



Phase One: Common Topics and Questions

Aim: When you have completed these exercises you will have a good idea of what you might be asked about in speaking Phase One.

Problems: In Phase One of the speaking test many candidates don't listen carefully to the questions; they just talk generally about the topic and so get a lower score.

The first topic that you will be asked about will be either about where you live or come from or about what you do. In this section, we will look at both of these topics and the different questions that you might be asked about each one:

Part 1 - Where you live / come from

The examiner will tell you that (s)he is going to ask you some questions about one of the following:

- Where you live now
- Where you come from
- The country that you come from

Listen carefully to the examiner otherwise you might start talking about the wrong topic - many questions are similar. '...where you live now' and '...where you come from' might be the same. Don't worry if it is - you won't receive this question twice.

Below are some common questions for each topic area. You can brainstorm the answers for each one based on your own experiences. You can check the 'How long should my answer be?' section on this website for help with the content and detail of your answers.

Part 1 - Tell me about...

1. Where you live / are living now

Where do you live / are you living now? What do you like most about the area? Why? What don't you like about the area? Why? What is the area like? Can you tell me about the area? Do you think you will live there for a long time? Why? Can you tell me about any interesting places there? What do people do in the area? How would you improve the area? How has the area changed in recent years?

(Continued)



2. Where you come from / your hometown

Where do you come from?
Can you tell me about your hometown?
What is the area like?
What don't you like about the area? Why?
What is the area like?
Can you tell me about the area?
Can you tell me about any interesting places there?
What do people do in the area?
How would you improve the area?
How has the area changed in recent years?

3. Your country

What country do you come from?
What country were you born in?
What is it like?
What are the people like?
Can you describe the country for me?
What are the main areas of industry and commerce?
What are the main areas of employment?
Have there been any recent developments in your country? What?
How will your country develop in the future?

Part 2 - What you do

The examiner will tell you that (s)he is going to ask you some questions about what you do, then you will be asked either "What do you do: work or study" or "What are you doing now: working or studying?" This is just an introduction so that the examiner knows what to ask you about, so just answer with one word.

1. Study

What do you study?
What subjects are you studying?
Why did you choose these subjects?
What do you like most about your studies? Why?
Is there anything that you don't like about your studies? Why?
What are your study plans for the future?
What subjects do you think will be popular / important in the future? Why?
What subjects are popular with male and female students?



2. Work

Where do you work?
What job do you do?
Do you like your job? Why?
Is there anything you don't like about your job?
How would you like to improve your job?
What training did you need for this job?
Why did you choose this career / job?
Do you think you will change jobs in the future? Why / why not?
What are your future career plans?

Remember: you will only be asked 4-5 questions in the real test.

For more IELTS strategies visit:

Listening : http://www.ieltstips.com/ielts_test_strategies/listening_test_strategies/listening_test_strategies.html

Reading : http://www.ieltstips.com/ielts_test_strategies/reading_test_strategies/reading_test_strategies.html

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