

## Test section – Speaking Part 1

# Test familiarisation and lexical resource

### Activities

1. IELTS Speaking section quiz
2. Part 1 topics
3. Analysing model answers
4. Developing vocabulary
5. Part 1 practice

### Aims

- to raise awareness of the format of the Speaking section of IELTS
- to help students develop their lexical resource for typical Part 1 topics

### Learning outcomes

- Students will be familiar with the format of the IELTS Speaking section.
- Students will have analysed what is required of them in terms of topics and lexical resource.
- Students will have practised a range of ‘typical’ Part 1 questions.

### Information about this section of IELTS

In Part 1 of the Speaking Section, the examiner will introduce themselves and ask the test taker to do the same and to confirm their identity. The examiner will then ask general questions on familiar topics, e.g. home, work, studies and interests. This part lasts for 4-5 minutes.

<b>Time</b>	45 minutes
<b>Level</b>	B1-B2
<b>Class</b>	Suitable for groups/large classes, 1:1 F2F / Online
<b>Interaction</b>	Pair or group work
<b>Materials</b>	Worksheets x5 attached

**Activity 1:** What do you know about the IELTS Speaking section?

**Material:** Worksheet 1

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Procedure:**

- put students into pairs or small groups to discuss and answer the quiz questions.
- elicit answers and go over key points of the Speaking section.

**Answers**

1 b, 2 a, 3 a, 4 c, 5 c, 6 b, 7 a, 8 c

Length of test: 11-14 minutes

3 parts

Part 1 – questions on personal / everyday topics (4-5 mins)

Part 2 – a 2-minute talk on a given topic with 1-minute preparation time (3-4 mins)

Part 3 – a discussion based on the topic in Part 2, in which candidates will be expected to express opinions, to speculate and to discuss on a more abstract level (4-5 mins)

The test is recorded in case the candidate's performance needs to be re-marked, and for monitoring examining standards.

**Activity 2:** Part 1 topics

**Material:** Worksheet 2, A3 paper and board pens (optional)

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Procedure:**

- put students into small groups.
- write 'personal / everyday topics' on the board.
- elicit an example of an everyday topic e.g. hometown, shopping.
- tell students they have 60 seconds to brainstorm and write down as many possible topics as they can.
- when the time is up, find out which group has the most topics. Get a student from the group to write the list on the board. If other groups have different ideas, add these to the list.

- either tell students to make a copy of the list on the board, or write the list on an A3 piece of paper and display in the classroom.
- The list can form the basis of further practice of Part 1 in future lessons.

**Possible answers:**

hobbies, work, studies, home and accommodation, my town, my country, learning English, important festivals, food, music, ambitions, transport, TV, reading, travelling, music

**Activity 3: Model answers**

**Material:** Worksheet 3

**Time:** 15-20 minutes

**Procedure:**

- give students about 5 minutes to read the questions and answers and to discuss which answers are good/bad and why.
- elicit the answers from the class and discuss the reasons.

- 1 a) about right length and amount of information  
b) too short  
c) probably too long and too much information. It doesn't sound like a natural response to the question.
- 2 a) just lists places. Again, not very natural-sounding.  
b) too short  
c) about the right length and amount of information
- 3 a) about right length and amount of information  
b) probably too long and too much information. It doesn't sound like a natural response to the question.  
c) too short

- summarise the main points: Students should . . .
  - give natural replies, neither too long nor too short
  - not list things
  - try not to give one-word answers
  - not rehearse / memorise answers.
  
- students continue working in pairs and ask and answer the questions about themselves (closed pairs).
- call on two students in the class to ask and answer a question (open pairs).
- repeat open pairs as necessary.

**Activity 4:** Developing vocabulary

**Material:** Worksheet 4

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Procedure:**

- tell students that the Speaking section is assessed through 4 criteria: Fluency & Coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range & Accuracy, and Pronunciation. This exercise is designed to help students to think about appropriate vocabulary for the topics that arise in Part 1 of the test.
- put students into pairs to complete the task.
- when some pairs have finished, ask them to write their lists on the board. The rest of the class check their answers.
- tell faster finishers to think of more vocabulary items to add to each list. Add all these to the lists on the board.
- you may wish to extend this exercise (for homework) by writing other topics from Activity 2, e.g. hobbies, food etc. on the board. Students can brainstorm these for appropriate vocabulary.

### **Activity 5:** Practice of Part 1 and feedback

**Material:** Worksheet 5

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Procedure:**

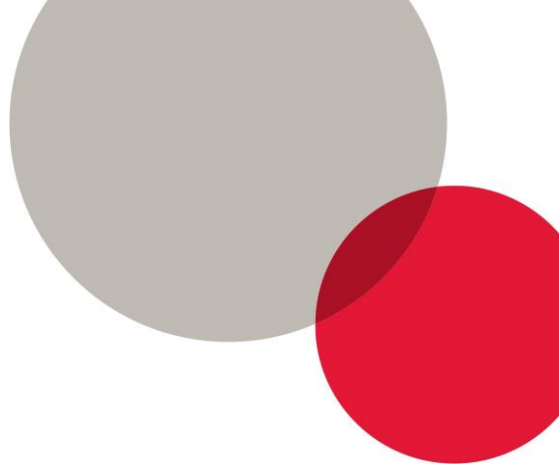
*There are a number of different ways in which this activity can be done. A procedure can be chosen that suits the size of the class, and/or the number of times the teacher wishes to practise the activity.*

#### Procedure 1

- students work in pairs.
- students should only look at their own page.
- tell students to look at the feedback questions and explain that they should tick the boxes as their partner is talking.
- student A gives student B a co-ordinate, for example D2. Student B then acts as the interviewer and asks student A the questions in that box.
- student B then gives student A a co-ordinate, and student A asks him/her the questions in the box.
- when both students have asked and answered questions, they should take turns to give their partner feedback.
- you may wish to collect the feedback sheets, or do class feedback by asking the questions.
- there are enough topics for each student in the pair to answer questions 16 times and it can be used for future lessons.

#### Procedure 2

- students work in groups of 3.
- cut up the handout 4A into cards so that there is a pack of 16 topics for each group.
- photocopy a copy of the feedback questions for each student.
- give out a pack of topic cards face down to each group.
- the first student turns over the top card and interviews the second student in the group.
- the third student listens to the answers and marks the feedback questions.



- repeat this until each student has asked and answered the questions, and taken feedback notes.
- allow 5 minutes for students to give each other the feedback.

### Extra information

- You may wish to download the Public Band Descriptors for the Speaking section or tell your students to do so.  
[https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/speaking-band-descriptors\\_0.pdf](https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/speaking-band-descriptors_0.pdf)
- You can then point out the important differences in the Lexical resource criterion for the levels appropriate to your class.

	Lexical Resource
<b>Band 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uses vocabulary resource <b>flexibly</b> to discuss a <b>variety of topics</b></li> <li>• uses some <b>less common</b> and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of <b>style and collocation</b>, with some inappropriate choices</li> <li>• uses <b>paraphrase</b> effectively</li> </ul>
<b>Band 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss <b>topics at length</b> and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies</li> <li>• generally <b>paraphrases</b> successfully</li> </ul>
<b>Band 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manages to talk about <b>familiar and unfamiliar topics</b> but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility</li> <li>• attempts to use <b>paraphrase</b> but with mixed success</li> </ul>

## What do you know about the IELTS Speaking section?

- 1 The test lasts about
  - a) 4 minutes
  - b) 14 minutes
  - c) 24 minutes
  
- 2 There are
  - a) 3
  - b) 4
  - c) 5 parts to the test.
  
- 3 In the first part you will be asked questions on:
  - a) everyday topics
  - b) academic subjects
  - c) topics in the news
  
- 4 In the next part of the test you will:
  - a) choose your own topic to talk about
  - b) choose between 2 topics you are given to talk about
  - c) be given 1 topic to talk about
  
- 5 In this part, you will have
  - a) no time to prepare
  - b) 30 seconds to prepare
  - c) 60 seconds to prepare
  
- 6 You will then talk for a maximum of
  - a) 1 minute
  - b) 2 minutes
  - c) 3 minutes
  
- 7 In the last part of the test you will
  - a) discuss questions based loosely on the Part 2 topic.
  - b) discuss your reasons for taking IELTS
  - c) discuss your plans and ambitions
  
- 8 The test is recorded
  - a) so you can have a copy
  - b) because it is always marked twice
  - c) in case it needs to be re-marked

## What topics will you be asked about in Part 1?

*Work with a partner or in small groups. Make a list of the topics you might be asked about in Part 1.*

### Personal/everyday topics

- *hometown*
- *shopping*
-



## Analysing answers

*Work in pairs or small groups. Look at the answers to typical questions from part 1 of the Speaking section of IELTS. Which answers (a, b or c) are best? Why?*

1 Do you live in a small place or a large place?

- a) Large. It's a family house with 7 rooms and a lovely big garden.
- b) Large.
- c) Large. There's a kitchen, a living room and a downstairs shower room and upstairs there are 4 bedrooms and 2 more bathrooms.

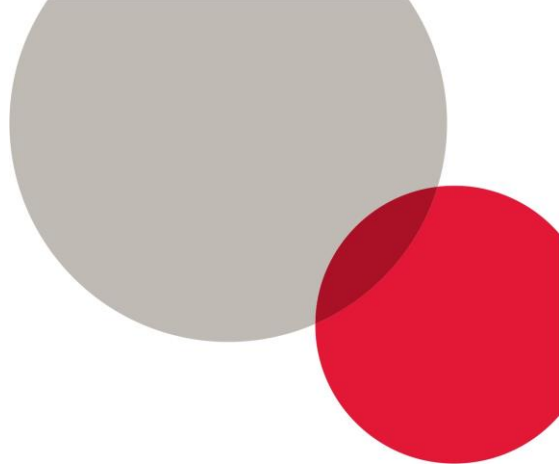
2 What is the area like where you live?

- a) It's boring. There isn't anything to do. There are no shops, or parks, or cinemas, or restaurants, or discos or sports centres.
- b) It's boring.
- c) It's quite boring. There isn't much to do – no shops or cinemas or anything.

3 What do you like most about your job?

- a) My colleagues. They are a great group and we work very well together because we cooperate rather than compete.
- b) My colleagues. We're a team of 10 and the team leader, Cecilia, is very good. She gets us all working well together and we have a lot of fun at the same time. We work hard as well, of course, but I have a lot of laughs with my colleagues.
- c) My colleagues.

*2 Work in pairs. Ask and answer the 3 questions above about yourself.*



**Speaking Part 1**

**Worksheet 4**

**Vocabulary**

beach holiday	book online	crime	crowded	current affairs
documentaries	eco-tourism	fantasy	job satisfaction	long-haul flight
look for a job	made redundant	movies	package holiday	part-time
pedestrian precincts	public transport	romantic	rush hour	salary
sci-fi	soaps	sport	suburbs	thrillers

Add words from the box to the topics below.

**Holidays and travel**

*beach holiday*  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**Cities and transport**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**TV programmes**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**Types of novels**

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**Work**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**Speaking Part 1**
**Worksheet 5**
**Feedback questions**

Name: .....

	Yes	Sometimes	No
1 Did your partner answer all the questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Did they speak English all the time?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Did they speak too quickly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
too slowly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at about the right pace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Were the answers too short?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
too long?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
about the right length?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Did you partner use appropriate vocabulary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 If they didn't know the correct word, did they manage to explain or describe what they meant?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 If they made a grammar mistake, did they try to correct themselves?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Feedback questions**

Name: .....

	Yes	Sometimes	No
1 Did your partner answer all the questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Did they speak English all the time?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Did they speak too quickly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	A	B	C	D
1	<p>Tell me about your friends. Do you spend a lot of time with them? What do you do together? Where do you meet? How do you keep in contact with your friends?</p>	<p>Tell me about transport in your hometown. How do you usually travel around your town? Is the public transport system good? In what ways? How could it be improved?</p>	<p>Tell me about your reading habits. Do you read a lot? What types of books do you enjoy? Why? What are you reading at the moment? Do you read books in English?</p>	<p>Tell me about television programmes. Do you watch TV a lot? What type of programmes do you prefer? What is your favourite programme? Do you get the news from the TV? Where else do you get the news?</p>
2	<p>Tell me about festivals in your country. What days are celebrated? Why? How are they celebrated? Do you eat special food on these days?</p>	<p>Tell me about your holidays. Do you generally go away for your holidays? Where do you go? Who do you usually go with? What do you enjoy doing on your holidays?</p>	<p>Tell me about your studies. How long have you been learning English? What do you find most difficult? Do you think you will use English in future studies or in a job?</p>	<p>Tell me about sports. What sports or exercise do you enjoy doing? How often do you do it? Is there a sport you would like to take up? Why (not)?</p>
3	<p>Tell me about shopping. Do you enjoy going shopping? Why (not)? How much time do you spend shopping? Do you shop online? What do you buy that you don't buy from ordinary shops?</p>	<p>Tell me about your hometown. Is it a big or a small place? What sort of jobs or industries are there? Does it have places to spend your free time in? Do you enjoy living there? Why (not)?</p>	<p>Tell me about your home. Do you live in a flat or a house? What are some good things about your home? Are there any bad things? Which is better, living in a house or a flat? Why?</p>	<p>Tell me about food in your country. Is there a national dish? What is it? Do you enjoy cooking? Why (not)? If yes, what sort of things do you cook? If no, who does the cooking in your home?</p>
4	<p>Tell me about your plans for the future. Do you plan to do more studies? What sort of job would you like? Why? What is more important to you, job satisfaction or a high salary? Why?</p>	<p>Tell me about your hobbies and interests. What do you do in your free time? Why do you like doing these things? Do your friends share the same interests? Are there any hobbies you would like to take up? Why?</p>	<p>Tell me about your weekends. Do you spend your weekends at home or do you go out? What do you do while you're at home? Do you like having time to yourself? Do you ever do anything special at the weekend?</p>	<p>Tell me about your taste in music. Do you enjoy listening to music? What sort of music do you listen to? Do your friends like the same music? What about your family? Do they enjoy your music?</p>

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