speaking."

ON

"I'm no expert **on** this, but..."

"**On** the other hand,..."

"It depends **on** their generation, but generally people in my country..."

"There must be very different points of view **on** this, but..."

"I saw **on** the news that..."

"... and so **on**."

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SOME

"I can see why **some** people might think that, but..."

"To over-generalise **somewhat**, middle managers are famous for..."

"That's **sometimes** the case."

"In **some** ways."

"The two things have **something** in common, namely..."

THE

"Sorry I still don't understand, can you rephrase **the** question?"

"I feel more or less **the** same way as the people who say that."

"**The** chief reason why I feel this way is..."

"Actually, I saw a TV programme on this just **the** other day in which..."

"I'm not sure **the** proper English word, but..."

TO

"It seems clear **to** me that..."

"That seems **to** make sense."

"This happened **to** me once when..."

"**To** give just one example,..."

"It is almost certain **to** happen."

"Compared **to** when I was a child, nowadays people..."

"There are both pros and cons **to** living in..."

WITH

"I totally agree **with** those experts."

"I partially agree **with** that, but more importantly..."

"Sorry, I'm not familiar **with** the word..."

"**Without** the shadow **of** a doubt,..."

"I'm not very familiar **with** this topic, but..."

"I couldn't agree **with** that idea more."

Swap worksheets and do the same, making sure that you start with the most difficult sections and examples (because your partner has already seen them).

Ask about any sentences that you don't understand, think could have other words in the place in bold, etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

First of all without any help, write at least two useful phrases for each of the categories below. Many other phrases not above are also possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

Giving weak opinions phrases

Recommendations language

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Personal experience phrases

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Speculating phrases

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Looking at both sides phrases

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

Look above for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare your ideas.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Suggested answers

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

- "Sorry, I still don't understand, can you rephrase **the** question?"
- "Can I just check? Should I talk **about** the past, present and/ or future?"
- "Could you say that **another** way?"
- "It depends what you mean **by** 'important', but..."
- "Assuming **by** 'how' you mean 'in what manner', then..."
- "**By** 'green', do you mean...?"
- "Sorry, could you repeat the last part **of** the question?"
- "Sorry, I'm not familiar **with** the word..."
- "Sorry, can I just check? Would a technical college be **an** example of...?"

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

- "That's **an** interesting question."
- "That's **a** tricky one."
- "I've never thought **about** that before."
- "That's rather **a** deep question."

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

- "I'm not sure how well I can explain this **in** English, but..."
- "What's the best way to explain **my** opinion? Well,..."
- "I'm not sure **the** proper English word, but..."

Giving strong opinions phrases

- "It seems clear **to** me that..."
- "In **my** honest opinion,..."
- "**Without** the shadow **of** a doubt,..."
- "I don't think **anyone** can doubt that..."

Giving weak opinions phrases

- "I'm no expert **on** this, but..."
- "I don't know very much **about** this topic, but..."
- "This is just **my** personal opinion, but..."
- "I don't have **any** personal experience of this, but..."
- "I've never seen **any** actual research on this, but I'd say that..."
- "**For** me, personally,..."
- "Not **many** people will agree with me, but..."
- "There must be very different points of view **on** this, but..."
- "I'm not very familiar **with** this topic, but..."
- "The first thing that comes to mind when I think **about** this question is..."
- "As far **as** I know,..."
- "**At** least for me."

Recommendations language

- "The authorities could think **about** introducing a new..."
- "The best course **of** action would probably be..."
- "If I were **in** charge, I'd almost certainly bring in a new..."

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Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

"I feel exactly just the same way **as** those people."

"I totally agree **with** those experts."

"I couldn't agree **with** that idea more."

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

"I feel more or less **the** same way as the people who say that."

"That seems **to** make sense."

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

"I don't agree **at** all."

"That's **an** absolutely awful idea."

"I can't see **any** merit in..."

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

"I partially agree **with** that idea, but more importantly..."

"I can see why **some** people might think that, but..."

"**Many** people share that opinion, but..."

"I'm not sure how **much** evidence there is to support that idea."

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

"There are **many** reasons for my opinion, but the main one is..."

"**The** chief reason why I feel this way is..."

"**As** a consequence of this..."

"This is often caused **by** people worrying too much about..."

Personal experience phrases

"In **my** limited experience,..."

"This happened **to** me once when..."

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

"According to **a** friend of mine,..."

"Actually, I saw a TV programme on this just **the** other day in which..."

"**By** coincidence, I watched a documentary on just this subject in which they said..."

"I saw **on** the news that..."

Giving examples phrases

"Probably the best example **of** this is..."

"**To** give just one example,..."

"**For** instance,..."

"There are lots of these, **for** example,..."

"... and so **on**."

Talking about importance phrases

"It is absolutely essential **in** order to be able to achieve..."

"It is incredibly important **for** young people who want to..."

"It doesn't matter **much** in terms of long term effects, but..."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Speculating phrases

"It is almost certain **to** happen."

"That is definitely not **a** real solution."

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

"The vast majority **of** millennials..."

"**In** general, the retired..."

"Judging just **from** the few toddlers that I know..."

"Very **many** elderly people make a habit of..."

"To over-generalise **somewhat**, middle managers are famous for..."

Looking at both sides phrases

"Looking **at** it another way..."

"Looked **at from** another point of view, it should be clear that..."

"**On** the other hand..."

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

"**In** complete contrast, in other countries people tend to..."

"Compared **to** when I was a child, nowadays people..."

"Those two things have almost nothing in common apart **from** their connection to..."

"They don't share **much**, but one thing that is the same is..."

"This effect is **much** bigger than..."

"The two things have **something** in common, namely..."

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

"It depends **on** their generation, but generally people in my country..."

"Hardly **at** all."

"Not **as** far as I know."

"**From** time to time."

"Not as **much** as I'd like."

"In a manner **of** speaking."

"That's **sometimes** the case."

"In **some** ways."

"Not **any** that I've heard about."

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

"There is **an** excessive number of..."

"There are **a** huge number of..."

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

"**In** addition, we need to consider..."

"This topic is connected to the environment **as** well."

"Or, looking **at** the wider picture..."

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three error correction pairwork

Student A

Without showing your worksheets to each other, find the differences between your worksheet and your partner's, decide which is wrong, and change yours if it is incorrect. There is always one correct version and one wrong version. Some are wrong because they don't match the category they are in, so make that sure you check the headings.

Useful phrases for doing the activity

(I can't hear any difference.) Can you repeat...?/ Can you say... again?

Did you say... (or...)?

The difference is.../ Yours says... but mine says...

I think mine/ yours is right/ wrong because...

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Sorry, what does "carbon capture" mean?

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

That's interesting question.

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

How can I answer to that question? Let me think. Well,...

Giving strong opinions phrases

I strongly believe that the authorities need to do more about this.

Giving weak opinions phrases

I'm not expert on this, but I would recommend more spending.

Recommendations language

The government should consider stricter rules on this.

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I feel exactly the same way as the people who have that opinion.

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I partially agree with that, but in many cases...

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Absolutely.

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I really don't agree that charities are the best organisations to solve those problems.

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

There are many reasons for my opinion, but the main one is that it can cause...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Personal experience phrases

I have generally find that working alone is more efficient.

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Actually, I saw a programme on this just a couple of days ago, in which...

Giving examples phrases

Probably the best example of this is Canada.

Talking about importance phrases

It is absolutely crucial for civil servants to have the independence to be able to...

Speculating phrases

It could probably disappear.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Almost all young adults in my country worry about their future working lives.

Looking at both sides phrases

However, looking at it other way, it could also be said that...

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

In my country, private schools are quite a lot better than state schools.

Compared to northwest Europe, this region of the world lacks...

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

I think yes.

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

I really think we face a huge amount of problems.

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

I have seen that trust in the media has worsened in recent years.

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

To be more specific, people in the twenties and early thirties have suffered...

Hint: Half of the lines on each worksheet (= twelve lines on each) are incorrect.

Check your answers as a class or with the list of wrong phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three error correction pairwork

Student B

Without showing your worksheets to each other, find the differences between your worksheet and your partner's, decide which is wrong, and change yours if it is incorrect. There is always one correct version and one wrong version. Some are wrong because they don't match the category they are in, so make that sure you check the headings.

Useful phrases for doing the activity

(I can't hear any difference.) Can you repeat...?/ Can you say... again?

Did you say... (or...)?

The difference is.../ Yours says... but mine says...

I think mine/ yours is right/ wrong because...

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Sorry, what means "carbon capture"?

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

That's an interesting question.

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

How can I answer that question? Let me think. Well,...

Giving strong opinions phrases

I strongly think that the authorities need to do more about this.

Giving weak opinions phrases

I'm no expert on this, but I would recommend more spending.

Recommendations language

The government should consider about stricter rules on this.

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I feel exactly same way as the people who have that opinion.

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I mostly agree with that, but in many cases...

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Absolutely not.

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I don't really agree that charities are the best organisations to solve those problems.

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

There are many reason for my opinion, but the main one is that it can cause...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Personal experience phrases

I have generally found that working alone is more efficient.

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Actually, I saw a programme on this just a couple of days before, in which...

Giving examples phrases

Probably the best example of this is Canada, etc.

Talking about importance phrases

It is absolutely important for civil servants to have the independence to be able to...

Speculating phrases

It could possibly disappear.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Almost young adults in my country worry about their future working lives.

Looking at both sides phrases

However, looking at it another way, it could also be said that...

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

In my country, private schools are quite better than state schools.

Comparing northwest Europe, this region of the world lacks...

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

I think so.

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

I really think we face a huge number of problems.

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

I have seen that trust in the media has been worsened in recent years.

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

To be more specifically, people in the twenties and early thirties have suffered...

Hint: Half of the lines on each worksheet (= twelve lines on each) are incorrect.

Check your answers as a class or with the list of wrong phrases.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

All errors stage

The phrases below are incorrect, so make sure you corrected them on your worksheets.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Sorry, what means "carbon capture"?

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

That's interesting question.

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

How can I answer to that question? Let me think. Well,...

Giving strong opinions phrases

I strongly think that the authorities need to do more about this.

Giving weak opinions phrases

I'm not expert on this, but I would recommend more spending.

Recommendations language

The government should consider about stricter rules on this.

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I feel exactly same way as the people who have that opinion.

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I partially agree with that, but in many cases...

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Absolutely.

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I really don't agree that charities are the best organisations to solve those problems.

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

There are many reason for my opinion, but the main one is that it can cause...

Personal experience phrases

I have generally find that working alone is more efficient.

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Actually, I saw a programme on this just a couple of days before, in which...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Giving examples phrases

Probably the best example of this is Canada, etc.

Talking about importance phrases

It is absolutely important for civil servants to have the independence to be able to...

Speculating phrases

It could probably disappear.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Almost young adults in my country worry about their future working lives.

Looking at both sides phrases

However, looking at it other way, it could also be said that...

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

In my country, private schools are quite better than state schools.

Comparing northwest Europe, this region of the world lacks...

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

I think yes.

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

I really think we face a huge amount of problems.

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

I have seen that trust in the media has been worsened in recent years.

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

To be more specifically, people in the twenties and early thirties have suffered...

Ask about any sentences which you don't understand, etc.

Work together to correct all the mistakes above.

Check with the corrected versions of the previous worksheets.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, write at least two useful phrases for each category below.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

Giving weak opinions phrases

Recommendations language

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

Personal experience phrases

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Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Speculating phrases

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Looking at both sides phrases

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

Check with the previous worksheets, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three the same or different

Take turns asking each other questions from the list below, choosing different questions each time. Some of the questions have the same meaning, so make sure that you don't ask questions with the same meaning to the same person.

On the following worksheet, write "S" next to lines with questions with the same meaning and "D" next to lines with questions with different meanings. Even small differences in meaning = D.

Check as a class or with the list of ones which have synonyms.

Do the same for the answers on the following page.

Test each other on the same questions and phrases by:

- reading out two or more and seeing if your partner can say if they are the same or different
- reading out one that has something the same next to it and seeing if your partner can say something with the same meaning such as the one that is written on the same line (or any other synonym)
- reading out two or more that have differences and seeing if your partner can explain how they are different
- reading out questions with different meanings and seeing if your partner can answer them correctly (with different answers)

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three questions the same or different

- Are there any negative effects of dams?/ Can you think of any bad effects of dams?
- Are there times when it is best to stop using social media?/ Are there occasions when it is best to stop using social media?/ Is it sometimes best to stop using social media?
- Can you contrast suburbs with town centres?/ Can you compare suburbs to town centres?
- Can you contrast taxis and car sharing apps?/ How are taxis and car sharing apps different?/ How do taxis and car sharing apps differ?
- Do you think government funding for education is always a good thing?/ Do you think that government funding for education is about right?
- Do you think it's okay for politicians to have second jobs?/ Do you think it's acceptable for politicians to have second jobs?
- How do you think the big tech companies will change in the next ten years?/ What are your predictions for the big tech companies in the next ten years?
- Do you think the government should control online auction sites?/ Do you think the government is doing enough to control online auction sites?
- Do you think there is a danger that people will stop having children?/ Do you think that people stopping having children is a good or bad thing?/ What can be done to stop people having children?
- Do you think there is a danger that people will stop having children?/ Do you think it is possible that people will stop having children?
- Is people changing career later in life a problem in your country?/ What problems can people have with changing career later in life?
- Is internet crime a big problem in your country?/ What is the biggest internet crime problem in your country?
- How do people your age in your country invest their savings?/ What methods do people your age in your country use to invest their savings?/ In what ways do people your age in your country invest their savings?
- How important are rivers and lakes?/ How are rivers and lakes important?
- In what ways do local bars and pubs benefit society?/ What are the advantages of local bars and pubs for society?
- How can people be encouraged to live greener lives?/ How easy is it to encourage people to live greener lives?
- To what extent are people influenced by TV ads?/ How much are people influenced by TV ads?
- Can you explain why some people choose to have arranged marriages?/ What are the main reasons for some people having arranged marriages?
- Some people say that the age of globalisation is coming to an end. Do you agree?/ Why do some people say that the age of globalisation is coming to an end?
- Are fan clubs popular in your country?/ What are the most popular kinds of fan clubs in your country?
- What types of professionals do people in your country particularly respect?/ What kinds of professionals do people in your country particularly respect?/ What sort of professionals do people in your country particularly respect?
- Who tends to give children career advice?/ Who should give children career advice?
- How has the internet affected post offices?/ What have the consequences of the internet been for post offices?/ What effects has the internet had on post offices?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three answers the same or different

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

- Sorry, can you repeat the question?/ Sorry, can you rephrase the question?
- Sorry, can you repeat the question?/ Sorry, can you say that again?
- Assuming by "green" you mean "ecologically friendly", then.../ I'm guessing that "green" means "ecologically friendly", in which case...

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

- That's a difficult question./ That's a tricky one.

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

- Hmm, let me think./ Well, let me see.
- How can I best answer that question?/ How can I best say this in English?

Opinions phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

- Frankly,.../ Frankly speaking,.../ To be honest,.../ In my honest opinion,...
- I really think that.../ I do think that.../ I strongly believe that.../ I firmly believe that...
- Clearly,.../ Obviously,.../ Plainly,...
- I'm totally convinced that.../ I'm absolutely positive that.../ I'm completely sure that...

Giving weak opinions phrases

- I'm no expert on this, but.../ I don't know much about this topic, but...
- I think.../ I guess...
- I don't have any personal experience of this, but.../ That's not something I've ever read or heard anything at all about, but...
- My initial reaction is.../ My first thoughts on the topic are...

Recommendations language

- I would recommend.../ It might be a good idea to.../ They must...
- The best course of action would be.../ The most effective plan is...
- If I were in charge, I'd.../ If the government asked me, I would suggest...

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

- That's exactly what I think./ I totally agree with that./ I feel just the same way.
- I couldn't agree with that more./ I can't argue with that.

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

- I feel more or less the same way./ I mostly agree.
- I mostly agree./ I partially agree.
- That seems to make sense./ That sounds reasonable.

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

- I really don't agree with that./ I don't really agree with that.
- I don't agree with that at all./ I totally disagree with that.

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

- I partially agree with that, but.../ I partly agree with that, but...
- I can see why some people think that, but.../ Many people share that opinion, but...

Supporting your arguments phrases/ Phrases to answer specific kinds of questions

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

- The main reason why I feel this way is.../ The chief reason for my opinion is.../ I hold this view principally because of...
- This leads to.../ This results in.../ This causes.../ As a consequence of this,...
- This leads to.../ This is caused by...

Personal experience phrases

- In my personal experience,.../ In my limited experience,...
- I have generally found that.../ I have typically found that...

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

- According to one of my friends,.../ A mate of mine told me that...

Giving examples phrases

- Probably the best example of this is.../ To give just one of probably many examples,...
- For example/ For instance/ e.g....
- ...and so forth./ ... and so on./ etcetera.

Talking about importance phrases

- It is absolutely vital to.../ It is absolutely essential./ It is absolutely crucial.
- It is absolutely essential./ It is incredibly important./ It is very important./ It is fairly important./ It doesn't matter much.

Speculating phrases

- It is almost certain./ It is very likely./ It is probable./ It is possible./ It is conceivable.
- It may well happen./ It might well happen.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

- Almost all/ The vast majority/ Most/ Many/ A number of
- The majority/ Most

Looking at both sides phrases

- One potential advantage is.../ One possible selling point is...
- The disadvantages/ The drawbacks/ The negative aspects/ The bad points
- On the other hand,.../ Looking at the other side of the argument,...
- However,.../ On the other hand,.../ Nonetheless,...

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

- The former is substantially better./ The first is considerably better.
- Within 50 years is much more likely than.../ Within 50 years is far more probable than...
- They share their popularity./ What they have in common is that they're popular.

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

- excessively/ extremely/ really/ rather/ somewhat/ insufficiently
- excessively/ sufficiently
- almost three quarters/ around three quarters/ just over three quarters
- almost everyone/ nearly everyone
- around half/ about half/ more or less half/ approximately half

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

- It has deteriorated quite a lot./ It has considerably worsened.
- I predict a rebound./ I think it'll bounce back./ I expect it to recover.

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

- What's more,.../ In addition,.../ Furthermore,...
- Specifically,.../ To be more specific,...
- In other words,.../ That is to say,.../ To put it another way,.../ i.e.,...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorm IELTS Speaking Part Three phrases with the same meaning

Write at least one question with the same meaning as each of the questions and phrases below. Phrases with slightly different formality, connotation, grammar, etc are fine, as long as they have the same meaning. Many answers not above are also possible.

IELTS Speaking Part Three questions with the same meaning

Can you think of any bad effects of dams?

Are there occasions when it is best to stop using social media?

Can you contrast taxis and car sharing apps?/ How are taxis and car sharing apps different?/ How do taxis and car sharing apps differ?

Do you think it's acceptable for politicians to have second jobs?

What are your predictions for the big tech companies in the next ten years?

Do you think there is a danger that people will stop having children?

In what ways do people your age in your country invest their savings?

In what ways do local bars and pubs benefit society?

To what extent are people influenced by TV ads?

What are the main reasons for people having arranged marriages?

What types of professionals do people in your country particularly respect?

What effects has the internet had on post offices?

Check above. Many other questions with the same meanings are possible, so please check if you wrote something different.

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IELTS Speaking Part Three answers with the same meanings

First of all without looking above, write at least one phrase with the same meaning as each thing below. Many phrases not above are also possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Sorry, can you say that again?

I'm guessing that "green" means "ecologically friendly", in which case...

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

That's a tricky one.

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Well, let me see.

Opinions phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

In my honest opinion,...

I firmly believe that...

Plainly,...

I'm completely sure that...

Giving weak opinions phrases

I don't know much about this topic, but...

My initial reaction is...

Recommendations language

The most effective plan is...

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

That's exactly what I think.

I can't argue with that.

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I feel more or less the same way.

That sounds reasonable.

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I don't agree with that at all.

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

I partially agree with that, but...

Supporting your arguments phrases/ Phrases to answer specific kinds of questions

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

I hold this view principally because of...

This results in...

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Personal experience phrases

I have typically found that...

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

A mate of mine told me that...

Giving examples phrases

For instance,...

...and so forth.

Talking about importance phrases

It is absolutely vital to...

Speculating phrases

It might well happen.

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

The majority

Looking at both sides phrases

One possible selling point is...

The drawbacks

Looking at the other side of the argument,...

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

The former is substantially better.

Within 50 years is far more probable than...

What they have in common is that they're popular.

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

almost everyone

approximately half

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

It has deteriorated quite a lot.

I predict a rebound.

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

Furthermore,...

Specifically,...

That is to say,...

Check with the previous worksheet. Many other answers are possible, so please check if you wrote something different.

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Brainstorming stage

First without help, write as many phrases as you can with each function below, writing ones with the same meaning next to each other. Many phrases not above are possible.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

Giving weak opinions phrases

Recommendations language

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

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Personal experience phrases

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Speculating phrases

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

Looking at both sides phrases

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

Look at the previous worksheets for ideas, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class and/ or with a list of phrases.

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Brainstorming useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Three

Write as many useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Three as you can in the spaces below (phrases you have heard other candidates using, phrases that you imagine would impress the examiner, etc). If you are competing, you will get a point for each phrase that no other groups wrote, and five points if it is not on the teacher's list.

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

Giving opinions phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

Giving weak opinions phrases

Recommendations language

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

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Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

**Supporting your arguments phrases/ Phrases to answer specific kinds of questions
Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases**

Personal experience phrases

Other people's experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

Giving examples phrases

Talking about importance phrases

Speculating phrases

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

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Looking at both sides phrases

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

Choose twelve things that you think no one else will have written, then share your ideas with the whole class.

Check the big list for things you wrote which are not on there, then ask about anything on those lists which you didn't think of and don't understand.

Circle the most useful phrases for you, then compare your circled phrases with someone else.

Try to use as many of those circled phrases as you can while you practise IELTS Speaking Part Three.

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The big list of useful phrases for IELTS Speaking Part Three

Checking/ Clarifying phrases (when the meaning of the question isn't clear, etc)

"Sorry (I still don't understand,) can you rephrase the question?"

"Sorry, (just to check) are you asking... (or...)"

"Sorry, could you say that again (a little more slowly)?"

"(Can I just check?) Should I talk about... (or...)"

"If I understand (correctly), you want me to give my opinion on...?"

"If I'm right (in thinking) that '...' means..., then..."

"Assuming by... you mean..., then..."

"Sorry, I didn't (really) catch the last part/ the middle part/ the last word."

"Sorry, could you repeat the first part/ the middle part/ the last part of the question?"

"I'm guessing that... means..., in which case..."

"It depends what you mean by '...', but..."

"So, you want to know...?"

"Sorry, what does... mean?"

"I'm afraid I'm (still) not (quite) sure what the question means."

"So, does that mean that I should talk about...?"

"(By.../ When you say...) do you mean...?"

"I'm afraid I didn't understand the last word/ the last part of the question."

"Sorry but I've never heard of..."

"I'm afraid I've never come across the word... before."

"(At the end of the question) you said... What does that mean?"

"Sorry, I'm not familiar with the word..."

"Could you say that another way?"

"I'm afraid I'm not clear if you are asking... or..."

"Sorry, can I just check? Would... be an example of...?"

Commenting on the question phrases (when it's challenging, unusual, etc)

"That's a tricky one."/ "That's a difficult question."

"I've never (even/ really) thought about that before."

"That's an interesting question."

"That's quite complicated, actually."

"That's rather a deep question."/ "That's quite a philosophical question."

"Wow! That's a (really) big question."

(Other) thinking aloud phrases/ filling silence phrases

"Hmmm, let me think."/ "Hmmm, let me see."

"I'm not sure how well I can explain this (in English), but..."

"How can I (best) (start to) answer that question? Well,..."

"What's the best way to explain (my opinion)? Well,..."

"I'm not sure the (exact/ proper) English word/ English expression, but..."

"(If you ask me) I'd (probably/ have to) say that..."

"How can I (best) say this in English?"

Giving opinions phrases

Giving strong opinions phrases

"It seems clear to me that..."

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“It appears obvious to me that...”

“Frankly (speaking),...”

“In my honest opinion,...”

“To be (completely) honest,...”

“To be (perfectly) frank,...”

“I really think...”

“I’m (absolutely) certain that...”

“Clearly/ Obviously/ Plainly,...”

“I’d definitely say that...”

“I strongly believe that...”

“I’m (completely/ totally) convinced that...”

“I’m (absolutely) positive that...”

“I firmly believe that...”

“I do think that...”

“I don’t think anyone can doubt that...”

“I don’t see how anyone can deny that...”

“There is (absolutely) no doubt that...”

“Without (the shadow of) a doubt,...”

“It can’t be denied that...”

Giving weak opinions phrases

“I’m no expert (on this), but...”

“I don’t know (very) much about this topic, but...”

“This is just/ only my (personal) opinion, but...”

“For me, personally,...”

“I (would) guess that...”

“I (would) imagine that...”

“I’m not sure but I think that...”

“(I guess) I’d (probably) say that...”

“I’m not (very) familiar with this topic, but...”

“It’s very difficult to generalise, but...”

“My initial reaction is...”

“I don’t have (much/ any) personal experience of this, but...”

“Some people will disagree with me, but...”

“Although the arguments for/ against are also quite convincing,...”

“On balance,...”

“I personally feel that...”

“Based on (just) my own experience,...”

“Based on the little that I remember (from my school days/ on the topic),...”

“From what I’ve heard...”

“I haven’t heard much about this before, but...”

“I haven’t read much about this subject, but...”

“My first thoughts on the topic are...”

“That’s not something I’ve ever read or heard anything (at all) about, but...”

“There must be very different points of view on this, but...”

“We didn’t (really) study this at school, but...”

“I might have a different answer if I had more time to think about it, but...”

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“Off the top of my head,…”
“Although there are also arguments for/ against,…”
“Although there are both advantages and disadvantages,…”
“It could (perhaps) be said that…”
“Not many people (will) agree with me but…”
“I’ve never seen (any/ much) (actual) research on this, but I’d say that…”
“On the whole,…”
“Overall,…”
“Taking everything into account,…”
“To the best of my knowledge,…”
“You could say that…”
“As far as I know,…”
“At a guess, I’d say…”
“I’d need to look into this more, but I’d say that…”
“I’m afraid I know very little about this topic, but…”
“I’m not (very) sure about this, but…”
“My personal impression is…”
“This is the first time I’ve (ever) come across this issue, but…”
“The first thing that comes to mind when I think about this question is…”
“I know this is a minority view, but…”
“The only thing I can come up with is that…”
“There is a lot to be said for..., but…”
“I assume…”
“I tend to think that…”
“... at least for me.”

Recommendations language

“I would(n’t necessarily/ personally/ probably/ strongly) recommend…”
“The government/ The authorities (really) have to/ should/ should consider/ could think about…”
“The best (course of) action would (probably) be…”
“It might be a good idea to…”
“The most effective plan (of action) would (almost certainly) be to…”
“If I were in charge, I’d (probably/ almost certainly) bring in…”
“In order to achieve..., ... would be necessary/ essential.”
“My advice to... would be (not) to…”
“If the government asked me, I would suggest…”

Strongly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

“That’s exactly what I think.”
“I totally agree with…”
“I completely agree that…”
“That makes complete sense.”
“I feel exactly/ just the same way (as those people).”
“I can’t argue with that.”
“I wholeheartedly agree that…”
“I couldn’t agree with... more.”

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“Absolutely!”

“Precisely!”

“That’s an (absolutely) excellent idea.”

“That’s bound to work.”

“Exactly!”

Weakly agreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

“I feel more or less the same way (as the people who say that).”

“I can (probably) accept that.”

“That seems to make sense.”

“That sounds like it could (possibly)...”

“That sounds reasonable.”

“I suppose so.”/ “I guess so.”

“I mostly agree that...”

Strongly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

“I really don’t agree with...”

“There is no way that... would work/ be effective/ have the desired effect.”

“I can’t see any merit in...”

“I can’t agree with...”

“I don’t agree at all.”

“I certainly don’t believe that ...”

“Absolutely not.”

“That’s an (absolutely) awful idea.”

“To be honest, I don’t think so.”

Weakly disagreeing with ideas/ statements phrases

“I don’t really agree that...”

“I partly/ partially agree with..., but...”

“I can see why some people might think that, but...”

“That kind of makes sense, but...”

“I’m not sure that I agree that...”

“I don’t think I agree that...”

“Many people share that opinion, but...”

“I don’t think that’s such a good idea.”

“I’m not sure how much evidence there is to support that (idea).”

“I used to feel that way (too). However,....”

Supporting your arguments phrases/ Phrases to answer specific kinds of questions

Giving reasons/ Giving logical arguments/ Answering why questions phrases

“The (chief/ main/ principal) reason (why) I feel this way is...”

“This is (almost certainly/ probably/ mainly) because (of)...”

“There are many reasons for my opinion, but the main one is...”

“This (inevitably/ generally) leads to...”

“This (invariably/ typically) results in...”

“This is (usually/ often) caused by...”

“This is (probably) due to (the fact that)...”

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“This would have a (positive/ negative/ mixed) effect on...”

“The (main/ chief/ primary) result of this is...”

“As a consequence of this...”

“I’m not sure why I feel that way, but perhaps...”

“... so I...”

“in order to...”

“so that...”

“... drives... to...”

“motivated by...”

“spurred on by...”

“made to... by...”

“forced to... by...”

Personal experience phrases

“In my (personal/ limited/ own/ own personal) experience,...”

“Personally, I have (always/ generally) found that...”

“I (always/ generally) find that...”

“This happened to me (once/ once or twice) when...”

Other people’s experiences/ Explaining the sources of your knowledge phrases

“According to...”

“Actually, I saw a (TV) programme on this (just the other day) in which...”

“(Almost) everyone I know...”

“I read a book/ an article/ a... which said...”

“I saw on the news/ on the internet/ on... that...”

“I’ve never experienced this myself, but...”

“My friend/ My teacher/ My... told me that...”

“By coincidence, I watched a documentary on just this subject (a couple of weeks ago) in which they said...”

Giving examples phrases

“Probably the best example of this is...”

“To give (just) one example,...”

“For instance,...”

“To give just one of probably many examples,...”

“Maybe the most relevant example of this is...”

“..., e.g....”

“..., for example,...”

“... and so forth.”

“... and so on.”

“... etcetera.”

Talking about importance phrases

“It is (absolutely) vital/ essential/ crucial (for/ in order to...)”

“It is (incredibly/ very/ fairly/ not so/ not very/ not at all) important (if you want to...)”

“It doesn’t matter (at all/ much) (in terms of...)”

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Speculating phrases

"It is (almost) certain to happen."

"It is very likely to occur."

"It could possibly take place."

"It could conceivably be seen."

"It is almost certainly not going to work."

Generalising (about people in your country, etc) phrases

"Almost all young adults..."

"The (vast) majority of millennials..."

"Teenagers usually/ generally/ mostly..."

"A (very) large number of middle-aged people..."

"In general, the retired..."

"(Very) many elderly people..."

"Most single-member households..."

"Judging (just) from the few toddlers that I know..."

"(Very) few tweens..."

"To (over-)generalise (somewhat), middle managers..."

"A great deal of my generation's savings are..."

Looking at both sides phrases

"One (potential/ likely) advantage/ benefit/ selling point/ positive factor is..."

"One (possible) disadvantage/ drawback/ negative aspect/ bad point is..."

"On the other hand,..."

"The only drawback (that) I can think of is..."

"It could also be said that..."

"(However,) looking at it another way,..."

"(If it is) looked at from another point of view,..."

"Nevertheless/ Nonetheless,..."

"There are both pros and cons to..."

Comparing and contrasting phrases/ Answering comparing questions phrases

"... is far/ much/ a lot more... than..."

"... is considerably/ substantially/ quite a lot ...er than..."

"... is slightly/ a bit/ a little more... than..."

"... In (complete) contrast,.../... whereas..."

"The (biggest/ main/ only/ sole) difference/ similarity between ... and ... is..."

"A (big/ major/ -nother) difference/ similarity between ... and... is..."

"Compared to...,..."

"Comparing... and...,..."

"(Much) like...,"

"(Totally/ Almost totally) unlike..."

"... and ... have a lot/ quite a lot/ something in common, namely..."

"... and ... have nothing in common (apart from...)."

"... and ... share..."

"... and... don't share much, but..."

"One contrast between ... and ... is ..."

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(More natural/ interesting) (initial) answers to yes/ no questions (without yes or no)

"I think so."

"You could say that."

"Not (so) much."/ "Not (so) often."

"I suppose so."

"It depends (on...), but generally...."

"(Yeah,) I guess."

"That's what I've been told."/ "That's what I've heard."

"Not (...) exactly."

"Not as far as I know."

"I wouldn't say that."

"I wouldn't go that far."

"Perhaps."

"Very."/ "Extremely."/ "(Quite) a lot."

"I'd say so."

"Not as much as..."/ "Not like..."

"Generally not."/ "Not usually."

"Not right now."

"Sure (, why not?)"

"Sort of."/ "Kind of."

"Hardly (at all/ ever)."

"Somewhat."

"Not at all."/ "Never."

"Sometimes."/ "From time to time."

"Not according to..."

"Well, actually..."

"I wouldn't necessarily say..."

"I think that (...) would be going (a bit) too far."

"Of course (not)."

"Probably (not)."

"As long as..."/ "Only if..."/ "Only when..."/ "Providing..."

"More or less."

"Not by... standards."

"Not that you'd notice."

"Only if you compare it to..."/ "Only in comparison to..."

"Only in so far as..."

"That's sometimes the case."

"No way!"

"In some ways."

"In a manner of speaking."

"Not what I would call..."

"Clearly."

"Absolutely."

"There are."

"Not that I know of."

"Not any that I've heard about."

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“Several.”

“Quite a lot.”

“I don’t.”

“Well, if that is what they say, then I guess...”

Answering how (many/ much) questions/ to what extent questions phrases

“(far) too much/ too many/ an (extremely) excessive number”

“extremely/ exceedingly/ so/ so much/ a huge number”

“really/ very/ a large amount”

“pretty/ rather”

“fairly/ quite a lot”

“somewhat...”

“slightly/ a bit/ a little/ a little bit/ not very/ not so many/ a small number”

“very slightly/ a tiny bit/ hardly at all/ a very small amount/ a tiny number”

“not at all/ none/ not any”

“not enough/ an insufficient amount”

“sufficient”/ “enough”

“over/ more than...”

“below/ under/ less than...”

“almost/ nearly/ just under...”

“up to/ as much as...”

“around/ about/ more or less/ approximately...”

Trends phrases/ Answering questions about changes phrases

“... has (recently/ already) improved/ got better/ got worse/ deteriorated/ worsened (a large amount/ considerably/ slightly).”

“I predict a rebound.”/ “I think that it will bounce back.”/ “I forecast a recovery.”/ “I expect it to recover.”

“... is (currently) climbing/ dropping/ crashing/ rocketing/...ing”

Adding to your answer/ Extending your answer/ Explaining more phrases

“In other words,...”/ “That is to say,...”/ “By which I mean,...”/ “To put it another way,...”/

“i.e.,...”

“What’s more,...”

“In addition, we need to consider...”

“We also mustn’t forget...”

“Another important factor is...”

“And more generally,...”

“Or, looking at the wider picture,...”

“Specifically,...”/ “To be more specific,...”

“Furthermore,...”

“... is connected to... as well.”

IELTS Speaking Parts One, Two and Three section

See also:

- Analyse and write IELTS Speaking Part Two tasks (with Speaking Part Two tasks on typical Speaking Part One topics) page 159
- Ask and analyse 100 IELTS Speaking Part One questions (linking Part One to Parts Two and/ or Three) page 16
- IELTS Speaking Part One coin games (for Parts One and Three) page 93
- IELTS Speaking Part One tips and useful phrases (linking Part One to Parts Two and/ or Three) page 29
- IELTS Speaking Part Three coin games (for Parts One and Three) page 283
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IELTS Speaking Parts One, Two and Three tips and useful phrases

Look at a whole IELTS Speaking exam, preferably with the examiner's script, and try to give hints on all three parts, including things which are similar and different.

Work out which part(s) of the exam each tip below is true for and write "1", "1, 2", "3", etc next to each. All the tips are true for at least one part of the exam.

If there is anything on the question sheet that you don't understand, just point and ask about it ("Excuse me. Can I ask what this word means?", "Sorry. Could you explain this word here?", etc).

If you don't understand the question, it's best to be specific about what the problem was ("Sorry, could you rephrase the question?", "Sorry, what does... mean?", "I'm afraid that I've never come across the word...", etc).

If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask ("The only thing I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?", "Can I speak about...?", "Is it okay to speak about...?", "Is... a kind of...?", etc).

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is vague/ ambiguous, you can mention that in your answer ("I guess the question means..., in which case...", "If... counts as..., then...").

You should almost always prepare in silence for one minute before speaking, until you are asked to speak.

If you want to answer the question(s) before the examiner asks you to start speaking, just ask ("Can I start?", "Is that one minute?", "I think I'm ready", "Shall I get started?", etc).

You should use a range of different noises and phrases to fill your thinking time ("Hmmm. Let me think", "Well", "Let me see", "I'm not sure how to say it in English, but...", "As far as I remember,...").

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can comment on the question ("I've never really thought about this before", "It's quite complicated, actually", , etc).

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can ask yourself questions ("How can I best start to answer that question? Well,...", "What's the best way to explain my opinion? Well,...", "How can I best say this in English? Well I guess,...", etc).

It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time you do a task ("I'd like to speak about..." "I'm going to talk about...", "I've chosen to talk about...", "I've decided to talk about...", etc), but a more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation ("I'm really glad I got this topic because...", "There were many things I could have spoken about, but...", "It's a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...", "The only thing I could think of to talk about was...", "It was difficult to choose a topic but I finally settled on...", etc).

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If the question doesn't exactly match your situation, you should show that in your answer ("Actually, I... not... but...", "Well, in my case..., so...", etc).

Although the examiner will probably ask follow-up questions if your first answer is short, you can show your range of language and communicate more by avoiding simply "Yes" and "No" ("You could say that", "Not so much", "I suppose so", "Not exactly", etc).

You can show your range of language by rephrasing words in the questions instead of repeating them.

One good way to expand your range of language is with strong statements ("to be honest", "frankly", "definitely", etc).

One good way of expanding the level of language you use is to soften what you say ("not so", "slightly", "fairly", "reasonably", "partly", etc).

If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so ("I've forgotten..., but...", "As far as I remember,...", "My memory is a little hazy, but...", etc).

Communicating effectively is most important than not making mistakes, so you should only usually correct yourself if what you said will be difficult to understand or is factually wrong ("I come from Tokyo. Well, I don't actually come from Tokyo but...", "I'm working. Well, actually I'm an intern, but it's full-time so it's like a job", "Sorry, that doesn't make sense. I mean...", etc).

If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic ("Sorry, I should have been speaking about...", "Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the question,...", "Where was I? Oh yes,...", etc).

If you feel your answer is too short, the easiest way to make it longer is to add a reason ("I'm not sure why, maybe...", "This is mainly because...", "... so I can...").

If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you've spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say ("What else can I say? Well, I suppose...", "One more thing I could say about... is...", "About... I could add that...", "Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...", etc).

If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so ("That's all I can think of to say", "I think I've covered all four points", "That about covers it", etc).

It's a good idea to practise answering IELTS Speaking questions out loud straightaway without too much thinking time, so you should speak your answer as soon as you find the question online, in your IELTS books, etc.

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Suggested answers

If there is anything on the question sheet that you don't understand, just point and ask about it ("Excuse me. Can I ask what this word means?", "Sorry. Could you explain this word here?", etc). – 2

If you don't understand the question, it's best to be specific about what the problem was ("Sorry, could you rephrase the question?", "Sorry, what does... mean?", "I'm afraid that I've never come across the word...", etc). – 1, 2, 3

If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask ("The only thing I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?", "Can I speak about...?", "Is it okay to speak about...?", "Is... a kind of...?", etc). – 1, 2, 3

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is vague/ ambiguous, you can mention that in your answer ("I guess the question means..., in which case...", "If... counts as..., then..."). – 1, 2, 3

You should almost always prepare in silence for one minute before speaking, until you are asked to speak. – 2

If you want to answer the question(s) before the examiner asks you to start speaking, just ask ("Can I start?", "Is that one minute?", "I think I'm ready", "Shall I get started?", etc). – 2

You should use a range of different noises and phrases to fill your thinking time ("Hmmm. Let me think", "Well", "Let me see", "I'm not sure how to say it in English, but...", "As far as I remember,..."). – 1, 3, maybe 2

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can comment on the question ("I've never really thought about this before", "It's quite complicated, actually", etc). – 1, 3, maybe 2

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can ask yourself questions ("How can I best start to answer that question? Well,...", "What's the best way to explain my opinion? Well,...", "How can I best say this in English? Well I guess,...", etc). – 1, 3, maybe 2

It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time you do a task ("I'd like to speak about..." "I'm going to talk about...", "I've chosen to talk about...", "I've decided to talk about...", etc), but a more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation ("I'm really glad I got this topic because...", "There were many things I could have spoken about, but...", "It's a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...", "The only thing I could think of to talk about was...", "It was difficult to choose a topic but I finally settled on...", etc). – 2

If the question doesn't exactly match your situation, you should show that in your answer ("Actually, I... not... but...", "Well, in my case..., so...", etc). – 1, 2

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Although the examiner will probably ask follow-up questions if your first answer is short, you can show your range of language and communicate more by avoiding simply “Yes” and “No” (“You could say that”, “Not so much”, “I suppose so”, “Not exactly”, etc). – 1, 3

You can show your range of language by rephrasing words in the questions instead of repeating them. – 1, 2, 3

One good way to expand your range of language is with strong statements (“to be honest”, “frankly”, “definitely”, etc). – 1, 3, maybe 2

One good way of expanding the level of language you use is to soften what you say (“not so”, “slightly”, “fairly”, “reasonably”, “partly”, etc). – 1, 3, maybe 2

If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so (“I’ve forgotten..., but...”, “As far as I remember,...”, “My memory is a little hazy, but...”, etc). – 1, 2, maybe 3

Communicating effectively is most important than not making mistakes, so you should only usually correct yourself if what you said will be difficult to understand or is factually wrong (“I come from Tokyo. Well, I don’t actually come from Tokyo but...”, “I’m working. Well, actually I’m an intern, but it’s full-time so it’s like a job”, “Sorry, that doesn’t make sense. I mean...”, etc). – 1, 2, 3

If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic (“Sorry, I should have been speaking about...”, “Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the question,...”, “Where was I? Oh yes,...”, etc). – 1, 2, 3

If you feel your answer is too short, the easiest way to make it longer is to add a reason (“I’m not sure why, maybe...”, “This is mainly because...”, “... so I can...”). – 1, 2, 3

If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you’ve spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say (“What else can I say? Well, I suppose...”, “One more thing I could say about... is...”, “About... I could add that...”, “Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...”, etc). – 2

If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so (“That’s all I can think of to say”, “I think I’ve covered all four points”, “That about covers it”, etc). – 2

It’s a good idea to practise answering IELTS Speaking questions out loud straightaway without too much thinking time, so you should speak your answer as soon as you find the question online, in your IELTS books, etc. – 1, 3

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Brainstorming stage

First of all without looking above, brainstorm as many useful phrases as you can into each gap below, paying attention to the part(s) of the exam that they should be used in.

If there is anything on the question sheet that you don't understand, just point and ask about it (_____

_____). – 2

If you don't understand the question, it's best to be specific about what the problem was

(_____

_____). – 1, 2, 3

If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask (_____

_____). – 1, 2, 3

If you think you understood the question but aren't 100% sure or feel the question is vague/ ambiguous, you can mention that in your answer (_____

_____). – 1, 2, 3

If you want to answer the question(s) before the examiner asks you to start speaking, just ask (_____

_____). – 2

You should use a range of different noises and phrases to fill your thinking time (_____

_____). –1, 3, maybe 2

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can comment on the question (_____

_____). – 1, 3, maybe 2

To answer questions without silent thinking time, you can ask yourself questions (_____

_____). – 1, 3, maybe 2

It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time you do a task (_____

_____),

but a more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation (_____

_____). – 2

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If the question doesn't exactly match your situation, you should show that in your answer (_____
_____). – 1, 2

Although the examiner will probably ask follow-up questions if your first answer is short, you can show your range of language and communicate more by avoiding simply "Yes" and "No" (_____
_____). – 1, 3

One good way to expand your range of language is with strong statements (_____
_____). – 1, 3, maybe 2

One good way of expanding the level of language you use is to soften what you say (_____
_____). – 1, 3, maybe 2

If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so (_____
_____). – 1, 2, maybe 3

Communicating effectively is most important than not making mistakes, so you should only usually correct yourself if what you said will be difficult to understand or is factually wrong (_____
_____). – 1, 2, 3

If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic (_____
_____). – 1, 2, 3

If you feel your answer is too short, the easiest way to make it longer is to add a reason (_____
_____). – 1, 2, 3

If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you've spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say (_____
_____). – 2

If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so (_____
_____). – 2

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The future in IELTS Speaking

Needs analysis/ Getting to know you

In twos or threes, ask each other about the things below, making notes if your teacher says to. Any questions on those topics are okay, but ask about the past, present and future.

English language exams (IELTS, etc)

Studying English

Using English (at work, in your studies, in your free time, etc)

Studying abroad

Living abroad

Travel

Brainstorm at least one future question for each of the topics above.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The future in IELTS Speaking Part One

Future questions on typical IELTS Speaking Part One topics

Make and ask each future personal questions about these topics below. Any questions are okay, as long, as they are about the future.

- **Accommodation**
- **Arts and media**
- **Education/ Studies**
- **English**
- **Family and friends**
- **Festivals and celebrations**
- **Food and drink**
- **Free time/ Hobbies/ Interests**
- **Future plans**
- **Hometown**
- **Music**
- **Technology**
- **Transport and travel**
- **Work**

Ask any questions below which you haven't already asked.

Accommodation

Do you want to move home in the future?

How long do you think you will continue to live in your present home?

What would your dream home be like?

Arts and media

Are there any books that you would like to read?

When do you think you will next go to the cinema?

Do you think how you get news will change in the future?

Education/ Studies

Do you need any qualifications for your career?

Is there anything you'd like to study in the future?

Are there any other languages which you'd like to study?

English

How long are you planning to continue learning English?

Why are you taking the IELTS test?

Do you think that you will need English more in the future?

Family and friends

When do you think you will next see your extended family?

Would you like to have a large family?

Festivals and celebrations

When is the next festival or celebration where you are living?

When do you think you will next attend a festival or celebration?

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Food and drink

Do you have any plans for tonight's dinner?
When do you think you will next cook?

Free time/ Hobbies/ Interests

Are there any hobbies which you'd like to take up?
Do you have any plans for the weekend?
Do you have any plans for the next public holiday?
What are your plans for this evening?

Hometown

What changes would you like to make to your hometown?
Would you like to live in your hometown when you retire?

Languages

Are there any other languages which you'd like to learn?
Which other languages do you think will be most useful for you to learn?
Would you prefer to learn a new language, or to continue studying a language which you have studied before?

Music

Are there any musical instruments that you would like to learn to play?
Do you think your taste in music will change as you get older?

Technology

Is there any technology which you'd like to buy?
How long do you think you will continue using your present phone and computer?

Transport and travel

Do you think you will live abroad someday?
If you could travel anywhere, where would you choose?
When do you think you will next go abroad?

Work

Can you tell me something about your future career?
How important is progressing in your career to you?
What would your ideal job be (like)?
Would you set up your own business if you could?

Future plans

Can you tell me something about your future plans?
Can you tell me something about your ambitions?
What do you think you will be doing in 2030?
What do you think you will be doing in thirty years' time?
What do you hope to achieve in the next ten years?
Ask about any questions you couldn't answer, etc.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Analysing future IELTS Speaking Part One questions

Are the questions in each section below the same or different? If there are more than two questions, they are all the same or all different (= different and different again).

When is the next festival or celebration where you are living?

When do you think you will next attend a festival or celebration?

What are you planning to do at the weekend?

What would you like to do at the weekend?

What do you think you will do at the weekend?

Do you want to move home in the future?

Would you like to move home in the future?

Are there any other languages which you'd like to study?

What other languages do you want to study?

Would you prefer to learn a new language, or to continue studying a language which you have studied before?

Would you rather learn a new language, or continue studying a language which you have studied before?

How long are you planning to continue learning English?

How long do you think you will continue learning English?

How long do you think you will continue living in your present home?

How long will you continue living in your current home?

What would your ideal job be?

What would your dream job be?

If you could choose, what would your ideal home be like?

What would your dream home be like?

Do you think you will set up your own business?

Would you set up your own business if you could?

What do you think you will be doing in 2029?

What do you think you will be doing in ten years?

What do you think you will be doing in ten years?

What do you think you will be doing in ten years' time?

Can you tell me something about your ambitions?

What do you hope to achieve in the next ten years?

Check your answers as a class, making sure that you understand the differences between the different ones.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Take turns asking and answering questions from above, making sure that you don't ask two questions with the same meaning, and choosing the most likely question when there are two different ones.

Do all the answers in each section below have the same or different meaning? If there are more than two, they are all the same or all different. All are correct/ possible.

Verbs

Do you want to move home in the future?

- Yes, I'd like to move out of my flat and into a house.
- Yes, I'd love to move out of my flat and into a house.

How long do you think you will continue to live in your present home?

- Not long. I will probably move next year.
- Not long. I'm planning to move next year.
- Not long. I'm going to move next year.
- Not long. I'm moving next year.

Do you have any plans for tonight's dinner?

- Yes, I'm going out for Italian with my mother.
- Yes, I've arranged to go out for Italian with my mother.

How long do you think you will continue to live in your present home?

- Well, I don't have any plans to move, but I will almost certainly need to move nearer to my parents in the near future.
- Well, I don't have any plans to move, but I will probably need to move nearer to my parents in the near future.
- Well, I don't have any plans to move, but I may well need to move nearer to my parents in the near future.
- Well, I don't have any plans to move, but I may need to move nearer to my parents in the near future.
- Well, I don't have any plans to move, but I could possibly need to move nearer to my parents in the near future.

Do you think that you will need English more in the future?

- Well, I may get a promotion, in which case I'd definitely need to speak English more often.
- Well, I might get a promotion, in which case I'd certainly need to speak English more often.

What would your dream home be like?

- The place where I'm living is almost perfect, but I'd love to live somewhere with a rooftop terrace or a huge balcony.
- The place where I'm living is almost perfect, but I love living somewhere with a rooftop terrace or a huge balcony.

Is there anything you'd like to study in the future?

- Well, I don't really want to, but I need to take the CPA exam.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

- Well, I don't really want to, but I have to take the CPA exam.

What do you think you will be doing in ten years' time?

- I hope that I will be writing my book by then.
- I hope that I will have written my book by then.

How long are you planning to continue learning English?

- To be honest, I want to just get IELTS 6.5 and then study something else!
- To be honest, I hope to just get IELTS 6.5 and then study something else!
- To be honest, I wish I could just get IELTS 6.5 and then study something else!

Would you like to live in your hometown when you retire?

- Not really, but I will if...
- Not really, but I would if...

Times

Can you tell me something about your future plans?

- I'm planning to quit my job next year and become a freelancer in five years.
- I'm planning to quit my job next year and become a freelancer within five years.
- I'm planning to quit my job next year and then become a freelancer five years later.

When do you think you will next go to the cinema?

- I'm thinking about seeing the latest superhero movie in two days.
- I'm thinking about seeing the latest superhero movie in two days' time.
- I'm thinking about seeing the latest superhero movie the day after tomorrow.
- I'm thinking about seeing the latest superhero movie two days from now.

When will you next attend a festival or celebration?

- Well, it's the summer, so I may well attend one in the next week.
- Well, it's the summer, so I may well attend one in the next seven days.
- Well, it's the summer, so I may well attend one within the next seven days.

When do you think you will next see your extended family?

- Actually, it's my birthday in a week, so I'm meeting them then.
- Actually, it's my birthday this time next week, so I'm meeting them then.
- Actually, it's my birthday at this time next week, so I'm meeting them then.

When do you think you will next cook?

- I'm not sure if it will be the next time or not, but I need to cook Xmas dinner, so I need to go shopping for it by then.
- I'm not sure if it will be the next time or not, but I need to cook Xmas dinner, so I need to go shopping for it until then.

When do you think you will next go abroad?

- Not in the near future, but I'm sure I will one day.
- Not in the near future, but I'm sure I will someday.
- Not in the near future, but I'm sure I will sometime.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Check your answers as a class and then take turns asking and answering questions from above.

Without looking above, try to think of another way of saying each thing below with exactly the same meaning. Try to make the wording as different as you can, but any changes are fine, as long as the meaning is the same.

Do you want to move home in the future?

Would you prefer to learn a new language, or to continue studying a language which you have studied before?

What would your ideal home be like?

What do you think you will be doing in 2028?

Well, I may get a promotion, in which case I'd definitely need to speak English more often.

I'm thinking about seeing the latest superhero movie two days from now.

Well, it's the summer, so I may well attend one within the next seven days.

Actually, it's my birthday this time next week, so I'm meeting them then.

Not in the near future, but I'm sure I will one day.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Complete the answers below with at least one correct future form.

How long do you think you will continue to live in your present home?

I _____ (probably stay) there for the next or two years, and then move back to my family home in Osaka.

How long do you think you will continue to live in your present home?

Actually, I've decided to move house. I _____ (start) looking for a new flat next weekend.

Do you want to move home in the future?

No, I don't really want to, but _____ (have to) because the building is quite old and so will need to be demolished in the next decade or two.

What would your dream home be like?

I _____ (live) somewhere with a swimming pool, but it _____ (almost certainly never happen), unfortunately.

Are there any books that you would like to read?

Yes, I _____ (read) the latest book from Stephen King. I'm a huge horror fan.

Do you think how you get news will change in the future?

I think it probably won't change, because I already get most of my news from the internet. However, I _____ (have to) start paying if all the good newspapers charge for their websites.

When do you think you will next go abroad?

Actually, I already have a ticket! I _____ (fly) to New York on Sunday.

What are your plans for the weekend?

I don't have any plans. I _____ (probably just watch) the new series of House of Cards on Netflix.

When do you think you will next go abroad?

I'm not sure. I _____ (go) to Hawaii for my honeymoon next year, but I will probably be too busy, in which case it might be five years or more.

What do you think you will be doing in 2030?

I _____ (almost certainly still live) in Tokyo, but probably not in the same house and perhaps somewhere quieter in the suburbs.

What do you think you will be doing in thirty years' time?

By then I _____ (already retire), so I will probably be living back in my hometown with my family.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Fill the gaps below with any suitable sentence, but using a different future form and/ or different future time from the question each time. Try to make true sentences if you can, but imaginary sentences are also okay.

Is there any technology which you'd like to buy?

Actually,...

Do you think you will live abroad someday?

Yes,...

Are there any hobbies which you'd like to take up?

Not really, but...

What are your plans for this evening?

I don't have any actual plans, but...

Would you like to live in your hometown when you retire?

I'd love to, but...

Do you think your taste in music will change as you get older?

Probably, because...

Is there any technology which you'd like to buy?

Nothing really, because...

Do you think you will live abroad someday?

It's possible...

When do you think you will next go abroad?

I'm not sure, but...

What would your ideal job be (like)?

If I could,...

Can you tell me something about your future plans?

Well, I'm planning to study abroad within...

Can you tell me something about your ambitions?

I hope to have...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Two on the future

Do at least one task from below in exam format (exactly one minute for preparation, one or two minutes' speaking, then a short follow-up question from your partner).

Describe a job you would like to do in the future.

You should say:

- What a typical work day for people in that job is like
- What qualifications and experience you will need in order to do that job
- What your next step will have to be in order to get that job

And say if you think you will be able to get that job in the near future or not, and why

Talk about a subject you would like to study in the future

You should say:

- How you first became interested in that subject
- What things about that subject you find particularly interesting
- Where and how it is possible to study that subject

And say if you think you will start studying that in the near future or not, and why

Talk about a goal or ambition you have.

You should say:

- When and why you first got that goal or ambition
- What you need to do to make it come true
- What your next step needs to be

And say if you think you will achieve that goal or ambition or not, and why

Talk about a foreign country you have never been to and would like to visit:

You should mention:

- How that place is similar and different to your country and other countries you have visited
- Why you are interested in going there
- What you would like to do there

And say if you think you will go to that country in the near future or not, and why

Talk about your plans for your next long holiday. You should say:

- Where you are thinking of going
- Who you would like to go there with
- What you would like to do there

And say if you think you will do what you are planning or not, and why

Talk about a job you would like to do in the future.

You should say:

- What people have to do in that job
- Why you are interested in that job
- If there are any disadvantages or difficulties to doing that job

And say if you think you will be good at that job or not, and why

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talk about a subject you would like to study in the future.

You should say:

- What you need to study as part of that subject
- Where you can study it
- What you think the most difficult things about that subject would be

And say if you think studying that subject will be useful in your future life or not, and why

Talk about a new hobby you would like to take up.

You should mention:

- What the advantages of the hobby are
- What the difficulties of doing that hobby would be
- How you first became interested in that hobby

And say if you think you will do that hobby in the near future or not, and why

Talk about the next festival or celebration in your family or your country.

You should say:

- What is being celebrated
- What most people will do on that day
- What you are planning to do on that day

And say if you think you will enjoy that day or not, and why

Talk about something you would like to buy.

You should mention:

- What it looks like
- What it is used for
- Why you want to buy it

And say if you think you will buy it or not, and why

Talk about another language you are interested in learning.

You should say:

- Where it is spoken
- How it is different from your language and from English
- Why you are interested in that language

And say if it is popular to learn that language in your country or not, and why

Talk about one thing you are planning to do after you pass the IELTS test.

You should mention:

- When you think you will do it
- Why you want to do it
- How long you have had that plan

And say whether there are any other options that you could also do which are just as good

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talk about your next trip abroad.

You should say:

- Where you are going or would like to go
- What you want to do there
- What souvenirs you would like to bring back

And say whether you think your next trip overseas will be as you would like it to be or not, and why

Talk about a musical instrument you would like to be able to play but have never tried.

You should say:

- What the instrument looks like
- How you play it
- What kinds of music are played on it

And say if you think you will learn to play that instrument or not, and why

Talk about a sport you think is interesting but have never played.

You should say:

- What equipment is needed
- What some of the rules are
- What kinds of people this sport is popular with

And say if you think you will do this sport in the near future or not, and why

Describe your dream job

You should say:

- What you would do in that job
- What the pay and conditions would be like
- What kind of place you would work in

And say if you think people who really have a job like that are happy in their work or not, and why

Talk about your dream holiday. You should say:

- Where you would like to go
- What kind of accommodation you would like to stay in
- What activities you would like to do

And say if you ever think you will go on a holiday like that or not, and why

Describe your dream workplace. You should say:

- What the place would be like
- What your colleagues would be like
- What the local area would be like

And say if you think such a workplace really exists or not, and why

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Give a short presentation about a film that you have never seen but would like to.

You should say:

- If any famous people are connected with this film
- What kind of film it is
- What other films it is similar to

And say if you think you will see that movie soon or not, and why

Talk about a book you have never read but would like to.

You should mention:

- If it is famous it is
- Why that book interests you
- Why you haven't read it before

And say if you think it will become one of your favourite books or not, and why

Talk about an instrument you would like to be able to play but cannot play.

You should say:

- Why that instrument interests you
- When you have seen or heard other people playing that instrument
- Why you haven't learnt how to play it before

And say if you think it is a difficult instrument to learn or not, and why

Talk about a pet you have never had but would like. You should mention:

- Where and how you can buy it
- Where you would keep it
- How it would need looking after

And say if you think you will have a similar pet in the near future or not, and why

Describe your dream home

You should say:

- How you would look like the outside to look
- How you would like the inside to look
- What area you would like to live in

And say if you have really seen a house that is similar or not, and if so how it was similar

Talk about one thing you are going to do next weekend.

You should mention:

- Where you are going to do it
- Who you are going to do it with
- Any equipment you need to do it

And say whether you are looking forward to it or not, and why

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Talk about a part of your country you have never been to but would like to visit

You should say:

- Why you have never been there before
- If or when you think you might go
- Why you would like to go

And say how you first became interested in going to that place

Talk about your plans for your next long vacation.

You should say:

- Where you want to go
- Who you want to go there with
- What you want to do when you get there

And say how likely you are to do what you have planned, and why

Analysis

What different future forms could you use to answer the questions above?

Which of those forms are the most likely/ most common/ most useful for these Speaking Part Two questions?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The future in IELTS Speaking Part Three

Take turns asking questions from below on two or three topics for four minutes.

Arts and media

- Will internet news ever replace newspapers?
- Do you think that there will be more jobs in the arts sector or in the technical sector in the future?

Demographics

- Can you think of any bad effects of a shrinking population?
- Do you think it is possible for ten billion people to live on the earth?
- Do you think the government should subsidise families with more kids?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of governments paying people to stay in shrinking towns and villages?
- What can be done to stop people moving to the capital city, do you think?

Economics

- Do you believe that a minimum basic income for everyone in the country would be a good idea?
- Do you think that economic growth is always a good thing?
- Do you think it is okay for people who have been declared bankrupt to then set up their own business?

Globalisation

- Are people in your country generally interested in studying abroad?
- Do you think people's feelings about more globalisation are changing?
- Why do some people think globalisation should be reversed?

Health

- Can you explain why some people support voluntary euthanasia?
- Do you think it would be good for governments to make smoking more and more difficult and expensive?

Nature and the environment

- Are people in your country worried about natural disasters?
- Do you think your government is doing enough to cut carbon emissions?
- What could the bad effects of further global warming be?
- What is the biggest environmental problem facing your country?

Retirement

- How do people in your country prepare for their retirement?
- Do you believe people your age will be able to retire in their sixties?
- Do you think that the retirement age is about right?
- What do you think old people's lives will be like in 50 years' time?

Technology

- How much do you think the government should get involved in helping companies research future technologies?
- Do you think there is a danger that robots will take over from humans?
- What are your predictions for public transport in the next few years?
- What could be the effects of AI becoming as intelligent as humans?

What future forms did you and should you use the answer the questions above? How about Writing Part Two questions and Writing Part One line graphs?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking tactics discussion

Look at the questions from all three parts of an IELTS test, with an examiner's script if possible, and talk about what to do before and during the exam.

Possible discussion topics

Before the exam

- Preparing to answer personal questions in Speaking Part One and Speaking Part Two
- Learning suitable vocabulary (including pronunciation)
- Learning suitable phrases
- Choosing practice and preparation materials (good and bad websites, books, etc)
- Improving your confidence and fluency
- Improving your accuracy/ Learning to avoid mistakes
- Using sample questions
- Using model answers
- Using videos of IELTS tests
- Practising speaking questions at home on your own
- Practising speaking questions with a friend
- Making exam practice realistic
- What to do on the day before the exam/ on the morning before the exam

In the exam

- What to do/ Things that will get a good mark
- What not to do/ Things that will get a bad mark
- Entering the test room, sitting down, giving your name, etc
- What to do when you don't understand
- What to do when you still don't understand
- Avoiding silence
- Answering personal questions in Speaking Part One
- Impressing the examiner (making sure that you use a wide range of language, etc)
- Preparing for Speaking Part Two
- Starting the Speaking Part Two mini-presentation
- Making sure that you stay on topic/ Completing the task in Speaking Part Two
- Ending the Speaking Part Two mini-presentation
- Giving your opinion in Speaking Part Three
- Dealing with difficult questions
- Supporting your opinions in Speaking Part Three
- Suitable lengths of your answers
- Being interrupted

Ask your teacher about anything related to the IELTS Speaking test which you are not sure about, including any topics above which you found it difficult to discuss.

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Preparing for IELTS Speaking outside class discussion

Discuss the questions below in pairs and then as a class. Your teacher will tell you which part(s) of the speaking exam you should discuss.

How can you prepare for IELTS Speaking outside class? Which are probably the best ways (for you)? Which ways might not be suitable?

How can you make sure that you are ready to answer the most common kinds of IELTS speaking questions? How can you make sure that you are ready to talk about the most common IELTS Speaking topics?

How can you make sure that you learn the right vocabulary to help you in the speaking exam? How can you make sure that you really learn that vocabulary and can use it in the speaking test?

How can you improve your pronunciation for IELTS Speaking? What's the best way?

Discuss these ways of improving your IELTS Speaking score:

- Brainstorm vocabulary to describe your life onto mind maps
- Brainstorm vocabulary on typical IELTS Speaking topics onto mind maps
- Write out descriptions of your family, home, hometown etc, using a dictionary to help
- Brainstorm possible questions on typical IELTS Speaking topics
- Do IELTS Speaking practice with a Skype teacher
- Do timed IELTS Speaking practice tests with a friend as the examiner
- Learn online lists of vocabulary on topics that usually come up in IELTS Speaking
- Look up vocabulary that you need to talk about your own home, hobbies, favourite arts and media, etc
- Write out and memorise some of your answers to IELTS Speaking questions
- Memorise some IELTS Speaking model answers
- Memorise useful functional language for IELTS Speaking (language for checking what the question means, speaking while thinking/ pausing for thought, etc)
- Practise answering IELTS Speaking questions on your own in your head
- Practise answering IELTS Speaking questions on your own out loud
- Practise answering the same IELTS Speaking question in different ways and then decide which answer was best
- Record yourself answering IELTS Speaking questions
- Try to remember the questions you were asked in your last (real or practice) IELTS Speaking test and try to improve your answers
- Try to remember the questions you were asked in your last (real or practice) IELTS Speaking test and discuss those questions and your answers online
- Use IELTS grammar books, apps, or website pages
- Use IELTS vocabulary books, apps, or website pages
- Watch videos of candidates taking the IELTS Speaking test
- Write out your answers to some IELTS Speaking questions

As a class discuss the most and least useful ideas above. Are any other ideas missing?

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Parts One, Two and Three dice game

Roll a dice to decide the topic, type of the question you should answer from your partner. Your teacher will tell you how many times you should roll the dice and to decide what.

Kinds of questions

1. personal questions about you (like IELTS Speaking Part One)
2. questions about people you know (family, friends, etc – like IELTS Speaking Part One)
3. “Speak for one or two minutes about a/ an... which/ that/ where/ who...” (like IELTS Speaking Part Two)
4. questions about people your age in your country
5. questions about your opinions (like IELTS Speaking Part Three)
6. free choice

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

Topics

One

1. Art
2. Books/ Literature
3. Communication
4. Conversations
5. Documentaries
6. Education/ Training

Two

1. Exercise/ Sport
2. Family
3. Free time/ Leisure
4. Friends/ Friendship
5. Games/ Playing
6. Gifts/ Gift giving

Three

1. Health/ Fitness
2. Household chores
3. Language learning
4. Media
5. Movies
6. Nature/ The environment

Four

1. News/ Current Affairs
2. Newspapers
3. Parties/ Celebrations
4. Photography
5. Possessions
6. Reading

Five

1. Shopping
2. Special occasions
3. Skills/ Abilities
4. Teachers/ Teaching
5. Technology
6. Timekeeping

Six

1. Tourism/ Sightseeing
2. Travel
3. TV
4. Weather/ Climate
5. Work/ Careers
6. Writing/ Writers

IELTS Speaking Part One question stems

1. Are there any... that you would like to...?
2. Are you... at the moment?
3. Are your friends interested in...?
4. Can you tell me something about your...?
5. Can you... (well)?
6. Did you... when you were younger?
7. Do you enjoy...?
8. Do you find it easy to...?
9. Do you have any plans to...?
10. Do you have many...?
11. Do you like...?
12. Do you often...?
13. Do you prefer to... or...?
14. Do you want to... in the future?
15. Do people often... in your country?
16. Has... changed (much) since you were younger?
17. Have you always...?
18. How did you spend... when you were younger?
19. How do... affect you?
20. How important is... to you?
21. How long have you been...?
22. How much time do you spend... (every week)?
23. How often do you...?
24. How often do people... where you come from?
25. How popular is... with...?
26. If you could..., which would you choose?
27. Is there any kind of... which you don't like?
28. Is there anything you dislike about...?
29. Tell me a little about your...
30. What is the best thing about...?
31. What changes would you like to make to...?
32. What did you do...?
33. What do you usually do to...?
34. What is the most famous... from your country? (Can you describe it?)
35. What is... like?
36. What kinds of... do people in your town usually...?
37. What kinds of... do you...?
38. What was your favourite... when you were a child?
39. What would your ideal... be (like)?
40. What... are there in your neighbourhood?
41. When are you next going to...?
42. When did you last...?
43. Where do...?
44. Would you say that you are...?
45. Do you wish that you had... when you were younger?

IELTS Speaking Part Two question stems

Describe/ Give a short presentation about/ Speak for one or two minutes about/ Tell the examiner about/ Speak on your own about...

... a/ an/ something... that...

... mentioning/... including/ You should say/ You should mention/ You should include/
Include in your answer:

- Where/ Its location/ The venue
- When
- What
- What kind of...
- What you (dis)like about...
- Which
- Who
- How long
- How/ The method
- How important/ How successful/ How big/ How popular/ How...
- How you (first)...
- ...'s appearance/ What... looks like
- ...'s character
- The topic of.../ What... was about

and say/ and explain

- How you feel about.../ How you felt about...
- Why you (think/ like)...
- How you could have... better
- Whether you... or not and why
- Who you would recommend it for
- What similarities there are between... and...
- How it compares with...

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

IELTS Speaking Part Three question stems

1. Are people in your country worried about ...?
2. Are people your age in your country interested in ..., do you think?
3. Can you think of any bad effects of ...? (On balance, do you think...?)
4. Do you believe that people your age in your country...?
5. Do you think it is okay for ... to...? (Why do you have that opinion?)
6. Do you think it is possible to...? (Why/ Why not?)
7. Do you think that ...is a good idea?
8. Do you think that ...is changing?
9. Do you think there is a danger that...?
10. Do you think your government is doing enough to...? (Why do you think that?)
11. Do you think ...is getting better or worse? (What makes you say that?)
12. How has ...changed over the last 50 years in your country?
13. How important is..., in your opinion?
14. How much do you think the government should get involved in...? (What could they do?)
15. How popular is/ are...in your country?
16. In what ways do ...benefit society?
17. Is... a problem where you live?
18. What are the advantages and disadvantages of...?
19. What are your predictions for ...in the next few years?
20. What can be done to stop..., do you think?
21. What can be done to...? (Do you think that is likely?)
22. What could be the consequences of/ the effect of...?
23. What do you think about ...in your country?
24. What do you think ...will be like in 50 years' time?
25. What is the biggest ...problem facing your country, do you think?
26. Why do some people...?

Ask about any questions above which you don't understand, don't know how to make questions out of or don't know how to answer.

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