Master IELTS Speaking

Course Material and Supplements

For Academic and General Training Candidates

Ebrahim Tahasoni
Cert TESOL, Academic IELTS 9.0
www.tahasoni.com
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What’s the test like?

The speaking test will take about 11 to 14 minutes to complete. There are three sections in total. These are as follows:

- **Part 1 – Introduction and interview.** This lasts for about 4 to 5 minutes. In this section, the Examiner will introduce him/herself and ask you questions about yourself.

- **Part 2 – Individual long turn.** Part 2 lasts for about three to four minutes. In this section, you will be asked to prepare and give a short talk for about one to two minutes on a given subject.

- **Part 3 – Two-way discussion.** Part 3 lasts for 4 to 5 minutes. In this section, you will be asked to have a short discussion linked to the subject you spoke about in part 2.

**Assessment**

Overall, you will be assessed on your:

- fluency and coherence
- vocabulary
- range of grammar and accuracy
- pronunciation.

This means that all of your preparation must concentrate on these areas. Check the IELTS speaking band descriptor for a more detailed description of the criteria the examiner will use to assess your speaking.
Part 1 - Introduction and interview

During Part 1, the Examiner will introduce him/herself and ask you some questions about yourself. This is the start of the test, and it will set the scene for the remainder.

Think of the Examiner as being just like your teacher. In fact, most examiners are usually teachers, so they'll understand how you feel, because some of their own students will feel the same. They're not there to catch you out. Indeed, they'll want you to do well and will do everything that they can to make you feel comfortable.

The Examiner has a set of questions. When you’re asked a question, try to answer it without repeating the whole question in your answer. For example:

If you are asked ‘What's the most interesting thing about your hometown?’
Don't reply ‘The most interesting thing about my hometown is…’
Just say ‘It’s…’
Then, you can expand on your answer, if possible, by adding something like: ‘Most people find this interesting because…’
You can then add a synonym of the words used by the Examiner. So, instead of interesting say something like: ‘Most people find this fascinating because…’

So, don't try to ‘fill up’ your answer by repeating the question back to the Examiner and try to add a little ‘extra’ to show off your English. Remember, it's a conversation with the Examiner. He/she will want to see if you are fluent and coherent. They can't do this if you just repeat back large chunks of a question! Examiners are looking for your own ideas.

The topics are usually very familiar and the Examiner normally asks you about yourself. Try to give examples and create ideas, willingly. Never say, ‘I don't know.’
Giving Full Answers

Impress the examiner with your ability to give full answers to his or her questions. To avoid simple yes or no answers or short responses generally, try using the REDS method to add detail to your initial response:

- Give a Reason
- Offer an Example
- Give Details
- Speculate

REDS in Action:

Question: What job would you like to do?
Answer (Reason): I've always wanted to be a vet. I love animals and I think it would be a very rewarding job.

Question: What skills do you need for this job?
Answer (Example): I think you need to be sensitive to people's feelings. If you're dealing with their sick or injured pets, you need to be honest but also appreciate how they might be feeling.

Question: Where do you come from?
Answer (Detail): I come from Mashad in Iran. It's well known as a religious centre and is really crowded most of the year.

Question: Do you often go out to restaurants?
Answer (Speculate): Unfortunately, since I had my baby, no. If I had the chance I'd really like to eat out more often, especially in Chinese or Italian restaurants.
Sample Part One Questions

Family
- Do you have a large family or a small family?
- Can you tell me something about them?
- How much time do you manage to spend with members of your family?
- What sorts of things do you like to do together?
- Did/Do you get on well with your family? [Why?]

Accommodation
- What kind of accommodation do you live in? What’s it like?
- Have you always lived there?
- What are the main advantages of this [accommodation]?
- What changes would you like to make to improve it?
- Would it be easy for you to move to another accommodation?
- Do many people in your country live in such accommodation?

Neighbourhood
- Which part of town do you live in?
- What’s it like?
- What kind of shops are there in your neighbourhood?
- Do you get along well with your neighbours?
- What’s difficult about living there?

Education (students)
- What do you study?
- What is special about this subject?
- Is there anything you find difficult about it?
- Where do you study...? What’s your university/college like?

Education (graduates)
- Do you have higher education?
- What have you studied at university?
- What did you like about your studies?
- Was there anything you found difficult?

Job
- What’s your job?
- Is it a common job in your country?
- What are your working hours like?
- Do you get a lot of vacation and off time?
- Are you thinking of changing your job?
Cold weather
- Have you ever been in very cold weather? [When?]
- How often is the weather cold where you come from?
- Are some parts of your country colder than others? [Which parts?]
- Would you prefer to live in a hot place or a cold place? [Why?]

Laughing
- What kinds of things make you laugh?
- Do you like making other people laugh? [Why/Why not?]
- Do you think it’s important for people to laugh? [Why/Why not?]
- Is laughing the same as feeling happy, do you think? [Why/Why not?]

Keeping in contact with people
- How do you usually contact your friends? [Why?]
- Do you prefer to contact different people in different ways? [Why?]
- Do you find it easy to keep in contact with friends and family? [Why/Why not?]
- In your country, did people in the past keep in contact in the same ways as they do today? [Why/Why not?]

Daily Routine
- What would you like to change in your daily routine?
- Are all your days the same?
- Tell me about your typical weekday and your typical weekend.
- What is the balance of work/study and free time in your normal day?

Visitors
- What would you suggest a visitor should see and do in your country?
- Are there any traditional arts or music you would recommend?
- Tell me about the kind of foreign visitors or tourists who go to your country.
- In what ways has tourism changed your country?

Festivals
- Tell me about the most important festival in your country.
- What special food and activities are connected with this festival?
- What do you most enjoy about it?
- Do you think festivals are important for a country? [Why?]

Dancing
- Do you enjoy dancing? [Why/Why not?]
- Has anyone ever taught you to dance? [Why/Why not?]
- Tell me about any traditional dancing in your country.
- Do you think that traditional dancing will be popular in the future? [Why/Why not?]
Musical instruments
• Which instrument do you like listening to most? [Why?]
• Have you ever learned to play a musical instrument? [Which one?]
• Do you think children should learn to play a musical instrument at school? [Why/Why not?]
• How easy would it be to learn to play an instrument without a teacher? [Why?]

Traffic where you live
• How do most people travel to work where you live?
• What traffic problems are there in your area? [Why?]
• How do traffic problems affect you?
• How would you reduce the traffic problems in your area?

Your friends
• Do you prefer to have one particular friend or a group of friends? [Why?]
• Are your friends mostly your age or different ages? [Why?]
• What do you like doing most with your friend/s?
• The last time you saw your friends, what did you do together?
• What makes a friend into a good friend?
• Do you think it’s important to keep in contact with friends you knew as a child? [Why/Why not?]

Food and cooking
• What kinds of food do you like to eat?
• What kind of new food would you like to try? [Why?]
• Do you like cooking? [Why/Why not?] What was the last meal you cooked?
• Do you prefer home-cooked food or food from restaurants? [Why?]

Leisure
• Do you have any hobbies or interests? [What are they?]  
• How did you become interested in (whatever hobby/interest the candidate mentions)?
• What is there to do in your free time in (candidate’s hometown/village)?
• How do you usually spend your holidays?
• Is there anywhere you would particularly like to visit? [Why?]

Your favourite place
• What place do you most like to visit?
• How often do you visit this place? Why do you like it so much?
• Is it popular with many other people?
• Has it changed very much since you first went there? [In what way?]

Your country
• Which part of your country do most people live in?
• Tell me about the main industries there.
• How easy is it to travel around your country?
• Has your country changed much since you were a child?
Colour
- What’s your favourite colour? [Why?]
- Do you like the same colours now as you did when you were younger? [Why/Why not?]
- What can you learn about a person from the colours they like?
- Do any colours have a special meaning in your culture?

Entertainment
- Do you prefer relaxing at home or going out in the evening? [Why?]
- When you go out for an evening, what do you like to do?
- How popular is this with other people in your country?
- Is there any kind of entertainment you do not like? [Why/Why not?]

Clothes
- How important are clothes and fashion to you? [Why/Why not?]
- What kind of clothes do you dislike? [Why?]
- How different are the clothes you wear now from those you wore 10 years ago?
- What do you think the clothes we wear say about us?

Fruits
- Do you eat fruits?
- How often do you eat fruits?
- Where do you buy your fruits from?
- Do you think it’s important for people to eat fruits? [Why/Why not?]

Books
- Do you like reading books?
- What kind of books do you like to read? [Why?]
- Where do you like to read? [Why?]
- Do others in your family read books too?
- Do you usually buy your books from a special place? [Where?]

Telephone calls
- How often are you on the phone?
- Do you like calling friends or family more often? [Why?]
- Did you call your friends a lot when you were a child?
- Do you think children should have to pay their own telephone bills? [Why/Why not?]

Technology at home/office
- How often do you use electric appliances at home/office?
- How do you think they help you with your chores?
- Are there any other advantages?
- Are there any drawbacks to using these appliances?
- Do you think people should use electric appliances more often or less often than they do now? [Why/Why not?]
Part 2 - Individual long turn

During Part 2, you’ll be given a topic on a task card which you will NOT be able to change. You’ll be given about one minute to prepare. Then you’ll be required to speak for about two minutes on the topic, by yourself. During this time, the Examiner won’t interrupt you and won’t ask you any questions.

Use the time to plan what you’re going to say! A lot of candidates don’t plan what they’re going to say. You won't impress the Examiner if you start speaking immediately without planning, whatever your level of English. Always make a brief written plan, as this will help to keep you on the subject. By following the plan, you won’t wander away from the points you’re being asked about. The point is, if your talk isn’t organised, you’ll lose marks. Remember, you’re being tested on your fluency and coherence. Coherence means that you must follow a logical and clear argument when you speak.

Don’t worry if you have to make up what you are going to say. You’re not been tested on the factual content of what you say, but more on how you say it in English. Keep to the point, and make what you say relevant. Being relevant is just as important as being fluent. In fact, you won't be able to say more than about 200 to 250 words in the two minutes you have available. So, never worry that you won't be able to fill the time! Two minutes will go really quickly… if you have a plan.

Also, don’t worry if you don’t get around to covering all the details mentioned in the task card. In other words, if your speech is cut short by the examiner at the end of the two minutes when you are still talking about, say, the third point on the card and have not yet addressed the last question, you would not be penalised for this. The prompts on the task card are to give you ideas to help you sustain the long turn. You are assessed on the sample of language you give rather than on whether you use all the prompts.

The task card usually asks you to describe something and then give reasons for your choice. So, for each point, write only one or two words for each prompt. In total, you should only write about 20 words in your plan.

During your planning, try the following:
- Write notes and don't write whole sentences.
- Write the points in a list and in order.
- Make a gap between, or draw a line between, words relating to description and explanation.
- Use nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives for your notes.
As you speak, look at the list that you’ve made so that you can organise your answer. This will ensure that you answer all parts of the task. Think about connecting words and phrases that will guide you as you speak. However, don’t try to write these down in the notes; you won’t have enough time. Try to practise your organisation as much as you can before taking the test. Practise making notes and then using them to help you speak. Learn how to build what you say, around your brief notes.

Don’t try to learn set phrases before taking the test, as this will just sound false. But, do learn words and phrases that will prompt and guide you when planning your talk. One good way to practise is to record yourself. By making a plan, and then recording yourself for two minutes, you can see how much you need to write down to fill two minutes. Remember, only use headings in your planning notes. Don’t try to write full sentences; you simply won’t have the time.

Here’s a list of prompt words that you can use to help you prepare:

- **Introductory phrases** - when you start your talk:
  - I’m going to talk about...
  - I’d like to talk about...
  - I want to talk about...
  - What I’m going to talk about is...
  - I’m going to describe...

- **Developing phrases** - when you want to expand your argument:
  - First of all...
  - Secondly,...
  - Additionally,...
  - Another thing...
  - Another reason why...
  - What’s more,...

- **Background phrases** - when you want to add some detail:
  - It's near...
  - It happened...
  - It took place...
  - It’s been going on for/since...
  - At that time...
• Impression phrases - when you want to say something that made an impression on you:
  ▪ … impressed me
  ▪ … motivated me
  ▪ … moved me
  ▪ … disturbed me
  ▪ … touched me deeply
  ▪ … had an effect on me
  ▪ … affected me
  ▪ … influenced me.

• Things you like phrases - when you want to describe or talk about things you like:
  ▪ I like… most of all
  ▪ I enjoy…
  ▪ I love doing…
  ▪ I’m a big/great fan of…
  ▪ I’m really keen on…
  ▪ I’m so much into…
  ▪ … really appeals to me because…

You can also use synonyms of words which appear on the task card given to you by the Examiner. For example, if you see the word ‘benefits’, think of synonyms such as ‘payback’, ‘profit’, ‘advantages’, ‘positive aspects’ and so on. By using synonyms in this way, you’ll show the Examiner that you’re fluent in your use of English and that you’re capable of using extra words.

Try to prepare your own examples of synonyms for common words. A good method of doing this is making a list of common words and then, using a word processing package on a PC, making an equivalent list of synonyms.
Sample Topic One

Useful Vocabulary
Useful vocabulary and expressions

- turning point
- crucial (adj.)
- decisive (adj.)
- important (adj.)
- graduation (n.)
- marriage (n.)
- marry (v.)
- getting married
- divorce (n.)
- divorce (v.)
- birth (n.)
- promotion (n.)
- death (n.)
- die (v.)
- give up (n.)

I guess my second year at high school was a crucial year for me. 1999 was a turning point in my life. 2001 marked the beginning of my professional career. I was hired by a large company. I was accepted in university for a course in metallurgy. I got married in the summer and I moved to Tehran with my wife in September. I was promoted to sales manager in late November that year. In May, my first child was born and we named her Anahita. 2008 was a great year for me because I gave up smoking and started a new job. My father-in-law passed away in the winter and left us a sizable fortune! My father was diagnosed with cancer and we had to move into my parents’ house to look after him. I think the events of this year made me stronger emotionally. At the end of that year, I was on the road to success in my career. The financial accomplishments I had in 1998 helped me develop a better life for my family.

Talk about an important year in your life.
You should say:
- how old you were
- what important things you remember from that year
- where these things happened
- and say why you think that year was important.

Exam Remedy: Preparing Notes
In the second section you will have one minute to prepare. Use this time to prepare notes to support yourself during the talk. These notes must be very brief and only contain the main points of your answer.

You can use bullet lists to organise your ideas:

2000
- 18
- 1. Driving certificate-Eslami Institute
  2. Started university-Birjand
- 1. Could drive
  2. University is important
  3. Met my closest friend there
  4. started to live independently

Note: Avoid writing full sentences in your notes. Write keywords or phrases only.
Sample Topic Two

Useful Vocabulary
- ancient (adj.)
- historical (adj.)
- pre-historic (adj.)
- antique (adj.)
- palace (n.)
- castle (n.)
- fort (n.)
- amazing (adj.)
- breath-taking (adj.)
- impressive (adj.)
- tomb (n.)
- burial place
- ruins (n.)
- statue (n.)
- inscription (n.)
- monument (n.)
- west/east/south/north of Iran
- western/eastern/southern/northern parts of Iran
- It is located in the western province of Ilam.
- It is situated 20 kilometres to the west of Mashad, a major city in the northeast of Iran.
- It is in Naghshe Jahan square in the city of Isfahan.
- Its historical value is undeniable.
- Pasargad is definitely one of the most interesting historical sites in the region.
- Persepolis is a symbol of Iranian historical and cultural heritage.
- These inscriptions are remnants of the ancient Maad civilisation.

Describe an interesting historic place.
You should say:
- what it is
- where it is located
- what you can see there now
- and explain why this place is interesting

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions
- How do people in your country feel about protecting historic buildings?
- Do you think an area can benefit from having an interesting historic place locally? In what way?
- What do you think will happen to historic places or buildings in the future? Why?
- How were you taught history when you were at school?
- Are there other ways people can learn about history, apart from at school? How?
- Do you think history will still be a school subject in the future? Why?

Sample Answer Notes

Pasargad
- Burial place of King Cyrus
- 80km from Shiraz, S-Iran
- 1. Cyrus’s tomb
  2. Castle remains
- 1. Symbol of Iranian heritage
  2. Great king, yet very simple tomb
Shiraz is located in south-central Iran, about 920 kilometres south of Tehran.

I went there last summer to visit my uncle.

My trip to Tehran was of business nature.

I went there on business.

Isfahan is famous for Zayanderood, a beautiful river that runs through the city.

Shiraz is host to millions of visitors and tourists every year.

There are many museums to visit.

The people are very hospitable and friendly.

The restaurants are fantastic and the local cuisine is excellent.

What interested me most about this city was that it was very clean and orderly despite all the traffic.

I guess what I liked most about Tabriz was the weather.

Getting around was quite easy.

The city had a fantastic countryside with a river and many farms.

Describe a city you have visited which has impressed you.

You should say:

where it is located
why you visited it
what is there to see
and what you liked about it.

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions

What are the main facilities in a large modern city?
How do you compare a modern city with a small town?
Do you prefer to live in a large modern city? Why?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in large cities?
Why, in your opinion, do people migrate from small towns to large cities?
How stressful is life in large cities nowadays? Has this always been this way?
How do you think cities will change in the future?
Sample Topic Four

Useful Vocabulary

- novelist (n.)
- author (n.)
- popular (adj.)
- character (n.)
- detective (n.)
- crime (n.)
- thriller (v.)
- romance (n.)
- science-fiction (n.)
- fiction (n.)
- novel (n.)
- masterpiece (n.)
- contemporary (adj)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>major author</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My favourite author is Jules Verne, a French science-fiction writer who lived in the 19th century.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She usually wrote about human connections and relationships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His stories are mostly concerned with crime and criminals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She could develop highly-complicated characters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The plots are very exciting and thrilling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His stories are quite imaginable and convincing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reason why I’m a real fan of his is that he focused on delicate human emotions such as love.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this masterpiece, he describes the life of a British businessman in India.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The endings of his novels are fantastic and unpredictable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talk about your favourite writer (author).

Talk about:
- who he/she is
- what he/she usually writes about
- what his or her best work is
- and why you like this author.

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions

How interested are people in reading where you live?
How have the reading habits of people in your society changed in the past 20 years?
Do you think writers should be allowed to express their ideas in any way they desire?
Are people nowadays reading more books than they did before?
What kind of books do people mostly read in their free time in your country?
Does people’s interest in books change as they get older? How?
Sample Topic Five

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful Vocabulary</th>
<th>A commercial I enjoy watching is an ad for a new car from Ford.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>publicity (n.)</td>
<td>This commercial advertises a new toothbrush from Oral-B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commercial (n.)</td>
<td>Sanford is a privately-owned business and makes markers and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertisement (n.)</td>
<td>pens as well as other school or office stationary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ad (n.)</td>
<td>The commercial compares their product with ordinary products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promotion (n.)</td>
<td>from other companies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promote (v.)</td>
<td>The commercial demonstrates the capabilities of a new tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertise (n.)</td>
<td>The director has employed special effects and animation to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business (n.)</td>
<td>display the effects of this new product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plot (n.)</td>
<td>The plot is very amusing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private business</td>
<td>The comparison is made in a very interesting way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-profit organisation</td>
<td>This commercial has a moral lesson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe a TV commercial you like very much.

You should talk about:
- which business or organisation sponsors it
- what it is about
- whether it has been successful
- and why you like it very much.

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions

To what extent do you think people’s decisions are affected by advertisement through the mass media?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of advertising?
What should people do in order not to be deceived by misleading advertisements?
What kind of advertisement is the most popular where you live?
In your opinion, is enough attention paid to marketing in your country?
What are the most important marketing strategies in your country?
Sample Topic Six

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful Vocabulary</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>festival</td>
<td>It is held on the last Tuesday night of the Iranian year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>festivities</td>
<td>It is observed on the 30th of the Iranian month of Azar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celebration</td>
<td>This night marks the end of the winter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parade</td>
<td>This is the longest night of the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carnival</td>
<td>People go out to the streets and the countryside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party</td>
<td>People of all ages indulge in the festivities of the day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>firecrackers/crackers</td>
<td>Young people dance around, holding hands and chanting songs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fireworks</td>
<td>Bonfires are lit here and there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bonfire</td>
<td>It’s a day/night of national pride and happiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chant (n)</td>
<td>The reason why I like this day/night is that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chant (v)</td>
<td>I love this festival because...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I always find this a very delightful and enjoyable celebration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The reason why this festival holds such significance is that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The reason why this is such an important festival is that...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Describe a festival that is important in your country.**

You should say:
- when the festival occurs
- what you did during it
- what you like or dislike about it
- and explain why this festival is important.

**Part 3 (Discussion) Questions**

Why do you think festivals are important events in the working year?
Would you agree that the original significance of festivals is often lost today? Is it good or bad, do you think?
Do you think that new festivals will be introduced in the future? What kind?
What role do the media play in festivals, do you think?
Do you think it’s good or bad to watch festivals on TV? Why?
How may globalisation affect different festivals around the world?
Sample Topic Seven

Useful Vocabulary
- once
- when
- greatly
to some extent
in many ways
in a way
somehow
suddenly
nostalgic (adj.)
homesick (adj.)
happy
delighted/delighting
flattered/flattering
amazed/amazing
confused/confusing
depressed/depressing
embarrassed/embarrassing

One of the things I can remember most clearly is my first day at school. I remember once I was thrown out of the class for being mischievous.

One Friday morning, when I was 8 years old, my parents took me to the zoo. This happened about/nearly 20 years ago when I was 9. When I was at school, I used to chatter with my classmates during class time. I had barely learnt how to speak then. It was really frightening. I was quite frightened. This experience influenced my life in a number of ways. This incident greatly affected my later life.

Describe a memory of your childhood.
You should say:
when it happened
what exactly happened
whether you remember it as a pleasant or unpleasant memory
and explain how it affected your later life.

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions
What kinds of memories are more pleasant for people?
Are pleasant memories linked to anything special in people’s lives? How?
Does our interpretation of certain memories (such as incidents at school) change as we grow older?
How do memories affect our choices in our lives?
What kinds of memories can you remember more clearly? Is it the same for other people you know?
Why do people talk about their memories for others?
What kinds of memories do people tend to share with others? Why?
Are there any special events in your country where people talk about their memories for others? How?
### Sample Topic Eight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful Vocabulary</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stationary store</td>
<td>muzak (n.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoe store</td>
<td>promotion (n.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grocery store</td>
<td>sale (n.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothing store</td>
<td>bargain (v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boutique (n.)</td>
<td>bargain (n.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>florist (n.)</td>
<td>One of the stores I love to shop from is a small boutique, called “Rangarang”, which sells designer items and posh clothes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>downtown (n.)</td>
<td>There’s a nice grocery store about half a block from my house, which is one of my favourite places to shop at.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business district</td>
<td>The store has a beautiful decoration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shopping centre</td>
<td>The store interior is painted in blue and is decorated with stripes of coloured cloth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department store</td>
<td>The windows are full of colourful items like ties and shirts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chain store</td>
<td>The shopkeeper is very kind and tactful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shopping mall</td>
<td>The salespeople are polite and helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interior (n.)</td>
<td>I usually buy my groceries there every week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exterior (n.)</td>
<td>My family and I love to buy our clothes at this boutique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interior design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>windows (n. pl.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Talk about a favourite shop or store.**

You should say:

- where it is and what it looks like
- what it sells
- what you like to buy there
- and say why you like the shop so much.

### Part 3 (Discussion) Questions

How do people decide on where to shop from in your country?

How popular are department stores and malls in your country?

Why do people tend to shop from malls and supermarkets in large cities?

Are large supermarkets a threat to smaller shops? How?

What are the advantages of shopping from large department stores? Are there any disadvantages?

In what ways can shops improve their service quality?
Sample Topic Nine

Useful Vocabulary
Splendid (adj.)
exotic (adj.)
distant (adj.)
forest (n.)
beach (n.)
spa (n.)
sunny/windy/cloudy/warm
cold/cool/humid/snowy/foggy
snow-covered mountains
ski slopes
go skiing
play volleyball
relax (v.)
meditate (v.)
go fishing

go horseback riding
read books
go shopping
collect seashells

My best choice for a holiday resort is Kish Island in the Persian Gulf.
I usually travel to Sar-Eyn to spend my holidays.
It’s a 2-hour ride from Tabriz in Western Iran.
It’s located about 55 kilometres north of Tehran on the coast of the Caspian sea.
There are exotic beaches and the sun always shines.
The weather is splendid, usually warm and sunny all year round.
The slopes are usually covered with snow all winter long.
I often go there to relax.
We can go fishing and horseback riding all day long.

Talk about your favourite holiday resort.
You should say:
where it is
when you last visited there
what you can do there
and explain why you like this place very much.

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions
What sorts of holidaymakers tend to visit your country?
What are some of the major tourist attractions in your country?
What is the attitude of people in your country towards tourism and visitors from other countries?
How has the attitude of people in your country changed towards tourism in the past 20 years?
What are some of the advantages of tourism for local people? Are there any disadvantages?
How do you think international tourism can affect globalisation?
What are some of the consequences of travelling for foreign visitors to other countries?
What financial consequences do foreign visitors have on local economies?
Sample Topic Ten

Useful Vocabulary
Admire (v.)
respect (v.)
look up to (v.)
sceptical (adj.)
fabulous (adj.)
admireable (adj.)
approve of (v.)
make great friends
study (v.)
review lessons
watch films
go shopping
chat (v.)
talk on the phone

Sanaz has been one of my best friends for the past three years. I have known Mehdi for about fifteen years. My parents initially were sceptical about her, but as they got to know her more, they started to like her too. My parents look up to him very much and approve of our friendship.

He is a wonderful friend and a brilliant student. We usually get together to review and study university lessons. We like to chat on the phone every now and then to catch up on each other.

We go hiking and mountain climbing together on holydays. I admire her very much for a number of reasons. The reason why I respect him is that he has always been very hardworking and responsible in his career.

Describe a friend whom you admire very much.
Talk about:
how long you have known him or her
whether your parents like him or her too
what you do together
and explain what is very admirable about him or her.

Part 3 (Discussion) Questions

What do you think are the most important qualities for friends to have?
Which are more important to people, their family or their friends? Why?
What do you think causes friendship to break up?
What other types of relationship, apart from friends or family, are important in people’s lives today?
Have relationships with neighbours where you live changed in recent years? How?
How important do you think it is for a person to spend some time alone? Why/Why not?
Part 3 – Two-way discussion

The last part of the test is where you and the Examiner have a discussion linked to the subject from Part 2. There is no set format to this part of the test and the Examiner is free to develop conversation as he/she sees fit. Again, the Examiner isn’t trying to catch you out. However, an Examiner will want to do things such as invite you to comment and expand on a theme.

Remember that the Examiner asks you a range of questions to encourage you to speak English.

Again, remember that this part of the test only lasts for four to five minutes. This means that the Examiner can only really ask you some six to eight questions. So, don’t panic!

Here are some hints to help you:

- Listen carefully to the Examiner’s questions.
- Try to be fluent and only correct yourself when it’s easy to do so.
- Don’t focus on your mistakes; move on.
- Try to go into detail when you explain your opinion.
- Give reasons for what you say.
- Keep to the topic.
- If you don’t understand the question, ask for it to be repeated. Never answer a question you don’t understand.
- Don’t worry if you have to make up an answer. You are being marked on your ability to speak English, not the truth of the content!
- Don’t speak quickly or slowly just speak clearly.
- Concentrate on the message you are trying to give.
- Don’t worry about saying too much! The Examiner will stop you if he/she wants to.
- When you say something, try to qualify it and expand it to support your opinion or reason.
- Don’t overuse words such as ‘actually’, ‘moreover’, ‘what is more’ and so on. This will come across as padding and won’t demonstrate your use of English.
- If you have time for a conclusion try saying something like: ‘…and so I …’
- Follow the Examiner’s lead. He/she might change direction quickly by asking an unexpected question for you to comment on. For example: What about...? Here, you might answer something like: ‘Well, that’s possible, but I think that…’
- Don’t try to use one breath to say everything. Pace yourself! Listen to how other people speaking English pace themselves during speech. You will find it useful to listen to spoken English, such as on radio programmes, to see how this is achieved.
Ideas for IELTS Topics
Common IELTS Topics

1. Advertising
2. Animal Rights: testing on animals, vegetarianism, zoos
3. Cities: urbanisation, problems of city life
4. Crime: police, punishments/prisons, rehabilitation, capital punishment
5. Education: studying abroad, technology in education, education in developing countries, higher education, home-schooling, bad behaviour, corporal punishment, single sex education, streaming (grouping children according to ability)
6. Environment: global warming, impact of humans on the environment, solutions to environment problems, waste/rubbish, litter, recycling, nuclear power
7. Family: family size, working parents, negative effects on children, divorce, care for old people
8. Gender: gender and education, gender and work, women’s and men’s role in the family
9. Genetic Engineering: positives, negatives, genetically modified foods
10. Global Issues: problems in developing countries, how to help developing countries, immigration, multicultural societies, globalisation
11. Government and Society: what governments can do, public services, censorship, video cameras in public places
12. Guns and Weapons: gun ownership and possession, police and guns, nuclear weapons, armed forces
13. Health: diet, exercise, state health systems, private healthcare, alternative medicine, stress
14. Housing and Architecture: state housing, old buildings, modern/green buildings
15. International Language: English as an international language
16. Money: money and society, consumerism
17. Personal Development: happiness, success, nature or nurture
18. Sport and Leisure: professional/competitive sport, sport salaries, sport and politics
19. Tourism: positives, negative effects on environment, future of tourism
20. Traditions and Modern Life: losing traditional skills, traditional customs
21. Transport: traffic problems and solutions, public transport, road safety
22. Television, Internet and Mobile Phones: positives and negatives, Internet compared to newspapers and books
23. Water: importance of clean water, water supply, water should be free, bottled water
24. Work: same job for life, self-employment, unemployment, work/life balance, technology and work, child labour
1. Advertising

Positives of Advertising
Advertising is a key part of modern business
Companies need to tell customers about their products
Advertisements inform us about the choices we have
Advertising is a creative industry that employs many people
Without advertising we would have less choice
Without advertising there would be higher unemployment
Advertising is a form of modern art
People enjoy adverts

Negatives of Advertising
Advertising manipulates people
It aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier
Advertisers focus on selling a brand image
They use glamorous, successful people
We now live in a consumer culture
We are persuaded to follow the latest trend
We are encouraged to associate certain brands with a higher status
Advertisers often aim their marketing at children
Children can easily be influenced by advertisements.
Children put pressure on parents to buy them things

Opinions about Advertising
Advertising should be regulated
Advertising aimed at children should be controlled or even banned
Unhealthy foods should not be marketed in a way that attracts children
Products that can be risk to healthy should display warnings
In some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television
Warnings must be displayed on cigarette packets
However, advertising is necessary in free market economies
It creates demand for products
Governments should only censor false information or products that are harmful

2. Animal rights

Arguments for Animal Testing
Animals are used in important scientific research
It is necessary to do medical tests on new drugs
Animal testing helps to advance medical and scientific knowledge
Many important medical discoveries involved experimentation on animals
Researchers aim to minimize the suffering that animals experience. Testing for the cosmetics industry is now banned in many countries.

**Arguments against Animal Testing**

The benefits of research using animals do not justify the suffering caused.
The lives of animals should be respected.
Humans have no moral right to do experiments on animals.

**Arguments for Vegetarianism**

Vegetarians do not eat foods that are produced by killing animals.
Many people choose a vegetarian diet for moral or health reasons.
A healthy diet is possible without eating meat.
It is unnecessary to kill animals for food.
A vegetarian diet may reduce the risk of disease like cancer.
Many people question the treatment of animals in factory farms.

**Arguments against Vegetarianism**

Vegetarians do not eat a balanced diet.
In many cultures, meat is the main ingredient in traditional meals.
Meat-eaters argue that animals are below humans in the food chain.
It is completely natural for us to kill them for food.
Our aim should be to improve farming methods.
Farms should produce organic food.

**Positives of Zoos**

Zoos play an important role in wildlife conservation.
They can help to protect endangered species.
Zoos allow scientists to study animals and their behaviour.
Zoos are educational, interesting and fun.
Children, in particular, enjoy learning about animals.
Zoos provide job opportunities.

**Negatives of Zoos**

Zoo animals are kept in artificial environments.
They are kept in cages or have limited space.
Zoo animals rely on humans.
They lose the freedom to hunt for food.
They best way to save endangered species is by protecting natural habitats.
Some people believe that zoos are unethical.
Zoos exhibit animals with the aim of making money.
We have no right to use animals for entertainment and profit.

3. **Cities**
Reasons for Urbanization

People move to cities in search of job opportunities
Cities offer greater employment possibilities and a higher standard of living
People migrate to cities from the countryside
Traditional activities like farming need fewer workers nowadays

Negatives of City Life

Life in cities has its drawbacks
The cost of living is higher than in rural areas
Some people do not manage to find work
Housing is usually much more expensive
Homelessness and poverty are common on cities
There is a gap between rich and poor
Life in cities can be extremely stressful
There are problems like traffic congestion and crime
Cities lack a sense of community
People do not even know their neighbor
Cities are sometimes described as “concrete jungles”.

Pedestrian Areas

Pedestrian zones in city centre can improve the local environment
Banning cars encourages people to walk or cycle
Many European cities have built bicycle lanes
Dependence on cars is linked to health problems like obesity
People who walk or cycle regularly are generally healthier
Pedestrian areas are safer and more attractive for both residents and tourists

4. Crime

Police and Crime Prevention

The job of the polices is to catch criminals
They must also prevent crime and make communities safer
There should be an increase in the number of police officers on the streets
Police officers should be seen as part of the community
They should be involved with education and prevention
The police should be in close contact with schools
They should focus on young people who have dropped out of school.
These teenagers may become involved with gangs

Punishments/Prisons

Fines are used as punishment for minor crimes
If the crime is more serious, prison is the most common punishment
Some criminals pose a threat to society
They are put in prison to ensure the safety of other citizens

**Negatives of Prisons**

Criminals are put together
They make friends with other offenders
Many prisoners re-offend when they are released
A criminal record makes finding a job more difficult

**Rehabilitation**

Another aim of prisons is rehabilitation
Prisoners receive education of vocational training
Prisoners should learn personal skills and specific job skills
Punishment could make prisoners’ behavior worse
Rehabilitation aims to make them better citizens
Rehabilitated prisoners are less likely to re-offend

**Capital punishment**

Supporters say that capital punishment deters crime
Fear of the death penalty stops people from committing offences
The death penalty shows that crime is not tolerated
It is a form of revenge
The cost of imprisonment is avoided
The offender cannot pose a threat to others

**Against Capital Punishment**

Innocent people could be wrongly convicted and executed
Crime rates are not necessarily reduced
Many criminals do not think they will be caught
Capital punishment is not a good deterrent
Executing prisoners creates a violent culture and encourages revenge
We have no right to take another human life

**Community service**

Community service is a way to reform offenders
It could be a solution to prison overcrowding
It avoids the cost of imprisonment
It makes offenders useful in their local communities
They are required to clean streets or talk to school groups
Offenders repay their community
They avoid the negative influence that prison can have
Against community service

Community service is not a sufficient punishment
Criminals should be locked up, away from their victims

Crime in the Media

Crime is one of the main subjects of most news programs.
The mass media focus on violent and sensational crimes
This lead to fear of crime among the public
Sensational stories attract more viewers or readers
The media report crime stories in order to increase their audience

5. Education

Benefits of education

Education gives people knowledge and skills
People with qualification are more likely to find work
They can earn a higher salary
They can contribute positively to society
Schools aim to teach young people moral values such as tolerance and sharing
Schools prepare children to be members of a society

Benefits of Studying Abroad

Foreign institutions may offer better courses
Many students want to attend a prestigious university
The best universities employ teachers who are experts in their fields
Qualifications gained abroad can open the door to better job opportunities
Living abroad can broaden students’ horizons
Overseas students are exposed to different cultures and customs.
They become more independent
They are responsible for cooking, cleaning and paying bills
They will learn a foreign language

Drawback of studying abroad

Living and studying abroad can be difficult
Students have problems with paperwork such as visa applications
The language barrier can be a problem
Students have to find accommodation and pay bills
Studying in a foreign language is challenging
Living alone in an unfamiliar culture can cause homesickness

Technology in Education: Advantages

Technology is a powerful tool to engage students
Technology can make lessons much more interesting
Students can do research using online resources
Students can study at their own place
Adults can take distance learning courses
Students can study whenever and wherever they want
Students also learn skills which are useful for their future jobs
For example, they learn to write reports using a word processor

Technology in Education: Disadvantages

People rely too much on computers
Young learners do not become proficient in some basic skills
They use word processors and spelling may suffer
People should be able to write a letter by hand
Technology is no substitute for a real teacher
Learners need a structured course
An experienced teacher knows what materials to choose
Computers are expensive to maintain and can be unreliable

Technology in Education: Opinion

Institutions should supplement traditional teaching with the use of technology
Technology is part of everyday life
It can enhance a teacher’s lessons
Students can use online resources to help with homework
Students must still learn to write by hand
They should still use traditional sources of information such as books

Education in Developing countries: Problems

Children often have to work from an early age
There are no schools in many areas
Families do not have access to books or computers
Literacy rates are often low
People in developing countries need knowledge and skills
Education is the key to improving the economy of these countries

Education in developing countries: solutions

Developed countries could help developing nations by providing money
They could invest in schools and technology
They could supply the funds to build schools and pay for teachers
Children need to have access to free schooling
Computer equipment could be donated
The Internet can expose students to a world of knowledge and information
Governments should make education compulsory for all children
They should encourage parents to send their children to school
Governments of developed and developing countries must work together

Higher education: Advantages (also see “benefits of education“)

There are many benefits to going to university
A degree can open the door to better employment prospects
Economies are becoming increasingly knowledge-based
Most jobs require specific knowledge and skills
Skilled workers are needed for sectors such as information technology and engineering
Repetitive manual jobs are now done by machine
Many factories have moved to developing countries

Higher education: Disadvantages

A healthy economy needs a wide range of workers
Some manual workers will always be needed
A university degree is not necessary for many service professions
Practical training is more important in some industries
In the UK, for example, there is currently a shortage of plumbers
Their services are therefore becoming more and more expensive

Advantage of Home-schooling

Some parents decide to educate their children at home
Some families live in isolated areas with poor transport
Other parents are not satisfied with local schools
Parents can respond to what their children need and how they learn best
One-to-one lessons allow much faster progress
The child can work at his or her own pace
Discipline problems are avoided by home-schooling

Disadvantages of home-schooling

Most parents do not have the time to educate their children at home
One parent would need to give up work
School subjects are normally taught by up to ten different teachers
Most parents do not have the necessary knowledge or resources
Private tutors are expensive
Children will miss out on the social experience that school offers
At school, children learn how to get on with each other
Home-schooled children may lack social skills
Schools offer a better overall educational experience

Bad behaviour in schools: causes

Bad behaviour is due to a lack of structure and discipline
There are too many children in some classes
Large classes are difficult to manage
May disruptive students come from an unstable family background
Other parents are too lenient and spoil their children
Some children are used to getting whatever they want
Schools can do very little if they are not supported by parents

**Bad behaviour in schools: solutions**

Schools need a clear code of conduct
Schools need a clear set of rules about behaviour
They need to create a positive working atmosphere
Teachers must have the power to punish disruptive students
Schools should remove difficult children from lessons
Schools need to work closely with parents
Discipline could be lacking at home
Parents must support the school rules
They should take responsibility for their children’s behaviour

**Corporal Punishment: Opinion**

Corporal Punishment is not a good idea
Physical punishment is a way of controlling children using fear
This does not promote trust between adults and children
Children who are punished physically may become shy or resentful
Corporal punishment creates an atmosphere of fear and anger

**Single Sex Education: Advantages**

Some people believe that male and female students should go to separate schools
This is often for religious or cultural reasons
Discipline problems might be avoided by separating boys and girls
Boys and girls may learn in different ways and have different needs
Student at single-sex schools often get better exam grades.

**Single-sex Education: Disadvantages**

Separating boys and girls is unnecessary
It is unhealthy in terms of children’s social development
Many coeducational schools are extremely successful
A mixed-sex environment is more representative of real life
Coeducational schools provide children with better social skills for adult life

**Advantages of Streaming (grouping children according to ability)**

Some schools separate students according to their academic ability
Teachers can work at the right speed for their students
Teachers can plan more suitable lessons
High-level groups may progress faster
Lower level groups can benefit from a slower pace
Some teachers and parents support streaming for these reasons

Disadvantages of Streaming

Grouping by ability may have a negative impact on students
Children do not want to be seen as less intelligent than others
Streaming could damage students’ self-esteem
They may lose motivation
Students from wealthier families tend to be better prepared
Children from poorer families may receive less support from parents
Mixed ability classes encourage everyone to achieve their potential.

6. Environment

Global warming

Gases such as carbon dioxide trap heat from the sun
This causes global temperatures to rise
This process is known as the greenhouse effect
Human activity is a major factor in the rise of the greenhouse gases
Factories and vehicles produce emissions and exhaust fumes
Many developing countries are becoming industrialized
The number of cars on our streets is growing
Cheap air travel is allowing more people to fly

Effects of Global Warming

Global warming will have a significant impact on our planet
Rising temperature will cause melting of the polar ice caps
Sea levels will rise
We can expect more extreme weather conditions
Flooding and droughts may become more common

Impacts of humans on the environment

The increasing world population is putting pressure on natural resources
Fossil fuels like oil and gas are running out
We are destroying wildlife habitats
We have cut down enormous areas of rainforest
This has led to the extinction of many species of animals and plants

Solutions to environment problems

Governments could introduce laws to limit emissions from factories
They should invest in renewable energy from solar, wind or water power
They could impose “green taxes” on drivers and airlines companies
Government campaigns should promote recycling
Natural areas and wild animals should be protected
Individuals should also try to be greener
We should take fewer flights abroad for holidays
We should take public transport rather than driving
We should choose products with less packaging
We should recycle as much as possible

**Waste/rubbish**

The amount of waste we produce has increased
This problem is a result of our consumer culture
Products are not made to last
If something breaks, we throw it away and buy a new one
Advertisers encourage us to buy the newest fashions
Packaging is an important part of selling
Most foods are sold in non-biodegradable plastics packaging
The amount of household waste is growing
This waste ends up in landfill sites

**Litter**

People do not think about the consequences of dropping rubbish
They assume that somebody is paid to clean the streets
Plastic packaging does not break down easily
Most of the litter seen on streets is fast food packaging

**Recycling and other solutions**

Companies should make goods that last longer
They should not use so much packaging
Governments should be stricter, about waster produced by companies
They should put legal limits on packaging
Consumers should avoid buying over-packaged products
We should recycle and reuse useful materials.
There are collection banks for glass, paper and plastic bottles
Households can use several rubbish bins to separate waste
Recycling saves energy and raw materials.

**Nuclear Power: Positives**

There are several benefits to build more nuclear power stations
Fossil fuel like oil and gas are running out
Nuclear power is a sustainable energy source
It can be used to produce electricity without wasting natural resources
It could be replace the use of natural resources like coal, oil or gas
Nuclear power stations are cleaner than fossil fuel power stations
They could help to reduce carbon emissions that cause global warming
The risks of accidents are being reduced

**Nuclear Power: negatives**

Opponents of nuclear power worry about the safety of power stations
The building of new nuclear power stations is unpopular
Nobody wants to live near one
Nuclear waste disposal is a significant problem
There is currently no way to decontaminate radioactive material
People worry that terrorists could steal radioactive materials
It is safer to produce energy from solar, wind or water power.

7. **Family**

**Family size**
Families in many countries are not as large as they used to be
We tend to live in small nuclear families rather than large extended families
Parents tend to have fewer children
Young children are no longer expected to work
Nowadays both parents often work
It costs so much to bring children up
It is more difficult to raise a large family

**Working parents (also see “gender” topic)**
Children and their parents seem to be less close nowadays
Parents spend less time with their children
Women traditionally stayed at home to cook, clean and look after children
Nowadays both parents often work full time
Children may be left alone, or with nannies or babysitters
Busy parents have less contact with their children
Many families no longer eat meals together
Children spend more time with friends or surfing the Internet

**Negative effects on Children**
The lack of closeness in families can have a negative effect on children
Many parents have no idea how their children spend their time
Friends, television and the Internet become the main influence on children’s behavior
Teenagers are influenced by peer pressure
Some of them join gangs
Juvenile delinquency is on the increase
Parents should be more involved with their children’s upbringing
Young people need positive role models

**Divorce**
In the past, divorce was unacceptable
It was considered to be embarrassing for a family
People stayed together for religious or family reasons
Divorce is more socially acceptable nowadays
It has become much more common
Divorce can be extremely stressful
Lone parents may face financial difficulties
Many single parents have to rely on benefits paid by the state
Divorce can have a negative effect on children
Children from single-parent families are more likely to get lower grades or drop out of school.
The rise in divorce rates may be connected to some social problems

**Care for Old people**
Caring for elderly people was traditionally the responsibility of families
Adults had to look after their elderly parents
A woman’s job was to stay at home taking care of her family
Nowadays, fewer elderly people are looked after by their relatives
Residential homes provide care for large number of elderly people
Some families are unable to look after elderly relatives
Families tend to be smaller these days, and women often have full-time jobs
Cares homes provide a professional service for senior citizens
Nurses are better trained than family members

**Care for Old people: Opinion**
The best form of care for the elderly depends on the family situation
It depends on whether family members have the time resources
We all have a responsibility towards the older people in our society
Governments should invest money in facilities and training for care workers.

8. **Gender**

**Gender and education**
Men and women should have access to the same educational opportunities
Males and females should be accepted onto courses according to their abilities
It is wrong to discriminate against students because of their gender
Gender should be irrelevant in education
Student’s achievements should depend on hard work and individual merit
In the UK, there are similar numbers of male and female students in higher education

**Gender and work**
Men and women should have access to the same professional opportunities
Both man and women should be able to pursue a career
They should earn equal salaries
They should be employed according to their abilities, qualifications and experience
Traditionally women have been restricted to certain roles
They were often employed as secretaries or receptionists
Nowadays, a range of occupations is available to both sexes
Career success depends on individual merit

**Women’s and Men’s roles in the Family**
Some people argue that a mother should not work
She should stay at home and bring up her children
The father should be the breadwinner of the family
Others believe that both parents should share these responsibilities
Working women can take maternity leave during and after pregnancy
Many mothers continue to work after this period
Many fathers and mothers share their parenting and domestic responsibilities
They contribute equally to childcare, cooking and cleaning
Some women may have better career prospects than their husbands.
Paternity leave and “househusbands” are becoming more common
Traditional gender roles and gradually changing
Families can divide roles and responsibilities in the most convenient way.

9. **Genetic Engineering**
   **Positives of genetic engineering**
   Genetic engineering is the practice of manipulating the genes of an organism
   It is used to produce crops that are more resistant to insects and diseases
   Some genetically modified crops grow more quickly
   Some drugs and vaccines are produced by genetic engineering
   It may become possible to change human’s genetic characteristics.
   Scientists may use genetic engineering to cure diseases.
   Inherited illnesses would no longer exist
   Genes could be changed before a baby is born
   It could also be possible to clone human organs
   We could all have replacement body parts
   Humans could live longer, healthier lives

   **Negatives of genetic engineering**
   There are ethical concerns about human genetic engineering
   Parents might want to choose their children’s characteristics
   This would be unnatural
   It would be unacceptable in most religions
   Soldiers could be cloned from the genes of the strongest people
   Clones might be used like robots to do certain jobs
   Clones might even be developed just for organ replacements
   Society and human evolution would change completely
   Currently, human genetic engineering is prohibited

   **Genetically-Modified (GM) foods: Advantages**
   Farmers can produce crops that grow bigger and faster
   Some GM crops are more resistant to disease or insects
This could be important for food production in developing countries
Faster growing cereals, fruit and vegetables will mean more profit
GM foods can be modified to look perfect
They may be more attractive to customers

**Genetically-Modified (GM) Foods: Disadvantages**
There may be risks involved in the genetic engineering of foods.
GM crops might change whole ecosystems
Food chains could be broken if crops are resistant to predators
Organic foods are produced without chemicals or genetic modification
Organic farming may be slower and more expensive
However, the environment is not damaged by fertilizers or pesticides.

10. Global issues
   **Problems in developing countries**
   Developing countries face a range if problems
   Standards of healthcare and education are low
   Life expectancy is usually lower than in developed countries
   There is a lack of infrastructure, employment and good quality housing
   Many people are forced to live in poverty
   Food, drinking water and basic medicines are in short supply

   **How to help developing countries**
   The best form of help for developing countries is development aid
   Richer nations can help by investing in long-term projects
   Governments and charities can help by building new houses and schools
   Globalization may also help developing countries
   Multi-national companies can creating jobs in developing countries
   On the other hand, many people emigrate to find work in richer countries
   They often send money back home to their families
   This money helps to improve the standard of living in developing countries

   **Immigration**
   Some people move to another countries in search of a better life
   Many immigrants come from less developed countries
   Richer, industrialized countries may offer opportunities for employment
   Free healthcare and schooling are available in some developed countries
   Other people migrate to a foreign country to improve their academic qualifications

   **Positives of immigration and Multi-cultural societies**
   From an economic perspective, immigration can be extremely positive
   Many immigrants have skills that are needed in the country they move to
   Immigrants who find work contribute to the economy of their new country
   Many immigrants send money home to help family members
Immigration also creates cultural diversity
People of many different nationalities learn to live together
This can help people to become more open-minded and tolerant

**Negatives of Immigration**
Some people believe that immigrants take jobs that should go to local people
Some immigrant workers work longer hours for less money
Companies might pay lower salaries to immigrant workers
Unemployment rates could rise if there are too many immigrants

**Opinions about Immigration**
Immigration can help the economy of a country
It can create multi-cultural societies
However, immigration needs to be controlled
In many countries, immigrants need visas or work permit
Governments should stop companies from exploiting immigrant workers
Foreign and local workers should have the right to equal pay and conditions

**Positives of Globalization**
Business of becoming increasingly international
Multi-national companies do business across the world
Companies like MacDonald’s can be seen on high streets in most cities
Goods are produced in one country and sold in many others
A global economy means free trade between countries
This can strengthen political relationships
Globalization can also create opportunities for employment
It encourages investment in less developed countries
It could reduce poverty in the developing world

**Negatives of Globalization**
Globalization is not always beneficial to everyone
Companies can move to countries where labour is cheap
This creates redundancies, or job losses
Employees cannot be confident that they have stable jobs
Companies sometimes exploit their employees in developing countries
Global trade creates more waste and pollution

**The future of Globalization**
There should be global regulations for salaries and working conditions
Governments should impose laws to protect the environment

11. **Government and Society**
What governments can do
Governments provide public services like healthcare and education
They support people who are living in poverty or unable to work
Governments raise money by taxing working people
They can spend money on resources and campaigns
They can introduce new laws
They can impose taxes
They can raise people’s awareness of issues (e.g climate change/healthy eating)
They can influence people’s habits and opinions
They can create jobs
They can regulate the activities of companies such as banks
They can provide resources for schools
They are also responsible for the security and well-being of their citizens
They control armed forces and police forces

Public services
Governments pay the salaries of public sector workers like police officers and teachers
The necessary money is raised by taxing people’s income
Free education and healthcare may be provided by the state
Some governments control public transport systems and even TV channels
In other countries, these services are provided by private companies
Some people believe that competition between private companies is good
It helps to improve quality while bringing prices down
Other people think that essential services should be free
Governments should pay for them

Censorship: Opinion
Governments can censor what public sees or reads in the media
To a certain extent censorship is necessary
We should use censorship to protect children from violent images
Some computer games involve killing people or committing crimes
The Internet also needs to be controlled
Many websites show pornography and violence
There should be age limits for websites and computers games
Parents need to take responsibility for checking what their children watch
It is impossible for governments to control everything we see

Video cameras in public places
The use of CCTV is becoming widespread
Video cameras have been installed in many public places
They are supposed to protect us and deter criminals
Many people think that this surveillance violates our privacy
The authorities could build databases with our pictures and identities
We should not be treated like criminals
Smart cards: Positives
Governments will probably introduce a digital identification card system
Smart cards will have benefits and drawbacks
They could help to reduce crime
They could hold personal information, such as DNA
Digital bank cards could contain fingerprint information
It would be very difficult for criminals to use a stolen card
It would be easier for police to identify people and catch criminals

Smart cards: Negatives
Many people are worried about losing their privacy
Governments could store all our personal and medical information
This information could be used by insurance companies
Employers could check our health records

People with Disabilities
People with disabilities should be treated the same as everybody else
They should have the same rights as other people
They should have access to the same jobs as other citizens
Discriminations against disabled people is illegal in many countries
Ramps and lifts for wheelchairs should be installed in public buildings
Support teacher can be employed to help children with learning difficulties

12. Guns and Weapons
Why guns should be legal:
In some countries, people are allowed to own firearms
Individuals have the right to protect themselves
People can use guns in self defence
This deters criminals

Why gun ownership should be illegal:
There is a risk of accidents with guns
The number of violent crimes increases when guns are available
Criminals may be armed
The police then need to use guns
Suicide rates have been shown to rise when guns are available
Guns create violent societies with high murder rates

Why polices should use guns
Many criminals use weapons
The threat of a gun can deter criminals
Police officers can forces a criminal to surrender
It is easier to arrest someone and avoid physical violence
The police may shoot violent criminals in self defence
They can protect the public
They can shoot an escaping criminal who poses a serious danger to the public

**Why police should not carry guns**
There is a risk of accidents and mistakes
The police might shoot an unarmed criminal or an innocent person
Accidents can happen in public places
There are several alternatives to guns (e.g. tear gas, sprays and electric shock weapons)
Only special police units should use guns

**Arm Trade: Positives**
The export of arms, or weapons, is an extremely controversial issue
Governments of rich, industrialized countries sell arms to each other
This industry creates jobs and wealth
The trade of weapons may improve relationships between governments

**Arm Trade: Negatives**
Weapons may be used in conflicts and wars
The supply of arms could be responsible for deaths
Governments are promoting war in order to make a profit
Rich countries can influence the politics of other nations

**Nuclear weapons**
Nuclear weapons are capable of destroying whole cities
A nuclear war between two countries would destroy both countries
Nuclear weapons are used as a deterrent
They prevent wars from starting

**Nuclear weapons: Opinion**
Nuclear weapons should be prohibited
Governments should limit the production of nuclear weapons
There is a danger of nuclear weapons being obtained by terrorists
Nuclear weapons cannot be used against terrorist organizations

**Armed Forces: Positives**
Armed forces provide security and protection
They deter military attack by another country
They can also be sued to maintain peace within countries
They can be sued to give the police extra support
Soldiers are also used to help in emergency situations, such as after a natural disaster

**Armed forces: Negatives**
Armies require a lot of funding from governments
Too much money is spent on weapons and military technology
This money could be spent on schools, hospitals and other public services
13. Health

Diet
The human body requires a balanced diet
An unhealthy diet can cause various health problems
Obesity, diabetes and heart disease are on the increase
Many people nowadays rely on fast food or pre-prepared meals
These foods often contain too much fat, salt and sugar
They are cheap to buy and very easy to prepare
Many young people have grown up on a diet of convenience foods
Populations in developed countries are increasingly overweight

Exercise
Regular exercise is essential in maintaining a healthy body
Exercise burns calories and helps to build healthy bones and muscles
Doctors advise exercising at least three times a week for 20 minutes
Most people nowadays lead a sedentary lifestyle
We tend to walk less and do desk jobs
Most adults relax by watching television
Children play video games rather than doing outdoor sports
In the past, people were more active in their jobs and at home

Government’s Role
Governments have a significant role to play in reducing obesity
More and more people, including young children are seriously overweight
They are at risk of heart disease and diabetes
This situation will increase the burden on hospitals and taxpayers
Hospitals rely on the government for money and resources
Governments should promote a healthy diet and regular exercise
There should be more time for sports on school timetables
Unhealthy junk food should be banned from school menus
People need information about what foods contain
Food packaging must show the food’s nutritional content
The British Government recommends eating five portions of fruit and vegetables per day

State Health system: advantages
Good healthcare should be available to everyone for free
State healthcare is paid by the government using money from taxes
Everyone has access to the same quality of care and treatment
Private healthcare is unfair because only wealthy people can afford it
The National Health Service in the UK provides free healthcare for every resident

Private Healthcare: advantages
State hospitals are often very large and difficult to run
Private hospitals have shorter waiting lists for operations and appointments
Patients can benefit from faster treatment
Many people prefer to pay for more a personal service
Patients have their own room and more comfortable facilities

**Alternative medicine: Positives**
People are increasingly using alternative medicines to treat illnesses.
For example, acupuncture can be used to treat backache
Herbal medicines can be used to treat allergies or viruses
Many patients report positive experiences with these treatments
Some traditional cures have been used for hundreds of years

**Alternative medicine: Negatives**
Many alternative medicines have not been tested scientifically
They may have no beneficial effect at all
They may cause unknown side effects
People should trust the opinions of qualified doctors
An illness could get worse without treatment from a doctor

**Stress**
Modern lifestyles are increasingly stressful
People work long hours with strict deadlines
Our busy lifestyles mean we have less time to relax
Unemployment is a major cause of stress
Children may be affected by their parents’ relationship problems
Tests and exams can also cause stress

**How to reduce stress**
Stress can be reduced by taking regular exercise and eating a healthy diet
It is also important to get sufficient sleep and make leisure time a priority
People should work less overtime and take regular holidays
Schools have started to employ psychologists
They can offer emotional support to students
They can help students to cope with exam stress

14. **Housing and Architecture**

**State/council housing**
In some countries the government provides state or council housing
This helps people who cannot afford to buy their own house
It can be argued that state housing creates dependence on the government
People should be rely on the government to look after them
People have no incentive to earn money and buy their own home
Council properties are often made with cheap, poor-quality materials.

**Old Buildings**
Historic buildings are part of a country’s heritage
They should be protected
Old buildings are often considered to be works or art
They give character to cities and attract tourists
They show us how people lived in the past
We identify countries by architectural symbols like the pyramids in Egypt
Governments should spend money on looking after historic buildings
They need regular repairs and maintenance
New buildings should be designed to complement them

Modern/green buildings
Modern buildings should be designed to be environmentally friendly
They should use less energy and produce less waste
Modern insulation can make houses more energy-efficient
Solar and wind power can be used to generate electricity
Rainwater and waste water can be recycled and used to flush toilets.
Modern glass buildings take advantage if natural light

15. Language

English as an international language
English is widely used around the world
It is becoming a global second language
It is the dominant language of technology, science and international business
International business meetings are regularly held in English
The most important textbooks and journals are published in English
The ability to speak English is a necessary skill in the modern world

Negative of English as an International Language
If one language is dominant, other languages may disappear
The dominant language brings its own culture
American culture has become popular around the world
Other cultures may be damaged
As an alternative to English, a new global language could be invented
It would have no nationality or culture attached to it
This could help to promote international peace and understanding
Esperanto is an example of a language that was invented with this aim

16. Money

Money and Society
Society has become increasingly materialistic
People aspire to earn more money
They want a bigger house or a better car
We connect wealth and material possessions with happiness and success
Brands like “Armani” or “Mercedes” are status symbols
Advertising creates new desires and needs
It persuades us to buy the latest styles

**Positives of Consumerism**
Consumerism creates employment
It helps to reduce poverty
It encourages innovation and creativity in business
We live in a global economy
We have a better quality of life

**Negatives of Consumerism**
Consumerist societies create more waste
They use more natural resources
They cause damage to the environment
Consumerism creates a “throw-away” culture
Advertisers tell us who we are and what we want
Wealth does not lead to happiness
Materialism causes greed and crime
We should return to traditional values like sharing

17. **Personality**

**Happiness**
Happiness means different things to different people
It can be described as a feeling of pleasure or enjoyment
People enjoy spending time with family and friends
Hobbies, sports and games can be a source of fun and enjoyment
Some people see money as a source of happiness
Other people define happiness as something deeper
In order to be truly happy it is necessary to live a good life
We need to feel that we are doing something useful with our lives
Some people get a sense of achievement from their work
Others find happiness in bringing up their children
Religion or a sense of purpose can also be a source of happiness

**Success**
People define success in different ways
Some people get a sense of achievement from raising a family
For others, success is defined by wealth or status
We often think of rich and famous people as being successful in life
Millionaires like Bill Gates are considered to be successful
They have risen to the top in their chosen professions
For some, being successful means achieving personal or professional goals
They see success as the result of hard work
Success in any field requires long-term planning and effort
Nature or Nurture
Some people believe that our personalities are determined mainly by genetics
We inherit our abilities and talents from our parents
Others think that our education and upbringing are more important
We develop according to the influences around us
Our personalities and achievements depend more on nurture than nature
Many people argue that we control our own destinies
We can shape our own personalities
By working hard we can achieve and goal that we put our minds to
Many successful people are “self-made”
We are not limited by our genetic characteristic or upbringing

18. Sport and Leisure

Arguments against Professional/competitive sport
Sport has become a business
Professional sport encourages people to compete for money
Many sports stars are only concerned about money and fame
Some athletes take drugs in order to win at any cost
Competitors are often selfish and rude
They are not good role models for children
All sports should be amateur
Sports should be leisure activities rather than jobs
People should do sporting activities for enjoyment and health reasons
Taking part is more important than winning

Arguments for Professional sport
Professional sports are the same as any other business
Many people are employed in the sports industry
People should be able to use their talents to earn a salary
Sports stars entertain millions of people
Money is necessary to improve facilities and train athletes
The level of professional sport is much higher than that of amateur sport

Arguments for Competitive sport
Competition is a natural instinct in humans
In daily life we compete to get jobs or the highest grades
Sports are a safe form of competition
Competition is healthy because it pushes us to give our best
Competitors and fans can release energy and aggression
Supporters of teams feel a sense of belonging to a community

Opinion: professional sport salaries are too high
Sports professionals earn too much money
They do not provide a vital service
Football players, for example, earn enormous salaries by simply kicking a ball. We could all live happily without professional football. Life would be difficult without doctors, engineers and other vital professionals. Society does not seem to value these professions as highly as professional sport. Sports salaries should be compatible with the wages most people earn.

**Opinion: professional sport salaries are fair**

It is fair that the best professional earn a lot of money. Sport is a multi-million-pound industry. There is a large audience of sports fans. Sports on television attract many viewers. Sports stars have dedicated hours of practice to developing their fitness and skills. Only the most talented among them will reach the top. A sports career many only last 10 years. Sports fans are willing to pay to support their teams.

**Sports and Politics**

Some people think that sport and politics should remain separate. Governments are involved in the hosting of sporting events such as the Olympics. These events attract investment and create jobs. The Olympic Games are an advertisement for the host nation. They attract huge numbers of visitors and sports fans. Wealthy countries tend to hold these events. Developing countries should be given the chance to become hosts.

**19. Television, Internet, Phones**

**Positives of television**

- Watching television is a good way to relax.
- It is many people’s favourite way to wind down after a hard day at work.
- Television programs can be entertaining and enjoyable.
- Viewers have access to a huge variety of entertainment channels.
- Television brings the best comedians, musicians and actors into our homes.
- Programmers can also be informative and educational.
- News coverage makes the public aware of events around the world.
- Documentaries can make learning more interesting.

**Negatives of Television**

- Television is having a negative impact on society.
- Some people link violence on television with crime rates in the real world.
- Children copy the behaviour they see on the screen.
- Children are less healthy because they spend less time playing.
- Advertisers direct their marketing at children.
- Most programs do not require much thought.
- Watching TV is a waste of time.
Opinions about Television
Television has many benefits
However, it can be addictive
Children should play outside rather than sit in front of a screen all day
Behaviour shown on TV can influence people
Parents should choose carefully what their children watch
Children should not be exposed to violence, swearing or sexual images
Advertising during children’s programs should be strictly controlled
TV companies should make more positive, educational programs

Positives of the Internet
There are many advantages to using the Internet
It gives us instant access to information on almost any subject
Shops and other services are now available online
People can buy goods and services from the comfort of their homes
The Internet is starting to replace other forms of entertainment
It has revolutionized communication
We can keep in touch by email or instant messenger services
Video messaging is becoming common for business meetings

Negatives of the Internet
Many websites contain offensive content
Some sites show violent or sexual images
Parents find it difficult to control what their children see online
They do not always know who their children are chatting to
With so many websites it is difficult to search for good information
Criminals increasingly use the Internet to steal people’s money

Internet compared to newspaper and books
Newspapers and books are now published online as well as in print
We can read the news in any language from any country in the world
It costs nothing to publish or access information on the Internet
The Internet allows anybody to publish their own writing
Newspaper articles and books are written by professionals
Professionals produce better quality writing than amateur
People still buy newspapers and books because they are portable
People do not like reading from a screen

Positives of Mobile Phones
The mobile phone is the most popular gadget in today’s world
Mobile phones have revolutionized the way we communicate
We can stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues wherever we are
Users can send text messages, surf the Internet, take photos and listen to music.
Mobiles have also become fashion accessories.

**Negatives of Mobile Phones**
Mobile phones can be a problem in some public places.
Ringing phones cause disturbance in cinemas and school lessons.
Some people are not aware that others can hear their conversations.
Mobile phones may also interfere with electronic equipment.
Their waves could cause damage to our brains.
Mobile phones can also be a dangerous distraction.
Using a phone while driving reduces the driver’s concentration.
Mobile phones are a popular target for thieves.

**Opinion about Mobile Phones**
The benefits of mobile phones outweigh the drawbacks.
We need to use these phones with care.

20. **Tourism**

**Positives of Tourism**
Tourism is a popular leisure activity.
People go on holiday to relax and have fun.
Tourists can experience different cultures.
They can sunbathe on beaches or go sight-seeing.
Travelling abroad opens our minds.
We can learn to speak other languages.
The tourist trade is vital for some economies.
It creates employment in services like accommodation, transport and entertainment.
Some areas rely on tourism for their income.
Tourists spend money.
Tourism attracts investment from multi-national companies.
It helps to improve the standard of living.
Low-cost airlines are making it cheaper to travel abroad.

**Negative effects of tourism**
Tourism can have a negative effect on the natural environment.
The building of facilities and infrastructure can destroy the habitat of wild animals.
Beautiful beaches are spoilt by the building of hotels.
Tourism creates pollution and waste.
It puts pressure on local resources.
Local traditional and cultures may be endangered.
A rise in the cost of living affects local people.
The price of goods, services and housing may increase significantly.

**The future of tourism**
Government should introduce laws to protect natural environments and local cultures
Tourism should have a low impact on wildlife
Renewable resources like solar or water power should be used
Waste should be recycled
Local businesses such as farms should be supported

21. Traditional vs. Modern

Losing traditional skills
Because of industrialization and global trade, many traditions have disappeared
Global advertising encourages everyone to buy the same products
Most products are now made in factories
Machinery has replaced skilled human labour
Factory work is boring and leaves people feeling unfulfilled
Goods are produced very quickly and in large numbers
Products are cheaper, which means that more people can buy them

Examples
Clothes are mass produced in standard sizes
People wear similar clothes, rather than traditional costumes
Jeans and T-shirt are now worn throughout the world
Historic buildings took skilled craftsmen years to build
Modern concrete, steel and glass buildings are built in only weeks or months
There are fewer people who can create hand-made goods

Traditional customs
Traditional customs are still important during weddings and religious festivals
People wear traditional costumers and eat special foods
It is important to maintain our different cultural identities
We should celebrate festivals, teach traditional skills and protect historic places

22. Transport

Traffic problems
Traffic congestion is caused by commuters travelling to work
Most people live in the suburbs outside city centre
Commuters tend to travel at the same time of day
They tend to travel alone
Cars and road space are not used efficiently
This causes traffic jams during the rush hour

Traffic solutions
In order to reduce traffic we should change our working habits
The internet can now be used to connect people
More people could work from home
Meetings can be held as video conferences
Workers could be given flexible timetables
Another solution would be to tax drivers
Workers should share their cars and travel together
In London, for example, there is a congestion charge
This helps to raise money for better public transport
Public transport needs to be reliable and efficient

**Positives of Public transport**
We need to reduce our dependence on cars
Parking a car can be extremely difficult in big cities
Well-designed transport systems are comfortable and convenient
Modern public transport can be fast and cheap
Public transport can help to reduce pollution in cities
Investment in buses and trains will ease traffic congestion
Buses can be given special lands to avoid traffic

**Negatives of public transport**
Public transport if often slow and unreliable
Metro systems and trains are often dirty and crowded
People feel like “sardines in a can”
Cars are much more comfortable

**Road safety**
Driving while tired or drunk is extremely dangerous
Mobile phones can be a dangerous distraction for drivers
They draw the driver’s attention away from the road
The use of phones while driving has been banned in many countries
Punishments are becoming stricter
Television campaigns are used to remind people to drive safely
Speed cameras have become more common
Speed bumps are another form of traffic calming
Many streets are designed with the aim of slowing traffic down

**23. Water**

**Importance of clean water**
Water is as necessary natural resource
Humans need access to clean, safe drinking water in order to live
Poor water quality is a major cause of disease and death in some countries
Water usually needs to be treated before we can drink it
Developing countries often lack the means to treat and supply water to citizens
Developed countries tend to have much better sanitation
Citizens have access to clean tap water
Drinking water is not contaminated by sewage or waste water
The supply of clean water would improve public health in many developing countries
Water supply
Urban life would be impossible without water supply systems
These systems are massive engineering projects
Many professionals are involved in their planning, construction and maintenance
The supply and distribution of water are major concerns
Water is becoming scarce in some countries
Areas that suffer droughts often need to import water
As populations grow, there is more pressure on water supplies
This could lead to a water crisis

Water and politics
The supply of water is also an important political issue
Huge amount of water are needed for agriculture and industry
The irrigation of crops accounts for a large proportions of water use
A water crisis could lead to political conflicts or even wars

Argument: water should be free
Some people believe that water should be free for everyone
Governments should supply water to all homes at no cost
Private companies should not be allowed to profit from this natural resource
Money from taxes can be used to pay for water supply systems

Argument: water should not be free
If water is free, people take it for granted
They do not think about how much water they waste
They leave taps running while washing or brushing their teeth
If we have to pay for water, we will use it more responsibly
Water supply systems are extremely expensive
Investment is needed to maintain and improve them
Private companies may provide a better service than governments
If they provide an efficient service, they will make more money
They will repair leaks to avoid losing money

Bottled Water: Opinions
Some people carry bottles of water wherever they go
For example, they take bottles of water to work or to the gym
They believe that bottled water is healthier than tap water
They also argue that it tastes better
However, other people believe that we should consume less bottled water
Plastic water bottles add to litter and waste problems
Companies should not be able to make a profit from water
It is unethical to make money by selling packaged water
There is no difference in quality between bottled and tap water
24. Work

The benefits of staying in the same job for life
- Employees have a stable career with one employer
- They have a good pension and health insurance
- Their salaries gradually increase
- They may be promoted within the organization
- They demonstrate loyalty
- Experienced staff can be trusted with more responsibility
- They become part of a team
- There is a clearly defined path for development

The benefits of not staying in the same job
- People often change jobs in order to further their career
- Another company may offer a promotion or a higher salary
- People who change jobs can gain experience
- They can learn different skills
- Changing jobs is interesting and challenging
- People can retrain in a different occupation
- In a fast-changing world workers need to be flexible
- People need to develop a range of experience and skills

Self-employment
- Nowadays, it is easy to set up a company
- The Internet provides a global marketplace
- Self-employment offers greater freedom than working for a company
- However, there are risks to starting a new business
- Self-employed people may face financial difficulties
- Many businesses fail to make a profit
- There is less stability in self-employment
- There are no benefits like pensions, sick pay and holiday pay
- Self-employment involved hard work, long hours and total responsibility

Unemployment
- Unemployment is a big problem for individuals, communities and society
- Some people are unable to find a job
- They may not have the sufficient level of education or qualifications
- They may find themselves homeless
- Unemployment causes frustration and stress
- Jobless people may become involved in crime as a means to get money
- The unemployed need careers advice
- Governments need to provide vocational courses and retraining

Unemployment benefits: positives
Some governments pay unemployment benefits in order to help jobless people. Unemployed people need financial support until they find a new job. By claiming benefits they can continue to pay for their homes. The benefits system helps to reduce poverty, homelessness and crime.

**Unemployment benefits: negatives**
Some people claim benefits rather than working. They become dependent on the government. They are not motivated to find a job. The benefits system is a burden on taxpayers. All citizens should work to earn a living and support themselves. Receiving benefits affects people’s self esteem.

**Work/Life Balance**
It is important to achieve a balance between work time and leisure or family time. Too much work can result in stress and poor health. “workaholics” may neglect their families and friends. People need to take regular holidays. Companies should be expect employees to work overtime. Nowadays, many people work part-time or have flexible working hours. Technology allow people to work from home. Many companies provide childcare facilities. A good work/ life balance can raise job satisfaction. Happy, healthy workers are more productive.

**Technology and work**
Internet, fax and mobile phone technologies have revolutionized working life. Workers can communicate via email, online networks and video conferencing. Technology can connect workers in different countries. It gives people more freedom. It can also save time and money. Some people believe that offices could disappear in the future. Virtual online offices may replace them.

**Child labour**
In some countries, children are exploited. They do repetitive jobs for very low pay. Children are often used in agriculture and factory work. The employment of children is prohibited in other countries. Many people think that children should be free to enjoy their childhood. Governments should make education a priority. They should build new schools. They should supply the resources to educate children. Children need to be given the knowledge and skills for adult life.
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