



IELTS SPEAKING AND ACTUAL TESTS SUGGESTED ANSWERS



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IELTS Speaking Actual Tests and Suggested Answers (June – August 2017)

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Preface

Most candidates like to read model answers as a very powerful way to get the best possible Band score when they are preparing for the IELTS speaking module. This ebook provides model answers for IELTS Speaking Actual Tests that appears in the IELTS speaking module. Even if your English is not perfect, you can transform your IELTS Band score by using this book.

The model answers are intended as a guide and candidates should modify the answers to suit their own circumstances and add to them wherever appropriate. In other words, candidates should consider using the vocabulary and grammatical structures in this book to help them to create their own answers.

Don't just trust to luck in your IELTS exam – the key is practice!

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PART I

1. Jewelry

1.1. Do you like jewel?

I love collecting tiny pieces of art like jewelries since they are not only accessories but perfect **complements** to your whole look. There are thousands of types and designs of jewelries for you to choose from so I bet everyone, **regardless of** genders, can find at least one item they love, from earrings, bracelets, necklaces to watches. The materials of which they are made also varied from luxurious ones such as silver, gold, diamond to more affordable and street-style ones like artificial stones, copper or other metals. Thus, they can go with different kinds of styles and if you do it right, they will make your outfit less boring and livelier.

- **complement** (n): a thing that adds new qualities to something in a way that improves it or makes it more attractive
- **regardless of**: paying no attention to something/somebody; treating something/somebody as not being important

1.2. Do you wear any jewelry?

Even though I have a whole jewelry collection at home, I've never attempted to put on more than five pieces since I live with a **motto** "simplicity is the best". I **have a habit of** picking up **eye-catching** accessories whenever I **come across** one but always consider carefully before matching them with my costume. For example, if I dress in an off-shoulder top, a simple choker is good enough to highlight my long neck. Other times when I tie my hair in a messy bun, I prefer a pair of sophisticated earrings such as hoop or feather ones to add more feminine and romantic vibes. But all in all, never exceed five at the same time.

- **motto** (n): a short sentence or phrase that expresses the aims and beliefs of a person, a group, an institution, etc. and is used as a rule of behaviour
- **come across** (phrasal verb): meet or find by chance

1.3. Do people in your country ever wear jewelry, such as rings or neckless? Why do people like to wear those things?

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, most people **show a big preference for** accessories like jewelry in the belief that they beautify the body. It's a common sight that women wear necklaces or bracelets **made of** gold every time they are present at a special occasion like weddings or parties. Besides, such **pricey** accessories symbolize people's social status as well, so it is used as a means to **show off** things people have.

- **Beyond/ without a shadow of a doubt (phrase)** used for saying that you are completely certain of something
- **Show a (big) preference for something (phrase)** a feeling of liking or wanting something more than someone or something else
- **Make of (phrasal verb)** to produce or construct from

1.4. How often do you wear jewelry?

Once **in a while**, especially when there is a special event. On that occasion, I often have my bracelet or necklace on so that I can feel more **confident in** myself.

- **Once in a while (idiom)** sometimes

1.5. What kind of jewelry do you like to wear/see on other people?

If I were to choose, I'd **opt for** gold necklace or bracelet. The reason behind this is that they are **eye-catching** and a girl would look gorgeous with some accessories on such body parts. For me, any piece of jewelry has its own beauty, depending on the **beholders** and the appropriateness of the situation.

- **Opt for (verb)** make a choice from a range of possibilities
- **Eye-catching (adj)** immediately appealing or noticeable; striking
- **Beholder (n)** a person who sees or observes someone or something.

1.6. Why some people wear a jewel for a long time?

I suppose each has their own reasons. In most cases, if people **get attached to** a certain piece of jewelries, there might be a story behind it. It could be a family **heirloom** that has been **passed down generations to generations** so it has a special meaning to the owner. Or it may belong to someone they **hold dear** such as their spouse, parent or soulmate which can explain why they don't want to take it off. Another reason is that they keep wearing the same jewel just **out of habit**. They **get accustomed to** it after a while and are too lazy to change the new one so there it stays.

- **get attached to**: attach
- **heirloom** (n): a valuable object that has belonged to the same family for many years
- **hold dear** (idiom): be fond of; be attached to | cherish, treasure, care for
- **out of habit** (idiom): habitually
- **get accustomed to**: to think/start to think that something is normal or natural because you have experienced it regularly over a period of time

2. Watches/Time

2.1. Why do people like expensive watches?

Just like any other accessories, the more luxurious a **timepiece** looks, the higher **social status** the owner may hold. Watches are widely used by either gender and ones of the visual **indicators** presenting how professional, smart and attractive a person is. Therefore, if one wants to be **acknowledged** and taken seriously, he prefers a **high-end** watch rather than a collection of **low-end** ones.

Vocabulary

Timepiece (n): a clock or watch

Social status (n): a person's standing or importance in relation to other people within a society

Indicator (n): a sign that shows you what something is like or how a situation is changing

Acknowledge (n): to accept that somebody/something has a particular authority or status

High-end (a): expensive and of high quality

Low-end (a): at the cheaper end of a range of similar products

2.2. Do you like to wear watches?

Well, I am more a cosmetics girl than clothing and accessories, hence, there are not many watches and jewelries **in my possession**. However, I **have nothing against** wearing a beautiful piece of art on my wrist and do own a few exclusive timepieces which suit perfectly with my clothing **on some special occasions**, giving me a **sense of identity** and uniqueness.

Vocabulary

In someone's possession: if something is in someone's possession, they have it

Have nothing against: to dislike or not approve of someone or something for a particular reason

On (special) occasions: from time to time; now and then

2.3. Have you ever received a watch as a gift?

Let me see. More than half of the watches in my little jewelry box are presents from my family and friends. And by that I mean 3 pieces since I only own 4 in total. They all know I am not extremely **fond of** collecting these types of accessories but make-up kits and the likes. Therefore, it would **soothe their souls** to see me in watches because according to them, time is so precious that I need to be reminded every second.

Vocabulary

Be fond of = be interested in = be keen on

Soothe someone's soul: To bring comfort, composure, or relief

3. Robots

3.1. Are you interested in robots?

It might be a little strange not to be amazed by robots because they can be seen as one of the most **innovative advancements** of mankind. Thanks to the **AI technology**, robots are able to **imitate** and perform most of human tasks such as house cleaning, cooking, serving and most significantly, interacting, which is pretty frightening to me since I keep imagining what life would be if robots one day can somehow understand emotions and function accordingly.

Vocabulary

Innovative (a): introducing or using new ideas, ways of doing something, etc.

Advancement (n): the process of helping something to make progress or succeed; the progress that is made

AI technology: Artificial Intelligence technology

Imitate (v): to copy somebody/something

3.2. Would you like robots to work at your home?

Honestly, who wouldn't. If you have a robot taking care of your daily chores such as making dinner, cleaning house, massaging and more, you can **optimize** your day with more meaningful and **engaging** activities with friends and family. Robots are organized, efficient and especially, **non-intrusive**, which makes them the best housemate of all time.

Vocabulary

Optimize (v): to make something as good as it can be; to use something in the best possible way

Engaging (a): interesting or pleasant in a way that attracts your attention

Non-intrusive (a): not intrusive or disruptive

3.3. Do you want to take a car in which a robot is the driver?

I have never been on a backseat of a self-driving or robotic car and would love to try at least once. Though different opinions about driverless vehicles have been **arisen**, I personally believe they will provide a safer solution for those who are not legally **eligible** to drive given their situation such as drunk or under-aged drivers and people with disabilities.

Vocabulary

Self-driving (a): used to refer to a vehicle that drives itself

Arise (v): (especially of a problem or a difficult situation) to happen; to start to exist

Eligible (a): a person who is **eligible** for something or to do something, is able to have or do it because they have the right qualifications, are the right age, etc.

4. Transportation

4.1. What's the most popular means of transportation in your hometown?

Without any doubt I would say motorbikes. Almost everyone travels by motorbike. The reason why motorbike is so popular I think is due to their reasonable price and convenience. They also extremely varied in terms of size, color and quality, thus **a wide variety of** choices is available for everyone.

Vocabulary

Without any doubt/There is no doubt that (expression) a phrase expressing certainty or agreement; yes

A wide variety of (collocation) a number or range of things of the same general class that is distinct in character or quality.

4.2. How often do you take buses?

Almost every day. Since my house is so far away from my university, it's impossible for me to travel by motorbike. In addition, the air is heavily polluted by **exhaust fumes** and **traffic jams** always take place, especially during **peak hours**. Thus, I'd prefer to take the bus, to save time, save gasoline and causing less pollution.

Vocabulary

Exhaust fumes (n) waste gasses or air expelled from an engine, turbine, or another machine in the course of its operation.

Traffic jam (n) a line or lines of stationary or very slow-moving traffic, caused by roadworks, an accident, or heavy congestion.

Peak hours/Rush hours (n) the busiest hours

4.3. Can you compare the advantages of planes and trains?

Planes and trains regularly depart and arrive on time. Plus, there are many convenient facilities **catering** particularly to certain groups of passengers. However, traveling by plane is clearly time-saving and enjoyable in terms of **on-board services** like meals or comfortable seats, while traveling by train offers you a chance **to see the world outside, admire the views** from their seats. It's totally a great experience for most train-travelers.

Vocabulary

On-board services (n) provided on or within a vehicle

Cater (v) provide with what is needed or required

4.4. Is driving to work popular in your country?

Although cars themselves and gasoline are expensive, a lot of people prefer driving, possibly because driving is more comfortable in such weather, with such polluted and noisy surroundings.

4.5. Do you think people will drive more in the future?

If you're talking about India, no, I don't think it's possible, even in the future. Cars and gasoline are becoming unaffordable for many people these days. Plus, the **transport infrastructure** in various regions in India is not appropriate for cars.

Vocabulary

Transport infrastructure (n) the framework that supports our transport system

4.6. Would you ride bikes to work in the future?

Definitely not. Riding a bike means you're exposing yourself to the **unpredictable weather** and to air pollution. What is worse, I'm afraid the main streets or the highway are too dangerous for cyclists, as cars, motorbikes and buses will travel at a very high speed. Thus I'd rather ride a motorbike or take the bus instead.

Vocabulary

Unpredictable weather (n) to not able to be predicted; changeable

4.7. What will become the most popular means of transport in your country?

I think buses will **take the lead**. You can **travel the distance** without much worries about ticket price or rainy weather outside. Also new buses now offer better services like comfortable seats for the elderly or good air conditioning systems.

Vocabulary

To take the lead (v) to start winning a race or competition

4.10. Do you prefer public transport or private transport ?

I think I'd prefer public transport. It's much more inexpensive and because it can contain a large number of people, it helps ease the **intensity** of traffic jams during peak hours and reduce the **greenhouse gas emissions** caused by vehicles. Private transportation is more costly in terms of fees, taxes and gasoline.

Vocabulary

Intensity (n) of extreme force, degree, or strength

Greenhouse gas emissions (np) the emission into the earth's atmosphere of any of various gases, especially carbon dioxide, that contribute to the greenhouse effect

5. Magazines

5.1. What magazines are popular now?

Magazines on entertainment sell well, **for** many people are keen on reading reports about the pop singers and film stars. In addition, I **figure out** that magazines about dressing and makeup are popular, because more and more people beginning to **pay attention to** their appearance, and reading magazines is a convenient way to learn something on this.

Vocabulary

For (conjunction) because

Figure out (phrase) to be able to understand something

5.2. What are the differences between men and women in reading magazines?

Men and women are usually interested in different things. For most women, fashion is the most important thing, so they like reading fashion magazines. For **the vast majority of** men, magazines about automobiles, electronic products, and sports are very attractive.

Vocabulary

Vast majority (phrase) almost all or something like 90% or more

5.3. Do people in the countryside generally read the same kinds of magazines as people in the cities?

I don't know this well, but I think probably they read similar magazines. But maybe city people **pay more attention to** fashion, so they will tend to read more fashion magazines and people in the countryside read more magazines about farming and gardening because they have enough land for them to do these.

Vocabulary

Pay attention to (phrase) focus on something

6. Politeness

6.1. Do you think you are a polite person?

I don't want to **boast of** myself but I have to say yes. I often keep good manners with others, especially strangers and I often **break the ice** and **hit it off** quite well with others, simply because I am so **courteous** on our first meeting.

Vocabulary

Boast of/about (phrase) to speak too proudly or happily about what you have done or what you own

Break the ice (idiom) to attempt to become friends with someone/ get something started

Hit it off (phrasal verb) to be friendly with each other immediately

6.2. Do you think people should be polite?

In my opinion, politeness should be considered as a basic **virtue** that every person must acquire. Being **well-mannered** may not get you straight to the highest position at work within one day, but would give you respect, trust and kindness from other people, all of which are **beneficial for you in a long run**. Furthermore, politeness can partially reflect your educational background and your profession as well.

Vocabulary

Virtue (n): goodness

Well-mannered (adj): polite, showing good manner

In a long run (phrase): long term

To be beneficial for (adj): to provide advantages for SO or to aid SO

6.3. How do people in your culture show good manners towards others?

Good manners can be shown **in a wide range of** acts in our culture. For example, when we **run into** people who are older than us like our parents, grandparents or our university lecturers, we say hi and **bow our head to show our respect towards** them. Additionally, when we talk to them, we use certain pronouns and words to indicate the age gap between that person and us. Another example is our tone when we speak. Raising the voice, scream or shout to others would **leave the worst impression**.

Vocabulary

In a wide variety/range of (phrase): to have many options to choose from

To run into (v): to meet SO unexpectedly

6.3. Who taught you to be polite?

I guess similar to most people, I was raised to be a polite person by my parents. As I spent most of my time around them, they tried to **set good example** for me. They also gave me advice and told me moral stories about how being polite and kind to others can help me a lot in real life.

Vocabulary

To set good example (v): to behave in a way that others should copy

7. Bus and taxi

7.1. How often do you take the bus?

Even though I don't really like public transport, I have to take bus to go to my university **on a daily basis** because it is quite far to bike from home to my university and it is the safest choice for me.

On a daily basis (adv) everyday

7.2. When was the first time you took a taxi?

My very first time taking a taxi was around 10 or 11 years ago. It was raining heavily after my class finished. The streets **were** seriously **flooded** so my dad could not come to **pick me up**. He asked me to take a taxi to go home. It was one of my very first experience travelling alone without my parents.

Vocabulary

To be flooded (v) to become covered or submerged by a flood

To pick SO up (n) to go somewhere to collect someone, typically in one's car

7.3. What are the advantages of taking a taxi compared with buses?

Their 24/7 **tailored** service has been improved and become better recently which is much more flexible and save us a great deal of time and energy, especially when we **rush for any appointment**. Moreover, by taking a taxi, we don't need to walk to the station or destination.

Vocabulary

Tailored (adj) to design or alter (something) to suit specific needs

To rush for Sth/doing Sth (v) to deal with (something) hurriedly

7.4. Is it convenient to take the bus/taxi in your city?

I would say, it's easy to book or take a taxi in my city. Nowadays, there are Uber and Grab besides other taxi companies which allow us to use an app on our smartphone to book a taxi. They also estimate the price and inform the route which make us feel safe and trustable.

8. Mirror

Frankly speaking, I have never bought a mirror in my entire life. This is because I live with my parents in a **fully-furnished** house. And, you know, there is a large mirror which has been hung in the living room for ages.

Vocabulary:

Fully-furnished (adj) luxurious, well-equipped

8.3. Do you think mirrors are necessary /good ornaments?

The answer will be a big yes. They could make a place appear more **spacious** and they could be perfect for those that live in a **cramped** apartment, just like me.

Vocabulary:

Spacious (adj) Having enough or abundant space or room

Cramped (adj) Uncomfortably small or restricted

Or:

It's safe to say architects and interior designers are **making full use of** mirrors in house building and decorating thanks to their **inherent** characteristics and wide **application**. Hence, **there's no doubt that** mirrors are **indispensable** decorations in any constructions. For example, they can be installed in bathrooms or dressing rooms for personal use or sometimes, small pieces of mirrors are placed randomly in someone's house or stores as a mere artwork.

Vocabulary:

Make full use of: to use something well

Inherent (a): that is a basic or permanent part of somebody/something and that cannot be removed

Application (n): the practical use of something, especially a theory, discovery, etc.

There's no doubt that: used for emphasizing that something is definitely true

Indispensable (a): too important to be without

8.4. Do you use a mirror before buying a clothing?

Well, there's an **unspoken** rule every girl should know when going shopping: trying everything on before buying it because **images are for illustration purpose** only, which is particularly true with online shopping. Seeing your reflection in a mirror is an absolute must-do to ensure that piece of clothing actually suits you so that your money and time is **well-spent**.

Vocabulary:

Unspoken (a): not stated; not said in words but understood or agreed between people

Well-spent (a): (of money or time) usefully or profitably expended

8.5. What functions does a mirror have?

First of all, mirrors are commonly used for **personal grooming**, regardless male or female. Hardly can women apply make-up or style their hair without a mirror. Same goes for men. Besides, in case you haven't noticed, mirrors are architects' and designers' best friends, especially in modern design. Mirror in different shapes and sizes can be placed in a house as decorations or with certain purposes.

Vocabulary:

Grooming (n): the things that you do to keep your clothes and hair clean and neat

9. Dream

9.1. Do you like your dreams at night?

For me, the answer is obviously no. This is mainly because I often dream about the bad experiences in the past, which makes me **have a sinking feeling** when waking up and **put me in such a bad mood all day long**.

Vocabulary:

Have a sinking feeling (idiom)

a feeling that something bad is going to happen

Put somebody in a bad mood (idiom)

sad; depressed; grouchy; with low spirits

9.2. Do you remember your dream when you wake up?

Well, honestly, I completely forget most dreams I **have been through**. However, sometimes I had **vivid dreams** which regularly haunted me. **Every now and then**, I had really pleasant and meaningful dreams which I could remember well after awakening and I love to **take a trip down memory lane for a while**.

Vocabulary:

To be through (phrase) To have finished something

Vivid dream (phrase) any dream or nightmare which one remembers after awakening

Every now and then (idiom) sometimes

Take a trip down memory lane (idiom) to reminisce over memories of past events, especially happy ones.

Or:

You spend nearly one-third of your life asleep, so remembering your dream is such a challenge. Honestly, I hardly **recall** any of my dreams after waking up. Sometimes, I manage to **visualize** a dream **in graphic detail** just because that dream does bring some strong emotions after I wake up.

Vocabulary:

Recall (v): to remember something

Visualize (v): to form a picture of somebody/something in your mind

9.3. Do you like hearing other's dreams?

By all means. I suppose that dreams represent their current **psychological stress** or struggles that they express themselves in an environment considered safe. Therefore, when I listen to them speaking about their dreams, I can **get an insight into** their body, mind and spirit.

Vocabulary:

By all means (phrase) Of course, certainly

Psychological stress (phrase) under mental, physical, or emotional pressure

Get/gain an insight into (phrase) have the clear understanding of something

Or:

Surprisingly, there are those whose dreams can be **a fortune teller**. Therefore, I prefer listening to mysterious dreams of people surrounding me. They can predict what will happen in the future, which makes me very excited. Hearing other's dreams really **catches my attention**.

Vocabulary:

Fortune teller (n): a person who claims to have magic powers and who tells people what will happen to them in the future

Catch someone's attention: to make someone interested in or excited about something

9.4. Why are dreams so important? /Do you think dreams will affect life?

Well, this is an interesting question. I think we are all aware of how important dream is. **Dreams** motivate us to **move forward, overcome obstacles** to fulfill ourselves. Dream is something **out of reach** only when do people have no passion and patience, as well as **life purposes**. Honestly, I feel pity for whoever lives without dream as they'll never know what they can do and how dreams can shape them.

Vocabulary:

Move forward (phrase verb) make progress

Out of reach (phrase) unobtainable

Life purpose (phrase)

Or:

In fact, a dream is a wish your heart makes. Hence, you usually dream about what you are hoping, so with someone who is **superstitious**, it's good when their dreams turn into a good **precursor**, which makes them feel relieved about the future. Then, **there's no denying that** dreams will affect life **in all ways**.

Superstitious (a): belief that is not based on human reason or scientific knowledge, but is connected with old ideas about magic, etc.

Precursor (n): a person or thing that comes before somebody/something similar and that leads to or influences its development

9.5. What is your dream?

I'm **living the dream** to become a successful businessman who can run a **chain store**. I'm trying to **fulfill my dream** and hopefully one day it'll **come true**.

Vocabulary:

Living the dream (idiom) do what you really want to do/achieve

Chain store (phrase) a store that is part of a chain of similar stores selling the same type of product, and that are all owned and controlled by the same organization

Fulfill one's dream (phrase) realize one's dream

Come true (phrase) to materialize as expected or hoped

9.6. Do you want to learn more about dreams?

To me, dreams always **beg a question**. I often wonder why we dreams, how dreams occur in our life and how they can predict what will happen in the future. Therefore, I would like to **look into** them more carefully to **figure out** the mysteries lying **beneath** my dreams.

beg a question: if a statement or situation begs the question, it causes you to ask a particular question

look into: to examine the facts about a problem or situation

figure out: to discover

9.7. Do you think dreams will affect life?

In fact, a dream is a wish your heart makes. Hence, you usually dream about what you are hoping, so with someone who is **superstitious**, it's good when their dreams turn into a good **precursor**, which makes them feel relieved about the future. Then, **there's no denying that** dreams will affect life **in all ways**.

Superstitious (a): belief that is not based on human reason or scientific knowledge, but is connected with old ideas about magic, etc.

Precursor (n): a person or thing that comes before somebody/something similar and that leads to or influences its development

10. Flats/Houses/Accommodation

10.1. Do you like a house or a flat/ an apartment?

I believe most people would prefer to have their own house rather than to rent a place and so do I. Hence, if I **have my way**, a house with a small garden would be my choice since I don't enjoy the constant disturbance from next-door apartments and elevator rides everytime coming home.

Vocabulary

Have/ get one's way (idiom): get or do what one wants in spite of opposition

10.2. What kind of housing/accommodation do you live in?

For the past 21 years I have lived in a house with my family. And I think if I can move out and start **making a living** on my own, I would try my best to have an independent place where I can plan and design a house layout to **suit myself** since sharing a room or a flat with strangers sounds so **troublesome** to me.

Vocabulary

To afford (v) to be able to financially support/have enough money to pay for Sth

Suit myself (v) to do exactly what you like/want

Troublesome (adj) causing difficulty or annoyance

To make a living (v) to earn enough to support one's self

10.3. What do you usually do in your house/flat/room?

Well definitely I'll spend some **me-time** there. I study, I **chill out** by reading, drawing and dancing **all by myself**. Sometimes I also invite one or two friends to spend time with. We'll watch some movies together and tell each other endless stories.

Chill out (phrasal verb) relax

Me-time (phrase) time for one's self alone

To do Sth all by one's self (phrase) to do Sth alone

10.4. Who do you live with?

I live with my family. There are 5 of us and we all have our own room, which is way more comfortable as the older we grow, the more privacy we need for ourselves. I think our house is big enough for us yet still a **warm and cozy** place that I call home.

10.5. How long have you lived there?

Although during my childhood my family had to move a lot, I've lived in the most recent house for almost ten years. Comparing to the old houses, I think this house has been the best so far.

10.6. Do you plan to live there for a long time?

The answer would be yes if the respondent is my parents, since moving in and out is too time-consuming and exhausting. Cleaning and arranging everything **all over again** would be like **torture** to them. For me, on the other hand, as I'm thinking of moving out to start my adult life, hopefully soon I'll be able to afford to live in a flat or an apartment.

Vocabulary

All over again (idiom) used for saying that you do the whole of something again starting from the beginning, or that the whole of a long process happens again

Torture (n) great physical or mental suffering

10.7. What's the difference between where you are living now and where you have lived in the past?

As I've already mentioned my family moved several times when I was younger. And the most current house where we've been living for about ten years is the best house so far. All of us have separate rooms for our **need of privacy** yet a big dining room where we can spend the whole evenings together watching TV or having dinner.

Vocabulary

Need of Sth/doing Sth (phrase) circumstances in which something is necessary; necessity

10.8. Can you describe the place where you live?/ Please describe the room you live in

Briefly, my **humble** house locates in a small and quite street, so coming home to me is like all the craziness happened outside is left behind. Just beside my house stands a big old tree. I have my own room with walls painted violet, which is kinda a peaceful color. The air outside is fresh. I usually open the window to enjoy the wind and sunshine, which will help cool down my room without an air conditioner. Since I spend most of my time staying at home, my room means the whole world to me. It's like a friend who is always there to **share ups and downs** with me. So yeah, I would always miss my house, my room whenever I'm away.

Vocabulary

Humble (adj) having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance

To help (SO) do Sth (v) to make it easier or possible for (someone) to do something by offering them one's services or resources.

To share ups and downs (v) together being through good and bad times

To be away (adj) to or at a distance from a particular place, person, or thing

10.9. Which part of your home do you like the most?

It's the dining room where my family spends our time together. Not only lunch or dinner but all our **family reunions** take place in the dining room where we can enjoy a **harmonious** atmosphere. We always try to keep the family dinner as something we **cannot go a day without**, since for us it's the family bonding that lies behind.

Vocabulary

Reunion (n) a social event for a group of people who have not seen each other for a long time

Harmonious (adj) friendly and peaceful

To go a day without Sth/doing Sth (v) to feel not necessary to do Sth on a day

10.10. Why do you think some people invest a huge amount of money in buying houses?

People certainly have different reasons to buy a **property**. I believe the most important one is privacy. You will gain much more independence and freedom to **refurbish** the place **as you please** since you are the owner. Besides, it would create a **pride of ownership**. No matter how small or big your house is, it is yours to **renovate** or brag about.

Property (n): a building or buildings and the surrounding land

Refurbish (v): to clean and decorate a room, building, etc. in order to make it more attractive, more useful, etc.

As one please (idiom): whatever you like, or in whatever way you prefer

Ownership (n): the fact of owning something

Renovate (v): to repair and paint an old building, a piece of furniture, etc. so that it is in good condition again

Brag (+about) (v): to talk too proudly about something you own or something you have done

10.11. Should we live in a flat or a house?

It heavily depends on people's preference and **affordability** since each type of property has its own **perks**. If one enjoys the modern **amenities** that an apartment complex can provide such as gyms, swimming pools and convenience stores and, of course, he has money, an apartment would be a great choice. In contrast, houses are usually suitable those who prefer privacy and a quiet lifestyle.

Affordability (n): the fact of being cheap enough that people can afford to buy it or pay it; how affordable something is

Perk (n): a benefit or advantage that you get from a situation

Amenity (n): a feature that makes a place pleasant, comfortable or easy to live in

11. Fruits

11.1. What is your favorite fruit?

I'm a **gourmet** and keen on various types of food, but nothing can beat strawberries. The taste is so refreshing and sweet that I **can't resist grabbing a bite** every time I'm home from work. I often slice the strawberries and mix them with yogurt, which is believed to **do wonders** to your skin.

Vocabulary

Gourmet (n) someone who knows a lot about good food and wine

Grab a bite (v) to get something to eat

Do wonders (phrase) to have a beneficial effect

Or:

It's impossible for me to pick one since I love all kinds of fruits and they are a **vital component** in my diet. I usually eat what's **in season** or sometimes have them mixed for variety. Tropical fruits such as bananas, pineapples, mangoes and papayas are most popular where I come from and also what I eat most frequently.

Vocabulary

Component (n) one of several parts of which something is made

Be in season: available or ready for eating or other use

11.2. When do you eat it?

Every time I find time to **satisfy my appetite**. Especially, when I'm **off work**, I just love to get a quick snack and strawberry yogurt made by myself is the first thing I want to eat. It's so yummy and I can finish off two full bowls **in a row**.

Vocabulary

In a row (phrase) in a series without interruption

Or:

I am a type of person who can consume fruits **any time of the day, any day of the week**. Fruits are included in my breakfast, lunch, dinner as well as several snacks I have during a day, mostly in the form of smoothies or fruit

salads. Avocado and green tea are a perfect combination for a refreshing and healthy drink and also my **all-time** favorite.

Any time of the day, any day of the week: any time

All-time (a): (used when you are comparing things or saying how good or bad something is) of any time

11.3. Do you use fruits when cooking?

Actually cooking is often my mother's **domain**, so I hardly know much about what ingredients she put in the dishes. **Having said this**, I often see my mom sliding some pineapples in the stew to make the meat softer; or in other cases, she also put some pears into the dessert she is boiling on the gas stove.

Vocabulary

Domain (n) an area of activity considered as belonging to or controlled by a particular person or group

Having said that (phrase) used for adding an opinion that seems to be the opposite of what you have just said, although you think both are true

12. Television

12.1. Do you often watch TV?

I actually prefer watching TV to surfing the Internet due to its selectivity and accessibility. Because the audience can be children, teenagers and families, the content of TV programs is examined carefully and suitable time frame is arranged in order to avoid having negative impacts on them.

12.2. What's your favourite TV programme?

Definitely music channels such as MTV or V-channel. These channels offer a wide variety of music everyday. In addition, they also interact with their audience by allowing them to vote for the Top 20 songs of each week or to play the songs they requested.

12.3. What types of TV programme are popular in your country?

In my country these days reality shows and comedy shows are among the most popular TV programs. I guess it's because its content is suitable for audience of any age from children to the elderly. The fans of reality shows feel

interactive and familiar with the competitors while that of comedy shows generally want to be entertained with jokes and laughters.

12.4. Do you ever watch foreign programs or films?

I definitely did enjoy quite a lot of shows and programs, from music, movies, fashion, news and scientific documentaries since the foreign are so good at visual editings and content management. Most of them are in in English because I'm more familiar with this language compare to French or Japanese.

12.5. What (types of) programmes did you watch when you were a child?

Like other children, I watched a number of cartoons and music programs for children when I was a child. Tom and Jerry, Barbie, Disney series are my favorite which still get me excited whenever I see them on TV now. My mom said I was also attracted to music programs for children that I focused on them completely while eating.

12.6. Do you think television has changed in the past few decades?/ (Possibly) Do you think television has changed since you were a child?

Televisions indeed have been changing remarkably for the past few years. The technology has become so **innovative** and competitive to **meet the customers' high demand on** entertainment. The variety of TV programs is no longer limited to national level but has reached to a number of foreign countries; and is significantly **diversifying** in content for audience preference.

Vocabulary

To be innovative (adj): to be developed in technology

To meet one's demand on Sth (v): to provide SO with Sth/to provide Sth for SO

To diversify (v): to vary, to have many choices available

12.7. Has television changed your life in any way?

I think watching TV has become a habit that I would hardly change. My family always watch news while having dinner together. Personally, I'd love watching

TV for relaxing after studying as well as **keeping myself updated on** showbiz, music, movies, landscape discoveries and fields of science. Thus as long as I do not become **a couch potato**, TV has always played an important role in my life, making my life more colorful and opening in front of my eyes the places I've never been to.

Vocabulary

Couch potato (phrase): a person who is addicted to watching TV

To play an important/key/crucial role in Sth (phrase): to be essential

13. Neighbors

13.1. Are there many people living near you?

I'm still living with my family in the same neighborhood where I grew up and the number of household has been constantly increasing over the last decade. Some people have moved out of town but many have **relocated** to this part of the city for better **employment opportunities** and high living standards.

Relocate (v): (especially of a company or workers) to move or to move somebody/something to a new place to work or operate

Employment opportunity (n): job opportunity

13.2. Do you know (all) your neighbors?

Unfortunately, no. I've got to admit that I **could count** the number of neighbors I've ever talked to **on one hand**. The reason might be I have limited contacts with others outside the office since I spend most of my time there, almost 12 hours per day to be exact. Thus, any time and energy I have left is invested in my family and friends.

Count something on one hand (idiom): if you could count something on (the fingers of) one hand, it does not happen very often or exists in very small numbers

13.3. How often do you see (or talk) to your neighbors?

Not as much as I should. I'm always **up to my neck in** work during weekdays, which only leaves weekends for **social engagement**. Since my neighborhood is quite an ideal place for raising families, I often run into

couples of kids when walking my dog on Sunday mornings. I actually prefer talking to children and the fact that they love my puppy is an effective **icebreaker**.

Be up to one's neck in (idiom): to be very busy

Social engagement (n): one's degree of participation in a community or society

Icebreaker (n): a thing that you do or say, like a game or a joke, to make people feel more relaxed, especially at the beginning of a meeting, party, etc.

13.4. Do you think it's important to know your neighbor?

I believe every relationship is worth putting efforts and can benefit us somehow and neighborhood is no exception. People usually say **better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away** since they can offer help **in a matter of** minutes and **look out for** you when your family is not around.

Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away:

A matter of: only, just

Look out for (phrasal verb): to take care of someone and make sure that they are treated well

13.5. How well do you know your neighbors?

Not very well, I'm afraid. Most of my friends around my age in the neighborhood have moved and I've never closed to any local seniors. We do exchange greetings and **impersonal** conversations when we **bump into** each other but nothing more.

Impersonal (a): without human warmth; not friendly and without features that make people feel interested or involved

Bump into (phrasal verb): to meet someone unexpectedly

13.6. Do you think it's important for a person to have a good relationship with their neighbors?

Maintaining good relationships with neighbors can give you **a sense of security** and comfort **to some certain extent**. On the one hand, they **have your back** when you are in trouble or **keep an eye on** your place when you

have some business out of town. On the other hand, you don't **feel out of your element**, especially when settling in a new city.

Maintain good relationships with: keep good relationships with

A sense of security: a feeling of confidence and safety

To some certain extent: up to a point

Have someone's back: to be prepared and willing to support or defend someone

Keep an eye on something (idiom): to watch someone or something or stay informed about the person's behavior, esp. to keep someone out of trouble

Out of one's element (idiom): not in a natural or comfortable situation

13.7. What do you think of your neighbors?

As much as I don't really know my neighbors personally, my parents are friends with most of them whom they usually **speak highly of**. Some occasionally **pay a visit to** my house for a coffee talk with my dad or stop by to send newspapers they have collected for us. We are a pretty close neighborhood; therefore, we treat one another with kindness and respect.

As much as: although

Speak highly of: to reflect well on someone or something

Pay a visit to: visit

13.8. What kind of people are your neighborhoods?

Since our neighborhood has many social activities to **promote a healthy lifestyle** and **a sense of unity** among families, we meet frequently and understand more about each other after each time. Everyone is pretty engaging and cheerful in these kinds of sports events and some are extremely enthusiastic in supporting others.

Promote a healthy lifestyle: encourage one to lead a healthy lifestyle

A sense of unity: a feeling of being united

13.9. Do you spend much time socializing with your neighbors in your neighbors' homes?

Rarely have I ever been to my neighbors' house, except my childhood friends'. I am an **introvert** and usually **feel out of my element** at others' space.

Therefore, unless they are extremely close to me, I prefer socializing with my neighbors somewhere public.

Introvert (n): a quiet person who is more interested in their own thoughts and feelings than in spending time with other people

Out of one's element (phrasal verb): not in a natural or comfortable situation

13.10. How (well) do you get along with your neighbors?

Although I've never had any deep, **soul-searching** conversations with most of the people in **local community**, we do share mutual respect and acknowledgement whenever engaging in a chat. Sometimes, when I need help with some gardening or housekeeping, they are always willing to **give a hand**.

Soul-searching (a): the careful examination of your thoughts and feelings, for example in order to reach the correct decision or solution to something

Give/ lend a hand (idiom): give someone help

13.11. What are the benefits of having good relationships with one's neighbors?

I reckon that there would be lots of them. First of all, getting along well with your neighbors creates **a sense of belonging** and **fulfilment**. This is **exceptionally** true with people who have to relocate and struggle with settling in. Having a friend to talk to would be a huge **emotional support**. Secondly, they will **offer a helping hand** when you are in trouble but having no family or friends around.

A sense of belonging: the feeling that you belong/ fit in somewhere

Fulfilment (n): happiness and satisfaction with what you are doing or have done

Exceptionally (adv): used before an adjective or adverb to emphasize how strong or unusual the quality is

Emotional support:

Offer a helping hand (idiom): give/ lend a hand; help someone

13.12. What sort of problem can people have with their neighbors?

There are tons of issues that can happen within a neighborhood such as **noise disturbance** or annoying neighbors. Some people have little concern about others' well-being or **state of mind**. Thus, no matter what time it is, they would turn up the volume and leave others wide awake.

Noise disturbance (n): the disturbing or excessive noise that may harm the activity or balance of human or animal life

State of mind (n): a person's emotional state

13.12. In what ways can neighbors help each other?

Neighbors could support each other, both emotionally and **materially**. For example, if someone **well-liked** and **kind-hearted** in the neighborhood is sick, others would visit and pray for him or her. In case said person is experiencing **financial difficulty** and couldn't afford **medical treatment**, he or she is likely to receive help from neighbors.

Materially (adv): in a way that is connected with money, possessions or the physical world, rather than with the mind or spirit

Well-liked (a): regarded with much affection; popular with many people

Kind-hearted (a): kind and generous

13.13. Have you ever asked a neighbor for help?

Surely. Although I'm highly independent, there are times that I have to **lean on** my neighbors. Most recently, I had to go on a business trip for a few weeks and none of my family could spend time in the city to look after my apartment. I was kind of **stressed out** but a friend from next door offered to **keep an eye on** my place and help to deal with some daily duties of residents when I was away, which I truly felt **grateful** for.

Lean on (v): to depend on somebody/something for help and support

Stressed out (a): stressed

Grateful (a): feeling or showing thanks because somebody has done something kind for you or has done as you asked

13.14. Would you prefer to have young people as your neighbors or old people?

Either is OK with me as long as they're **decent** and reasonable people. I **have had my fair share of** unpleasant experience with rude neighbors who lack **common sense** and **social etiquettes**; therefore, if they are **mindful** and can keep their voice and volume down in the middle of the night, it's good enough for me.

Decent (a): (of people or behaviour) honest and fair; treating people with respect

Have one's fair share of something (idiom): to have a lot or more than enough of something bad

Common sense (n): good sense and sound judgment in practical matters

Social etiquette (n): the customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession or group

14. Advertisements

14.1. Are there many advertisements in your country?

Definitely, there are. They appear **all over the place** from the streets to social media with a **high density**. For example, there is a **multitude of** colorful **flyers** stucked on the street walls in Sydney.

All over the place (expression) everywhere

Density (n) the quantity of people or things in a given area or space.

A multitude of (expression) a very large number of people or things

Flyers (n) a small handbill advertising an event or product.

14.2. Why do you think there are so many advertisements now?

I guess it's due to the benefits of the companies. First, advertisements are the easiest way to reach the customers to attract their attentions to a particular brand or product. From that attractive information, customers will **be able to** choose an appropriate one. Second, it also **plays a crucial role** in marketing strategy that the company apply to attract customers.

To be able to do Sth (v) having the power, skill, means, or opportunity to do something.

To play a (an) crucial/essential/key/main role in (v): of great importance

Campaign (n) an organized course of action to achieve a goal

14.3. What are the various places where we see advertisements?

Advertising is **here, there, and every where**. It gets to people through different types of communication such as flyers and banners on the streets or printed ones on newspaper, magazines or electronic ones on social media. It could be written, verbal or a short movie.

Here, there, and every where (expression) everywhere

14.4. How do you feel about advertisements?

Sometimes, I find it a little bit annoying because the quality of the advertised products are usually **overrated**. However, there are other beneficial advertisements in supermarkets which has **informative** contents for customers such as on which days there will be **promotions** or which new products will be **launched**.

Informative (adj) to provide useful or interesting information

Promotions (n) activity that supports or encourages a cause, venture, or aim.

Launch (v) to introduce (a new product or publication) to the public for the first time.

Overrated (adj) to have a higher opinion of (someone or something) than is deserved

15. Time Management

15.1. How do you organize you time?

I often **prioritize** things that **matter to me** most, in the order of urgency and importance. Usually, I often spend the evening **planning out** what to do the next day.

15.2. Do you think young people organize their time in the same way?

No, it depends on each individual. Some prefer to **have no plans** at all as they can **improvise** quite well no matter what situations. For me, I always plan out my schedule **in advance** as I'm a safe guy/girl and don't want to **take risks**.

15.3. How do you feel when you are late for an appointment?

I really don't like to keep others waiting. I feel very apologetic and **guilty of** not being punctual. Usually I'm late because I'm trying to fit too many things into my schedule.

16. Video Games

16.1. What do you think of the benefit of video games ?

From my point of view, video games have both entertaining and educational benefits. Firstly, video games that focus on puzzles help improve my **critical thinking skills**, and increase my creativity. By having to work through a problem, I can learn to **make logical connections between** certain actions. Furthermore, playing video games is really enjoyable, because they have been made covering a wide variety of subjects and styles. This allows me to choose games that are appropriate for my age and personal preferences.

16.2. Can video games be educational?

From an educational perspective, these games encourage imagination and creativity, as well as concentration, logical thinking and problem solving, all of which are useful skills outside the gaming context. Furthermore, it has been shown that computer simulation games can improve users' motor skills and help to prepare them for real-world tasks, such as flying a plane.

16.3. What are the drawbacks of video games?

Gaming can be highly addictive because users are constantly given scores, new targets and frequent rewards to keep them playing. Many children now spend hours each day trying to progress through the levels of a game or to get a higher score than their friends. This type of addiction can have effects ranging from lack of sleep to problems at school, when homework is sacrificed for a

few more hours on the computer or console. The rise in obesity in recent years has also been linked in part to the sedentary lifestyle and lack of exercise that often accompany gaming addiction.

16.4. What are the benefits of computer games?

Computer games have many educational benefits, for example, they help children develop problem-solving and analytical skills, such as drawing conclusions, seeking alternatives and making predictions. Computer games increase cognitive skills and encourage practical experience. They are designed to encourage creativity, initiatives and mental power. Many computer games are used to teach and reinforce academic subjects, e. g. some computer games enhance mathematical skills. Computer games are designed to be entertaining; most computer games offer a multiplayer function; inviting people to share their entertainment.

16.5. What are the drawbacks of computer games?

Most computer games encourage violent tendencies such as aggression, antisocial behaviour and recklessness. There are many games which show graphic fight scenes where the most brutal is most applauded. The language tends to be violent. Moreover, computer games can not only decrease interaction and social skills, but it also causes psychological and mental problems tension.

17. History

17.1. Do you like history?

Well, although I'm excited to **gain more knowledge** about history such as the evolution of humanity, or in other words, the process of how we became what we are today and of how we have what we're having today such as crops, machines, chemicals or understandings about creatures living on Earth, I think I would **prefer** reading or watching videos or documentaries about those topics myself **to** being taught at schools. To be honest, I believe history lessons at school have become less interesting to a lot of students nowadays.

Vocabulary

To gain/earn knowledge about Sth (collocation): to acknowledge/learn about Sth

To prefer V-ing (v): to like doing Sth more than other things

17.2. What historical event do you find most interesting?

Out of the many historical lessons I have been taught, the most memorable **epoch** in the history of America is Independence Day of the United States which is the second day of July, 1776. Perhaps this is because it **marked an event of massive historical significance for the country.**

Epoch (n) a period of time in history or a person's life, typically one marked by notable events

17.3. Do you think history is important?

From my personal perspectives, history knowledge is basic and essential to human lives. By looking back on the past, history first teaches us to appreciate our ancestors who **dedicated their lives to** the future, especially **when it comes to** the soldiers who battled for peace and independence, which **costed thousands of people's blood, sweat and tears.** Furthermore, the enormous number of principles and theories that past people left incompleting is recognized to be highly valuable for present application, as well as further improvement and development. In short, I believe that history **has a significant role to play in** our daily lives and it is important for our generation to gain as much knowledge about the past as possible.

Vocabulary

To dedicate (one's life) to (doing) Sth (collocation): to spend a life-long time working on Sth

To cost SO's blood, sweat and tears (phrase): to take SO a lot of efforts and suffering

17.4. Do you think you can learn history from films or TV programs?

Definitely, yes. **Visual aids** are able **to do a great job in providing deep insight into** history. **As far as I'm concerned,** historical documentaries

and films are quite popular on both national and international channels, in both first language and widely-spoken language. Thus, the historical background of one country has become well-known for national population as well as foreigners.

Vocabulary

Visual aids (n): something that you are shown, such as a picture, film, or map, in order to help you understand or remember information

To do a great job in Sth (v): to do Sth well

To provide (give) insight into Sth / to gain (get) an insight about (v): to a chance to understand something or learn more about it

As far as I'm concerned (phrase) used when you are giving your opinion about something, especially when this may be different from other people's opinions | according to my knowledge

17.5. Do you think internet is a good way to learn about history?

From my point of view, Internet should not be taken as a good means to learn history. You may **bear in mind** that a major of history is recorded by human, so it is almost impossible to examine its accuracy and precision. With the rights to **speak one's mind** provided by the Internet, people may **bias** towards their preference, **giving rise to** negative messages that threat social security and peace. Therefore, we must be **highly selective** when **taking in** historical information from online sources. Information from some well-known academic organizations such as TED or Crashcourse can be refered as reliable.

Vocabulary

To bear (keep) in mind/take into account/take into consideration (v): to remember a piece of information when you are making decisions or thinking about a matter

To speak one's mind (v): to say what's in one's mind

To give rise to Sth/ to result in Sth (v): to cause Sth to happen

17.6. Does your country have long history?

Well my country has quite long history from thousands of years ago. The more I learn about the ancient time through history classes as well as movies and documentaries, the more **grateful** I feel **for** what I have today, especially the peace and independence, for it **costed thousands of people blood, sweat and tears.**

Vocabulary

To feel grateful for (v): appreciate of benefits received

To cost SO blood, sweat and tears (v): a lot of efforts and suffering

18. Music

18.1. Do you often (like to) listen to music? Or Do you like listening to songs?

So far I haven't met anyone who dislikes listening to music. However, when the **workload** is too heavy that requires me to **stay highly focused**, music is a **huge distraction**. Unlike many people who like listening to instrumental music because it highly benefits for their concentration and study, in my case the music makes me feel instantly sleepy.

Workload (n) the amount of work that person has to do

Distraction (n) something that gets your attention and prevents you from concentrating on something else

18.2. When do you listen to music?

Well, music is essential to human in the whole world so I'm **no exception**. I usually listen to cheerful music when I need motivation while sad music is my **preference** if I'm **in a bad mood**.

Vocabulary

To be no exception (adj) if someone or something is no exception, they are the same as all others so they can be included in a general statement

To be in a bad/good mood (phrase) sad or happy

18.3. How much time do you spend listening to music every day?

As I've mentioned I prefer working in silence. **To put it simply**, no music is allowed during my working hours. After a long day at school, I probably want to **chill out** for like half an hour with music to help me stay energetic so I can get back to work later.

Vocabulary

To put it simply (expression) used for saying that you are explaining something in a clear and simple way

Chill out (phrasal verb) to relax

18.4. What kinds of music do you like to listen to? Or What's your favorite kind of music?

My music taste varies widely from West to East and from the 90s to modern EDM. But if Korean pop is considered as a kind of music, then yeah, that's my favorite of all time. More than half of my playlists are Korean songs and I always **keep myself updated** with the news related to Korean showbiz.

Vocabulary

To keep updated (v) to follow a celebrity by frequently reading news about them

18.5. Have you ever been to a concert before? Or Have you ever been to a musical performance?

Once in a blue moon I attend a concert, since the ticket price for foreign artists' concerts is so **out of my reach** that I can only stay home and watch online. It was 2014 that I finally did go to a concert **on my own**, obviously it was an international music concert. It was absolutely **mind-blowing** and unforgettable for me.

Vocabulary

Once in a blue moon (idiom) rarely

Out of my reach (idiom) to be unable to afford

On one's own (idiom)

Responsible for oneself, independent of outside help or control

Mind-blowing (adj) Sth overwhelmingly impressive

18.6. Do you like to listen to live music?

Unless it's live at a coffee shop, where literally there are only you and music, then yeah I would love to. But I would **change my mind** if it's a concert. The crowd is too crazy. It's completely **a mess** that most of the time I **end up** having serious dizzy and headache.

18.7. When did you start listening to this type of music?

Since the day a friend of mine introduced her favorite group to me. She **couldn't help herself talking on and on** about them that I thought I somehow needed to catch up with her. And the more I know about Korean pop, the more passionate I've become.

Couldn't help one's self doing Sth (n) continuously doing Sth

On and on (expression) continually; at tedious length

18.8. Where do you listen to it?

Almost everywhere, except for classroom. It's the **golden era** of mobile devices, everyone carries earphone and phone with them all the time, music therefore **is on their fingertips**.

Golden era (n) a certain period of time that Sth vastly develops

On their fingertips (phrase) easy to reach

18.9. How do you feel when you listen to this music?

Well **I'm a type of person** whose mood is easily affected by what I'm listening to, thus as the music changes, my mood also fluctuates. But most of the time, listening to some music helps me **pick up my energy** and chill a bit.

Vocabulary

To be a type of person (that) (phrase) to belong to a group of people who share a similar characteristic

Pick up my energy (phrasal verb) to get better, stronger

18.10. Have you ever learned to play a musical instrument?

I learned to play the organ when I was in kindergarten. It was quite funny because I **started out** as one of the performers, then my teacher told my mom that I had better play the organ instead of performing, so I became her trainee and it continued for around 4 to 5 years until I was 10.

Vocabulary

To start out (v) to begin

18.11. Is music an important subject at school in your country?

Music is one of the **compulsory** subjects for primary and secondary students in my country. However, mainly singing is focused. We can also add some movements to make the songs more lively. Only those who are selected for the big performances are allowed to use musical instruments.

Vocabulary

Compulsory (adj) to be required

18.12. Did you often listen to music when you were a child? (If yes give details.)

Since my parents are **music-lovers** and they also have very good tastes, I was exposed to the old kinds of music at a very young age. Sometimes my mom **sang me to sleep** with her **lullabies**. Although I can't get the message at that time, my mom said that I **buoyed up** when listening to them.

Vocabulary

Bouyed up (adj) feel cheerful

18.13. What kinds of music are (most) popular in your country?

Beside pop music, the young generation nowadays expose to a number of different types of music. It is indeed difficult to tell which is the most **in demand**, since from my point of view each type has roughly the same popularity. But I guess pop music is the most **sought-after** now. At least I've never met someone who completely doesn't know a single pop song.

Vocabulary

Sought-after (adj) in demand

18.14. Do you like traditional songs?

Well, it's easy for me to name some traditional songs, some of which are even quite familiar to me. But to be honest, I think **I'm not that into** this kind of music.

19. Work/Study

Study

19.1. Describe your education

I graduated from High School for the Gifted and **got into** an International University because I think 2-year study at this university would prepare me well, especially my **critical thinking** skills before I finish another 2 years abroad at the University of Nottingham.

Vocabulary

Critical thinking (n) the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment.

Get into something (phrase) to be accepted to study at a school

19.2. What is your area of specialization?

My **major** is Plant Biotechnology. I have been into Biology since I was in high school and I think a **shift** to a field where Biology and advanced technology are associated would be interesting and promising for my future career.

Major (n) the most important subject that a college or university student is studying

To be into something (phrase) really like something

19.3. Why did you choose to study that major?

There are many reasons for my choice. As I've already **explained about** my long-term interest in Biology and plants, another reason could be because of science itself, since I've found my personalities have changed in a positive way, you know, like I've become more patient and skillful.

19.4. Do you like your major? (Why?/Why not?)

To tell you the truth it was quite challenging for me **at first**, because the university's requirements are especially high and you know science itself highly demands skillful hands and curious mind. However, as time **goes by** I think I'm **getting used to** an **insurmountable** amount of pressure and actually enjoy my study.

Go by (phrasal verb) if time goes by, it passes

Get used to Verb-ing/something (phrase) If you get used to something, you become familiar with it

Insurmountable (adj) incapable to overcome (problem/difficult)

19.5. What kind of school did you go to as a child?

Well just like most of the pupils, I spent five years at the government's primary school. It took me only 10 minutes to go to school and I had my parents take me to school everyday. Classes start at 7 in the morning and end at 5 in the evening.

19.6. What was your favourite subject as a child?

To tell you the truth, I was quite good at Literature **back then**. Besides, my Literature teacher was really dedicated and caring, thus I always tried my best to get high score and impressed my teacher.

Back then (phrase) an expression you can use in order to refer to a specific period of time in the past

19.7. (Possibly) Are you looking forward to working?

To be honest, working is actually my **plan B** just in case I need to **make ends meet**. In the future I think my higher degree is my priority.

Vocabulary

Plan B (n) back-up plan

To make ends meet (v) to make money, to earn a living

Work

19.1. What do you do?

For the past few months I've been working for *The Guardian* as a news editor. In fact this is my first job ever, I'm working really hard to contribute to the success of this prestigious newspaper.

19.2. What are your responsibilities?

As a part-time editor, I am responsible for editing news related to different **current affairs** as well as collecting information for the newspaper edition.

19.3. Why did you choose to do that type of work (or, that job)?

I guess it's mainly because of the **job flexibility** & my passion for journalism. To be more specific, this job offers me alternatives to the typical **nine-to-five work schedule**, enabling me to find a better balance between work and

life. Besides, this job gives me opportunities to **pursue my dream** to become a journalist down the road.

Vocabulary

Job flexibility (expression) gives employees flexibility on how long, where and when they work.

Nine-to-five work (phrase) the normal work schedule for most jobs

19.4. Is there some other kind of work you would rather do?

At present I don't think I'm able to **dedicate** myself to any other job rather than this one. In fact, to me it's the experiences and opportunities I can gain that really matters.

Vocabulary

To dedicate to Sth (v) devote (time or effort) to a particular task or purpose

19.5. Describe the company or organization you work for.

The Guardian is a National British daily newspaper which offers free access both to current news and an archive of three million stories. In April 2011, MediaWeek reported that *The Guardian* was the fifth most popular newspaper site in the world. I personally believe that the guardian is the inspirational workplace for all people who dream of becoming a journalist.

19.6. Do you enjoy your work?

Most of the time. Contributing to the news production for a **world-class** newspaper gives me a sense of satisfaction and pride.

Vocabulary

World-class (adj) of or among the best in the world

19.7. What do you like/dislike about your job?

Well **the perk** of being a news editor is that you'll **surround yourself with** inspiring news **on a daily basis**. What I don't like about this job is that I have to do a thousand edits to get the final one to **meet the requirement** of my boss. Sometimes I feel a bit overloaded with tons of tasks.

Vocabulary

Perk (n) an advantage or something extra that you are given because of your job

Overloaded (adj) to give excessive work, responsibility, or information to

19.8. (Possibly) Do you miss being a student?

I surely will miss my student life once I **get involve in the workplace**. For me I think when I'm a student, at least I have someone guide me, whereas at work mostly you must guide yourself. The academic environment appears to be a **comfort zone** for me, while I'm sure I'll struggle with **fitting in** the working environment.

Vocabulary

To get involve in (v) to become a part of (an organization)

To fit in (v) to become suitable or appropriate for Sth or SO

20. Housework

20.1. Do you often do housework?

Since I am no longer living with my family, I have to take care of my own place without any assistance from other siblings with the housework. Due to **time constraint** and **health condition**, I only do my chores 2 times per week. My work and studying **consume** most of my time and it's not until after 7 in the evening do I come back to my apartment. I am so mentally and physically **exhausted** by then that I save all the housework for midweek and weekend.

Vocabulary

Time constraint: time limitation or restriction

Health condition:

Consume (v): to use something, especially fuel, energy or time

Exhausted (a): very tired

20.2. Do you like doing housework?

Personally, I don't think anybody likes to do housework but, of course, there will be exceptions. Since I only **manage to** do my chores twice a week only not to turn my apartment into a garbage dump, I cannot say I like doing it. However, for some people, cleaning houses or doing dishes have them

occupied and free their mind from other **bothersome** issues, at least temporarily.

Vocabulary

Manage to do something: to succeed in doing something, especially something that needs a lot of effort or skill

Occupy (v): to fill or use a space, an area or an amount of time

Bothersome (a): causing trouble or difficulty

20.3. Do you think children should do housework?

Well, obviously, children should be encouraged to share housework with other family members to **cultivate** their **sense of responsibility** and **appreciation**. Of course, it doesn't have to be anything too **extreme**. Some little helpful deeds such as keeping their toys from **scattering** all over the place or folding their own clothes are meaningful enough.

Vocabulary

Cultivate (v): to develop an attitude, a way of talking or behaving, etc.

Sense of responsibility | Sense of appreciation

Extreme (a): serious or severe

Scatter (v): to throw or drop things in different directions so that they cover an area of ground

20.4. How much time do people in your country spend doing housework?

It's hard to say the average amount of time since each family has their own **arrangement**. However, I believe it wouldn't **exceed** two hours per day because of people's busy schedule, especially in the **hustle and bustle** of today's lifestyle. Necessary chores that cannot be delayed such as cooking, dish washing or house cleaning are usually done daily, meanwhile less emergent housework can be **put off** until weekend like groceries shopping or gardening.

Vocabulary

Arrangement (n): a plan or preparation that you make so that something can happen

Exceed (v): to be greater than a particular number or amount

Hustle and bustle: a large amount of activity and work, usually in a noisy surrounding

Put off (phrasal verb): to change something to a later time or date; delay

21. Birthday

21.1. When is your birthday?

I came to this world on April 14th twenty two years ago. Although I guess no special international events took place on this day, but to my parents, I believe the day I was born had changed their lives.

21.1. How do children celebrate birthdays in your country?

From my personal experience, most children would celebrate their birthday by **throwing a party** at home with their friends and families. The food can be either home-cooked or take-away from food stores. Traditionally, kids would sing the Happy Birthday song, have meals to gather, play some games or watch movies.

Vocabulary

To throw a party (v): to have a party

21.2. How do you like to celebrate your birthday?

I'd like to get some gifts and have cake and stuff. Or make a long trip to Europe with my friend. I usually just stay at home with the family and have a cake. But this year I will go out to a club and dance with friends. I want to do something different. I don't particularly **care about** my birthday. However, being surprised by a loved one just to make me know just how much they care is nice. I usually treat it as any other day.

21.3. How did you celebrate your last birthday?

Well last year I was away from home on my birthday, thus I cannot have the chance to celebrate my special day with my families and friends. However, I still had a small party with some close friends living nearby and **got**

showered with birthday gifts. They also **took me out for** dinner to enjoy **palatable** dishes. I felt so happy to know such nice friends.

Vocabulary

Take somebody out for something (phrase) to take someone to a place like a cinema or a restaurant and usually pay for them

Palatable (adj) delicious

21.4. Are birthdays more important for children or for adults?

I think it's important for children and older people. For **middle-aged** men I think **it is not that important** because generally they are too busy with work or being a parent.

It's not that + adjective (clause) it's not very +adjective

Middle-aged (adj) (of a person) aged about 45 to 65

21.5. What kind of birthday gifts do you like to receive?

Well I think I would love to receive something useful for decoration such as little stuffed animals or mini indoor plants, as I tend to take some of those gifts with me when I'm away from home.

21.6. Is there a different between the way you celebrated your birthday in the past and in the present?

As a grown-up, I now prefer keeping my birthday as simple as I could. Because me, my friends and family members have become so busy with our own schedules that it is quite difficult for all of us to meet up for fun. Thus, the party might be re-arranged with only a few people showing up. Those who cannot **make it** to my birthday party would either give me a call or send me messages or cards.

Vocabulary

Make it (phrase) to manage to arrive at a place or go to an event

22. Music & Instruments

22.1. Do you think children should learn to play musical instruments?

I think it's not a **must** but it'll definitely make the children's life more colorful. They could play the instrument in their spare time and it can become their hobby. However, I don't like the fact that a lot of parents are forcing their children to learn musical instruments. I think they should respect their children's choice.

22.2. Have you learned to play any musical instrument?

Yes. I can play guitar, though not very well. I started learning guitar two years ago. The primary objective was to entertain my girlfriend, though she left me for another person soon after I started. It was **heart-breaking**, but I didn't stop, because I needed something to **hang on to**, a goal. I'm happy now and I'll keep on playing my guitar, whoever I may play for.

Hang on to (verb) to hold tightly to something| continue doing something

22.3. Do you play any instrument? And what is it?

Actually, I am not a **big fan of** instruments. I did learn to play the piano for a couple of months when I was little, but I **ended up quitting**. I think this whole hobby thing **requires music talent**, which I definitely don't have.

End up doing something (phrase) if you end up doing something or end up in a particular state, you do that thing or get into that state even though you did not originally intend to.

22.4. What might be the best age to start learning to play a musical instrument?

I'd say, as early as possible, because learning a musical instrument requires a lot of practice. When one is young, his/her fingers are often very **agile**. And they are quick to learn. But when they grow older, their fingers become stiffer and they probably don't have enough time because of their hectic study or work schedule.

Agile (a) able to move quickly and easily

Hectic (a) full of busy activity

22.5. Do men and women play different kinds of musical instruments?

Well, it's hard to say. For one thing, I haven't **paid much attention to** what kinds of musical instruments people are playing. For another, from what I see and what I hear, nowadays, men and women are playing all kinds of instruments as they are interested in.

22.6. What kind of natural sound do you love to listen to? And explain why.

I love to listen to birds chirping, leaves rustling, rain falling onto the ground, waves lapping over the beach and streams **gurgling down** in the valley. They are the real sound of nature. The beauty is **indescribable**.

Chirp (v) when a bird or an insect chirps, it makes a short high sound

Rustle (v) to make a sound like the one that leaves or sheets of paper make when they move

Gurgle down (verb) to make the low sound that water makes when it is poured quickly from a bottle

22.7. Do you love listening to music?

Absolutely, I am a big fan of music. Music can always **weave its magic** to give people different feelings. And people say that music speaks international languages. I think it is totally true. Say, people from different countries can all appreciate the same music.

Weave one's magic (phrase) to attract or interest someone very much

22.8. What kinds of music do you love listening to?

I love so many kinds of music, such as R&B, soul, new age, reggae and blues. Among all these kinds of music, I love R&B most. When R&B singers sing, they perform with all their heart and soul. And I can feel **overwhelming** emotions **coming out** from their voice.

Overwhelming (a) an overwhelming emotion is very strong, often so strong that you cannot think or behave normally

22.9. Where and when do you usually listen to music?

Actually, I always take my iPod with me, so basically, I can listen to music anywhere and anytime I want. The MP3 has been such a **blessing!** Thanks to the inventor of the MP3, my music world is awesome!

Blessing (n) something good that you feel very grateful or lucky to have

22.10. Do you want to be a singer?

Well, from what I've known, being a singer is **not easy at all**. It's not just about performing, but it's also **involved in** interaction with fans and other colleagues. Based on what I've known about showbiz, and even the music industry in general, I think that I don't belong to that world.

Not at all (phrase) certainly not

Involve (verb) to include something as a necessary part of an activity, event, or situation

23. Emails/ Letters

23.1. Do you like to write a letter or an email?

Due to **time constraint** and professionalism, emails are much more favorable than traditional **handwritten correspondence**. However, I still enjoy the **sophistication** and **artfulness** of handwritten letters since each one is unique and **intensely** personal. Therefore, unless in business context, I usually send written notes or invitations for my friends and family for their **intimacy**.

Constraint (n): a thing that limits or restricts something, or your freedom to do something

Correspondence (n): the activity of writing letters

Sophistication (n): the quality of being sophisticated

Artfulness (n): the quality of being artful or of acting in an artful manner

Intensely (adv): in a way that shows very strong feelings, opinions or thoughts about somebody/something

Intimacy (n): the state of having a close personal relationship with somebody

23.2. Do you think emails are useful?

Obviously yes. It's one of the most primary tools in **business communication** as well as personal correspondence. **On the business front**, emails are immediate, direct and efficient for both **internal** and **external** communication. Parties can send and receive **inquiries** or

contracts in the matter of seconds, which helps keep **the flow of information** and business process going.

Internal (a): involving or concerning only the people who are part of a particular organization rather than people from outside it

External (a): happening or coming from outside a place, an organization, your particular situation, etc.

Inquiry (n): a request for information about somebody/something; a question about somebody/something

23.3. What sorts of letters (or emails) do you think are most difficult to write?

In my opinion, complaint letters are one of the toughest **pieces of writing** because of the **discomfort** they may cause. Since I'm an easy-going and **conflict-averse** person, I don't usually complain when I should, whether it's a **poor service experience** or product. Hence, writing a formal letter of complaint is even more difficult, especially when I have to carefully choose my words and tones so it can be less critical and more **constructive**.

Discomfort (n): a feeling of worry or embarrassment

Conflict-averse (a): having a tendency to avoid conflicts

Constructive (a): having a useful and helpful effect rather than being negative or with no purpose

23.4. Do you think email might one day replace handwritten letters?

Regarding the **widespread** use of emails in modern communication, it's understandable that some might think handwritten letters could be completely replaced one day but I don't. Since handwriting is the most **primal** tool of human **interaction** and closely connected with **cultural identity**, it would be preserved and promoted. Besides, many have preferred handwriting in more personal notes or letters since it can express how special the **recipients** are.

Widespread (a): existing or happening over a large area or among many people

Primal (a): connected with the earliest origins of life; very basic

Cultural identity (n): the identity or feeling of belonging to a group

Recipient (n): a person who receives something

24. Holidays

24.1. What public holidays do you have in your country?

My country has a great range of public holidays but to me the most important one is the Independence Day. It is considered as a national holiday, which is annually celebrated on July 4. These day are to celebrate the day the US secured independence from the British Empire after the Revolutionary War and **usher in** a new **era** of peace and reunification.

Usher in (v) to make an activity or process begin

Era (n) a period of time that has a particular quality or character

24.2. Do people in your country celebrate foreign festivals?

Of course we do. We celebrate Christmas with extraordinarily colorful lights and decorations similar to those found in Western countries. It is a grand party when the fun-loving and sociable citizens, whether being a Christian or not, celebrate **with gusto**. Besides, there are also sparkling lighting decorations on the streets and in front of houses, turning particular places into Christmas area. Usually the shops will have their signs advertising sales for Christmas seasons, and the **piercing cold** is a wonderful chance for people to **get dressed up**.

With gusto (phrase) if you do something with gusto, you do it with a lot of enthusiasm

24.3. What do you usually do during public holidays?

Well, I often spend my time gathering with my beloved family and friends. Maybe go shopping and **take advantage of** the sales which my favorite shops are offering or **hanging out with** friends and having a whale of time at some entertaining places.

Take advantage of (phrase) to use an opportunity to achieve results

Have a whale of time (n) to have an exciting or fun time; to have a big time

24.4. Do you like short holidays or long holidays?

Both options have their own merits, but if I have to choose one, I would pick short holidays. The reason for this is that I can feel more prepared to **go back to study** and feel **less fatigued** than spending a week for playing or travelling. The purpose of holiday should be to give people **a temporary rest** and help them **recharge the batteries for a fresh period ahead**. Therefore, it is not recommended that people **turn their days off into** a long holiday, **indulge themselves** and **neglect their study and work**.

Fatigued (a) feeling extremely tired, either physically or mentally

Indulge (v) to have or eat something that you enjoy but that you should not have much of

25. Friends

25.1. Do you think friends are important in your life?

Sure, they **play an important role in my life**. I agree that **friends are your relatives chosen by yourself**. My friends **accompany me when I am going through ups and downs**. I think your **happiness will be doubled and sadness will be halved** if they are shared by your friends. In addition to that, good friends **offer me valuable suggestions** when I feel lost.

Or:

Well, honestly, besides my family, my friends **play an important role in my life**. With them, I am able to share all the problems that I find difficult to talk to my parents. They're also the ones who I can trust and enjoy the most beautiful moments of my youth.

Go through (phrasal verb) experience something bad

Ups and downs (idiom) a variety of situations and experiences that are sometimes good and sometimes bad

25.2. What does friendship mean to you?

I think friendship is a necessary part of life. Friendship, in my opinion, means you have somebody who can **share your happiness and pain**. Friends are those **whom you feel easy with**. They are always your good listeners. And they are the people you can **discuss the interesting issues with**.

25.3. How can be a good friend to others?

A good friend must be supportive, loyal and trustworthy. Whenever you need him, he will be there. He can share happiness and sorrow with you.

25.4. What qualities do you value in your best friend?

Honesty and faith, I think, are the most important. We needn't agree on everything, but we can trust each other totally. I don't like being with a person who always tells lies. It's too boring to judge all the time whether he is telling the truth or not. If I **go astray** he will point it to me frankly without hesitation. I don't like the friends who often **flatter** me. In fact they are not real friends.

Or:

Well, it's hard to say anything. Though making friends is easy, **maintaining** that relationship is much harder. Therefore, I think my best friends are those who should be honest and **sympathetic** because I am a kind of person that prefers the truth and easily **get affected** my emotions.

Go astray (phrase) do something wrong

Flatter (v) to praise someone in order to get something that you want, especially in a way that is not sincere

25.5. How do people make friends with others? How do you make new friends?

Besides being classmates and colleagues, I think the most common way to **make friends** is through other friends. It is especially true for people like me, because I am **introverted** and not used to introducing myself to strangers. In addition, with the development of the Internet more and more young people enjoy **making friends online**.

Or:

Let me see, I come from a country which is agricultural, so it means that the people are very friendly and **warm-hearted**. In my country, it is very easy to make friends just by saying hello to someone, then asking about other's health. Sometimes, just a smile can bring people close to each other.

25.6. What are the differences between adults and children in making friends?

I think children make friends just for playing together. If they can play with each other, they will become good friends. A toy or a candy can make them become friends. **Their friendship is rather pure**. But of course they are likely to **break up easily and make up again**. When they grow up, they will not **make friends very readily**. Adults **choose friends more cautiously**. And they may have many kinds of friends, such as business partners, colleagues. The friendship has some profits or advantages for them.

Or:

Well, this question is such an interesting one. In fact, adults and children do have a difference in making friends **owing to** their age and their interests. While adults prefer friends who have the same jobs and goals in life, children make friends as they simply want to find someone who can play and have fun with them.

25.7. Where do young people usually meet in your city?

Well, it's difficult to say because there are many **good meeting places** in my city, like cafes, cinemas or parks. **As far as I am concerned**, I usually meet my friends in the cafes. They have **comfortable seats and pleasant background** music. We can chat without being disturbed while **enjoying a cup of coffee or juice**. If the weather is fine we will go to the parks. It is agreeable to sit on the bench near the lake, enjoying the pleasant scenery far away.

25.8. Have you made any friends on the Internet?

Yes, I'm keen on surfing the Internet, especially chatting with others on Facebook. I have made many friends via the Internet. In my opinion, they are not different from other friends of mine. We know each other's personal

information and trust each other. We often discuss something we are both interested in. The only difference is that we meet online but not in real places

25.9. How can you keep in touch with your friends if you two are not seeing each other frequently?

Everything becomes easy with modern technology. We call each other or send messages. Sometimes we chat online and even see each other on the screen with the help of a small camera. We often send pictures and letters by Internet as well.

25.10. Do you prefer to spend time with friends or alone?

To me, friends are the best thing that I've ever had, so whenever I am free, I usually would like to spend time with my **beloved** friends. We often **hang out** at the coffee shop in the weekends, **gossiping** about our daily **issues**.

25.11. Do you have many friends?

Oh, many friends? I am a kind of person who is **fun-loving** and outgoing. Therefore, that I have many friends is just a matter of time. I have my friends, most of whom are my classmates from my high school and my university. We find it very exciting to **be friends** for such a long time.

25.12. Do you like meeting new people?

Honestly, I am a kind of person who is very **reserved** and quite, so I prefer meeting my acquaintances rather than try to make new friends. I don't like meeting new people since I have to start all the things to **get to know** those and **balance** the new relationship, which takes a lot time and efforts.

25.13. What kind of friend do you want to meet in the future?

In the future? Oh well, I prefer making friends who are better than me both in **general knowledge** and **soft skills**. Therefore, in the future, I would like to meet friends that may **set the same goals** as mine in their careers and in their lives. Besides, those who **master** in English do catch my attention a lot since English is my favorite language.

26. Sunny days

26.1. Do you like sunny days?

I would say I am most productive and energetic on sunny days since there are full of brightness and positivity. For me, sunshine **represents** hope and **optimism**, thus, it gives me motivation to perform better at school or at work. On the contrary, I tend to be more **lethargic** and less enthusiastic during rainy season, mostly because of its **dull** and **gloomy** atmosphere.

Represent (v): to be a symbol of something

Optimism (n): a feeling that good things will happen and that something will be successful; the tendency to have this feeling

Lethargic (a): without any energy or enthusiasm for doing things

Dull (a): not bright, with a lot of clouds

Gloomy (a): nearly dark, or badly lit in a way that makes you feel sad

26.2. What do you like to do when it's a sunny day?

I'd love to participate in some outdoor activities under the sun like meeting up with some friends or do some sports, especially swimming. Or I'll **grab the chance** for a photography tour. Everything becomes so clear and stunning on sunny days, no matter it's **early in the morning** or **late in the afternoon**, as long as the sun shines, I'm sure I'll find inspiration almost everywhere.

Vocabulary

To grab the chance (v) to have an opportunity to do Sth

Or:

I'm a **highly active** person who really enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking or cycling. Therefore, on a sunny day, if I have some time to spare, I will do some exercises in the local park or explore the surrounding neighborhood where I **have yet to visit**. It would be a shame if people stay indoor all day without bathing under the sun every once in a while.

Have yet to do something (phrase) used for saying that something has not happened or been done up to the present time

26.3. Would you like to stay at home or go outside when the weather is great?

It's recommended that people should spend more time outside for both **physical and mental benefits** and there's no reason not to, especially when

the weather is great. I usually get out of the house for a walk or short break just to enjoy the fresh air. It's also a really helpful **tactic** to **boost creativity** and **regain focus** after long working hours.

Tactic (n): the particular method you use to achieve something

Boost (v): to make something increase, or become better or more successful

Regain (v): to get back something you no longer have, especially an ability or a quality

Or:

I think I would say it depends on my mood and my **workload**. I definitely cannot go out enjoy myself if my work is still a mess, even though it was such nice weather. And unless I feel super energetic and motivated, I think most of the time I'd prefer staying inside, no matter how the sun shines or how cool the weather is.

26.4. Are there many sunny days in your hometown?

I'm living in a tropical country so it's safe to say that there are more sunshine than rain, which is great news for people who enjoy being outside like me. However, the heat can be **extreme** in some specific months of the year, therefore, we have to apply sunscreen or cover ourselves carefully before leaving the house to avoid **sunburn** or **heatstroke**.

Extreme (a): very great in degree

Sunburn (n): the condition of having painful red skin because you have spent too much time in the sun

Heatstroke (n): an illness with fever and often loss of consciousness, caused by being in too great a heat for too long

Or:

It is a modern big city so unless it's our rainy season, otherwise the sun would shine most of the time, either during one day or the whole year. Sometimes the temperature rises so high that it feels like burning, that's when people prefer staying indoor enjoying the cool air produced by air conditioners.

27. Rings

27.1. Do you wear rings?

I often have a ring on, as a piece of accessory. I reckon people look more stylish with a ring on their finger, kind of a way to **draw others' attention**.

27.2. Have you ever bought any rings?

Sometimes, a ring is quite durable and I can wear it for years. However, when there's a type of ring I like when going shopping, I will definitely go the extra mile to buy another one. I'm quite **fashion-conscious**.

Fashion-conscious (adj) interested in, and wanting to wear, fashionable clothes

27.3. Who do you buy rings for?

I guess rings are not a really common gift as some people don't prefer wearing them, if there's someone I buy rings for, I would say it is my future wife/husband.

28. Shoes

28.1. Do you like shoes?

I have a **lifelong passion for** shoes since I was a child. When I'm not **overloaded with** work, I will go to the shopping complex to **indulge myself in** tons of different stylish shoes. Until now I reckon that I spend much more money on shoes than anything else.

Vocabulary

To have a passion for (v) to be enthusiastic about Sth

Overloaded with (v) having or supplied with too much of something

Indulge myself in (phrase) to allow oneself the pleasure of something

28.2. Which do you prefer, comfortable ones or fashionable ones?

Well, it depends on the situations. If I go out for a **chit-chat** with my friends, I will prefer the former one. When wearing comfortable shoes, I can easily **stroll around** the areas and feel more enjoyable. Meanwhile, if I have an important appointment or meeting, the trendy shoes will definitely my choice.

Vocabulary

Chit-chat (noun) light informal conversation for social occasions

Stroll around (phrasal verb) walking around casually

Or:

I cannot say for sure what others' preference is: comfort or beauty, but there is little doubt that it depends on the occasion and situation to some extent. If anyone is going to attend a cocktail party or on her way to one of the most exclusive clubs, she will be **dressed up to the nines** with fancy-looking shoes despite its **discomfort**. In contrast, no one will pick high heels over sneakers on their picnic day or for running session.

Vocabulary

be dressed up to the nines: to be wearing very fashionable or formal clothes for a special occasion

discomfort (n): a feeling of slight pain or of being physically uncomfortable

28.3. Are people willing to buy expensive shoes?

Well, it's safe for me to say that the vast majority of people feel a little bit **reluctant** to pay for shoes that **cost them an arm and leg**. This is due to the fact that the living standard of people in my country is not really high; therefore, they have more important things to worry about like food, healthcare and education.

Vocabulary

Reluctant (adj) unwilling

Cost somebody an arm and leg (idiom) very expensive

Or:

It's noticeable that people nowadays **are** more **aware of** their appearance and have **higher sense of fashion**, which is proven by the fact that plenty of high-end fashion brands are thriving better than ever. **Wealthy** figures have no second thoughts on buying luxurious items, shoes included. **Premium** brands such as Jimmy Choo, Christian Louboutin, Jordan and so on have attracted millions of customers even though their products **cost an arm and a leg**.

Vocabulary

Be aware of (adj) knowing or realizing something

Wealthy (a): having a lot of money, possessions, etc.

Premium (a): used to refer to something that is of higher than usual quality

Cost an arm and a leg: to be very expensive

28.4. Have you ever bought shoes online?

Personally, I think it's easily understandable since there is no **one-size-fits-all** kind of shoes. Each has its own purpose and in order to **fulfill people's lifestyle** and participate in different activities, various shoes types are needed. For example, one cannot go to the gym with a pair of Italian leather oxford nor can he attend a job interview in sandals. As a result, having a couple of different types of footwear not only proves your well-prepared and considerate character but **maturity** as well.

Vocabulary

one-size-fits-all: acceptable or used for a wide variety of purposes or circumstances; appealing or suitable to a variety of tastes

fulfill one's lifestyle: to do or achieve what was hoped for or expected

maturity (n): the quality of thinking and behaving in a sensible, adult manner

28.5. Have you ever bought shoes online?

Online shopping has never been more convenient and **affordable** and of course, how can I possibly **miss the opportunity** to **take full advantages** from many occasional big sales promotions, especially clothing and **footwear**. Although buying shoes or any items online comes with the inability to actually try them on, **competitive** prices, wide product ranges and other exclusive customer's experiences on some websites are quite attractive. Once I even got my hands on a limited-edition pair of running shoes thanks to the **accumulated** points I received from my previous shopping on an online store and I have been their loyal customer ever since.

Vocabulary

Affordable (a): cheap enough that people can afford to buy it or pay it

Miss/ pass on the opportunity:

Take full advantages of: make good use of the opportunities offered by (something)

Footwear (n): things that people wear on their feet, for example shoes and boots

Competitive (a): as good as or better than others

Accumulate (v): to gradually increase in number or quantity over a period of time

29. Family

29.1. How often do you meet with your family?

Well, because all of us are fully **occupied with** our schedule, we don't see each other during daytime. In the evening we'll have dinner and watch TV together and talk about our day. I think in the future if I'm ever able to move out, I'll try to **set aside** time to visit my parents at least twice a week.

Vocabulary

Occupied with (adj) busy

Set aside (phrasal verb) reserve for a special purpose

29.2. How do you spend the time with your family?

We'll have a **delicious big dinner** together with **scrumptious** food prepared by my mom. After we have dinner at around 7 o'clock, we'll watch the news, have some chat with each other or **huddle together** to play cards. It's a precious time when we can momentarily get away from the **hectic whirlwind** of daily activities.

Vocabulary

Scrumptious (adj) delicious

Hectic whirlwind (expression) a busy schedule

Huddle together (phrase) gather together

29.3. Do you want to live with your family in the future?

I think probably not. It's better for me to try to start an independent life as a **grown-up**. However, I still have the responsibility to **take good care of** my parents that I'll **make time** to visit them at least twice a week.

Vocabulary

To make time to do Sth (n) to try to spend time doing Sth that is not just for fun like hobbies

29.4. What activities do your family like doing together?

Well, as I've mentioned we usually have dinner together. Besides, on weekends, we would love **to eat out** or get outdoor. Sometimes we have a family trip to the beach to enjoy ourselves on the day that all of us are free from work.

Vocabulary

To eat out (v) to have meal outside

Family trip (n) to travel with family members

29.5. Are you close to of your family members?

My parents are quite traditional that they try to **form a strong bond** between all of the family members. They **take good care of** my brother and me and guide us in some of our life aspects.

Vocabulary

To take good care of (v)

29.6. How has your family influenced you?

Although my parents are traditional, they try to become my friends, by helping me and encouraging me without forcing me to **live up to their expectations**. They also **imprinted on** me proper principles like moral values, respect, humbleness, patience, **deligence**, etc. I think my family shaped who I am now. I'm deeply thankful for having such a wonderful family.

Vocabulary

To live up to SO's expectations (v) to try to please others

Imprint (v) to establish securely, as in the mind or consciousness

Deligence (n) careful and persistent work or effort

30. Carrying things

30.1. What will you bring when you go out?

Oh, this is such an interesting question to me. Being a girl means that being **neat** and beautiful is her **top priority**. Hence, whenever I go out, I often carry a black leather backpack which **contains** a comb, a pack of **tissues**, a bottle of water and a jacket that would protect me from the **severe** sunlight of the sun during a day.

Vocabulary

Neat [a] A neat person likes to keep themselves, their house and their possessions tidy and in good order

Priority [n] something that is very important and must be dealt with before other things

Contain [v] to have something inside or include something as a part

Tissue [n] soft paper which is used for cleaning, especially your nose, and is thrown away after use, or a small rectangular piece of this

Severe [a] causing very great pain, difficulty, worry, damage, etc; very serious

30.2. Did you ever forget to bring things?

I'm kind of **absent-minded** so I sometimes forget to bring the keys. I tend to toss keys everywhere so I have lost them several times.

Vocabulary

Absent-minded (adj) forgetful

30.3. Will you bring different things in the daytime or at night?

I would say that most of the time when I go out during the daytime or night, I always **bring along** a purse which contains my credit and debit cards, small money, and driving license. However, I will bring some **make-up** and **skin-care** products like **sunscreen** in my vintage bag when I go out in the daylight hours.

Vocabulary

Bring along (phrasal verb) to bring someone or something while going somewhere

Skin-care (phrase) things that you do and use to keep your skin healthy and attractive

Or:

The difference? Well, it's hard for me to say exactly what the specific things are. However, there's a **subtle** difference between the stuff I carry in the morning and in the evening. I enjoy wearing a backpack with a pack of tissues, a bottle of water and a comb, **except** a jacket in the evening since the sun won't **scare** me anymore.

Vocabulary

Subtle [a] small but important

Except [pre] not including; but not

Scare [v] to (cause to) feel frightened

30.4. How would you remind yourself of something you need to bring?

Well, I have **never ever** thought about it. Such an interesting question, though. I think that I can **refresh my memory** by **taking note of** every single thing I should bring along during the day shortly after I get up. This is because in the morning, I can **recharge enough energy** after a healthy sleep, thereby being able to avoid forgetting things to carry along.

Vocabulary

Never ever (expression) an emphatic way of saying never

Take note of (phrase) to give attention to something

Refresh my memory (phrase) to help you to remember something

30.5. When you go to different places, do you carry different kinds of things?

Well, I'm a kind of person who prefers the same things all the time, so it's not very easy for me to change my **stuff**. Whenever I go out, I **hardly** carry a lot of things. Hence, when I arrive at different places, I still bring my favorite backpack with the same **personal objects**, such as: a pack of tissues, a bottle of water and a jacket.

Stuff [n] used to refer to a substance or a group of things or ideas, etc., often with a description of their general type or quality or saying who they belong to, without saying exactly what they are

Hardly [adv] only just; almost not

Personal object [phrase] things that belong to someone

31. Daily Routine

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

So far, planning has become one of my **unbreakable habits**. The more I get older, the more I learn about the importance of **planning ahead** even though I have just started this lately. Every night before I go to bed, I would **make a to-do list** for the following day, then **scan through** my monthly planner for any upcoming events such as deadlines, meetings or travel trips. Such organizing activity has helped **ease my life**.

Vocabulary

(An) unbreakable habit(s) (n): habits that you keep for a long term

31.2. Please describe your typical daily routine

A typical day of mine starts at 8 am. After waking up, I would just go for some basic getting-ready steps just like other girls. On weekdays I usually have classes so I would leave home at around 8.45 am to be there on time. After classes, I have lunch and go straight back home for some rest as I find morning classes are quite **overwhelming**. Meanwhile, on weekends when I don't have classes, I would spend my morning on assignments. In the evening I would do some workout, take a shower and then cook dinner with my friends in order to supply ourselves some healthy foods and **save money on a budget**. I also **eat out** sometimes if we're both busy or we run out of food. After I finish my dinner, I check my planner and **get myself back to work**. Additionally, as I'm not a **night owl**, I try to manage my time as efficiently as possible until around 12 am. Before I brush my teeth and go to bed at around 1

am, I would scan through my planner for what to do on the following day and maybe listen to some relaxing music and **do some meditation**.

Vocabulary

To be overwhelming (adj): Sth which is difficult to fight against

To save money on a budget (phrase): to save money

To eat out (v): to go outside to eat

To do some meditation (v): some therapeutic methods to release stress

31.3. What do you usually do at this time of day?

As usual I would still be working on my assignments. I always spend loads of time and efforts on researching for materials, organizing ideas and writing a number of drafts as I always aim to get good marks. Between duration of hard work when I find myself quite **drained out**, I take a 15-minute break to go online, drink some water or listen to some music to **refresh my mind**.

Vocabulary

To be drained out (v): to be exhausted by Sth

31.4. Do you usually do the same things at the same time each day?

Well I guess I would say repeating similar things everyday is not my lifestyle. A meaningful life to me is when I can balance between my personal life and my social life. What I mean is, I always **seek for** opportunities to see, interact and maybe involve in other people's lives to **open my mind** and learn great things from them. Thus, instead of studying, I would love to spend some evenings or nights, either outdoor or indoor, with my family and friends. Besides, I also participate in social activities held by my university. I believe that this is the right time for the young generation like me to discover the outside world.

Vocabulary

To seek for (v): to look for Sth important (jobs, scholarships, etc.)

31.5. How do you organize your study time?

Maybe because I am very keen on study, I keep studying as a daily routine. Normally I start after lunch or dinner everyday and try to finish it before midnight. However, sometimes it appears to be so boring for me, after I go out and have fun, I would either **stay up late** or wake up early in the morning to study depending on how tired I am.

Vocabulary

To stay up late (v): to go to bed late at night

31.6. Do you ever change your plans?

Well I guess I have to say I've changed my plans a number of times actually. Beside those events such as appointments, meetings or travel trips could barely be **put off**, I tend to be flexible and **go with the flow**. Some people who manage their time exactly to every minute but that's just not my style. If I feel changes do not significantly alter other activities, I would just **go for it**.

Vocabulary

To put off (v): to postpone, to delay

Go with the flow (phrase): let things happen | cope with the adversity

To go for it (phrase): to encourage SO to go ahead and do Sth

31.7. What's your favorite time of the day?

I guess from 4pm to 6pm, when I have some rest after class and a little workout, is my favorite time of the day. I find myself highly awake and process things much more effectively during these hours. This is also a good

time to spend on going outside and meeting up, as there is a wide variety of places to choose from and the weather is cooled down.

31.8. What do you want to change in your daily routine?

I guess I would definitely have to change my routine once I **jump into the workplace**, especially if I work in an office. I think I firstly have to **get myself used to** unchangeable events, then manage myself to adapt to the new working environment, as I am actually not good at dealing with changes.

Vocabulary

To get used to (doing) Sth (v): to get familiar with doing Sth

PART II & III

1. Describe a couple you know who have a happy marriage

You should say

who they are

how you knew them

what they usually do together

and explain how you feel about their marriage

I am at the age where people around me is **tying the knot** one by one, and **off the top of my head**, I wouldn't hesitate to say that X and Y, who are my besties, are the happiest **newly-wed** couples I have ever met. They are both my **intimate** buddies whom I have **befriended** for ages and we have been **on good terms with** each other ever since. The bride is **average-looking** without many distinctive features yet she is **kind-hearted deep down**.

Meanwhile, her husband is a **strongly-built** and attractive man. Despite such differences in outer appearance, I would simply say that they **get on well like a house on fire** and rarely **fall out with** each other. If they do, it is common that they will **make up** after some minutes, and this is the first point I want to highlight about their marriage: patience and forgiveness.

They recently **gave birth to** their first cute baby and they seem to be **over the moon** for that occasion. When I happened to be in their house for a **flying visit**, I **caught glimpse of** them both being **engrossed in** a hilarious conversation, **laughing hysterically**. That sight just shows how **contented** they are in each other's company. I **congratulated them on** their happy marriage but they were quite humble and said that they did have many **ups and downs** in life, but the **strong bond** between them has helped them **get over** everything and **lead a truly satisfying life** every moment.

If someone asks me what I treasure most in my life, the answer could be one and only – my family, who are not only **my pillar of strength and support** but also my inspiration in many ways. I wouldn't have become myself today without my parents' guidance and their love for me, and, of course, for each other. I will never **get tired of** my friends telling me how awesome and adorable my parents are despite both being almost 60. According to them, my parents are real-life **relationship goals**. My dad, an intelligent, thoughtful, strong and honorable man **to the core**, started his own business 20 years ago and has been working hard to achieve what he deserves. He's married to a beautiful, loving, **kind-hearted** and **strong-willed** woman who isn't afraid to **speak her mind**.

My parents have known each other for almost five decades and been pretty much in love all that time. They usually tell us their legendary stories from when they were **high school sweethearts** until **tying the knot** and living their **happily ever after**, which often gets **exaggerated** though none of my siblings have ever complained. Though my parents work in different fields, they tend to seek the other's input and opinions on numerous cases. My dad always says mom is his greatest cheerleader in everything he does and she tells us he is her rock. One thing I have noticed about my parents is honesty and openness in the way they communicate. Just like any other couples, mom and dad have also experienced many difficulties but how they handle them is what makes them stronger. I am so grateful to have been born and raised in the family full of love where I can feel it every time coming home. It is hard to **put into words** all they have inspired in me. They have **molded** and shaped me into the person I am today and who I hope to be in the future.

- **pillar of strength** (idiom): a person who can be relied on to give a great deal of support and comfort
- **relationship goal** (n): when two people are in a relationship and people envy them, usually a celebrity couple
- **to the core**: all the way through; basically and essentially

- **strong-willed** (a): determined to do what you want to do, even if other people advise you not to
- **speak one's mind**: express one's feelings or opinions frankly
- **high school sweetheart** (n): a person with whom one was romantically involved at high school
- **tie the knot** (idiom): get married
- **exaggerate** (v): to make something seem larger, better, worse or more important than it really is
- **mold** (v): to strongly influence the way somebody's character, opinions, etc. develop

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

1. If you are 35 years old without marriage, do you still waiting for your true love? Why?

I would say it might be the case since I'd prefer to stay single rather than **end up with** the wrong person. It is not a surprise, I believe, because there are plenty of people who still enjoy their every moment without a life partner. On the one hand, the number of divorces or unhappy marriages have been increasing tremendously over the years and its consequences are upsetting such as **dysfunctional** family, **domestic violence**, **child neglect** and the list could go on. On the other hand, people can find happiness in different places and activities without committing their life to one particular person, especially those who aren't worth it. Therefore, I wouldn't **settle for anything less** than what I deserve.

- **end up with** (idiom): to finish with the possession of someone or something or in the company of someone or something
- **dysfunctional** (a): not working normally or properly
- **domestic violence** (n): family violence
- **child neglect** (n): a form of child abuse, and is a deficit in meeting a child's basic needs, including the failure to provide adequate health

care, supervision, clothing, nutrition, housing as well as their physical, emotional, social, educational and safety needs

- **settle for anything less** (n) commit to a person just because you feel like you can't do any better:

2. Who will pay for the wedding cost? Man or woman or both?

Why?

Budget planning for weddings can be an extreme headache and deciding who pays what might not be easy since there are tons of expenses to cover such as the rings, **floral** arrangements, honeymoon and so on. Hence, I believe depending on each couple's financial status, they should carefully discuss and choose a **cost-splitting** option that works best for them. For example, if both are **financially abundant**, they can share the cost equally. Otherwise, one who is more **well-off** can cover a greater portion of the expense.

- **floral** (a): made of flowers
- **split** (v): to divide, or to make something divide, into two or more parts
- **abundant** (a): existing in large quantities; more than enough
- **well-off** (a): having a lot of money

3. What do you think is the best age to marry?

I don't believe that there is a right time for anything, marriage included. It's more about the **maturity** of the two people than the age itself, I think. People mature at different rates, physically and emotionally, and not until after they can fully acknowledge their life issues and handle them with **rational** and thorough consideration, are they ready to get settled and find happiness in their marriage life. Besides, financial situation also **plays a significant part in** this **once-in-a-lifetime** decision. Many divorces have been directly resulted from the lack of money or **financial insecurity**. Therefore, only when people can fully support themselves, should they consider to start a family.

- **maturity** (n): the quality of thinking and behaving in a sensible, adult manner
- **rationale** (n) the principles or reasons which explain a particular decision, course of action, belief, etc.
- **once-in-lifetime**: very special because you will probably only have it once
- **insecurity** (n): the state of not being safe or protected

4. What is the role of marriage?

The role of marriage is to **provide a solid foundation** for society and **enrich family values**. Marriage is the safest relationship for both men and women. Marriage prevents many **social problems**, for example, **sexual immortality**. Health benefits of marriage include fewer symptoms of depression and better **physical and emotional health**: marriage **has a positive effect on physiological functions** of adults. Individual effects of marriage can be **higher saving rates** and **greater life satisfaction**. Marriage protects against the feeling of loneliness. Marriage allows us to grow in character.

5. What are the marriage criteria?

Marriage should be based on **mutual understanding**, sympathy, affection, love, warmth, mutual tolerance, sacrifice, and commitment. An ideal partner is honest, **open-minded**, outgoing, fun-loving, helpful, supportive, **goal-oriented**, assertive, reliable, dedicated, devoted, encouraging, understanding, patient, **dignified**, thoughtful, and sympathetic.

2. Describe your favorite TV Series

You should say:

- *what the TV series are*

- *who act these series*
- *what is the plot*
- *and explain how you feel about it*

To be honest, I'm kinda **a couch potato**, so I watch a multitude of TV series. **Off the top of my head**, I'd say the most **captivating** TV series recently I **took up watching** is "Friends" - one of the most popular television shows of **all time**.

Friends is an American television sitcom originally aired on NBC from 1994 to 2004, lasting ten seasons. This sitcom **has a strong cast**, involving both experienced actors and **novices** in the field of entertainment. **By and large, it won't fail to live up to viewers' expectation** from the first episode.

The series are **centered on** six friends Ross, Chandler, Joey, Rachel, Monica, and Phoebe, who **are connected with** each other by being **blood related**, roommates, neighbors and old high school friends and they all find themselves living in the same apartment block. They all have their own story and **battle with** tough jobs, complicated relationships and life in the big city. The TV series **center round** daily happenings when they live under the same roof. The characters are portrayed with different virtues and qualities, giving the audience a nice picture of the stuff **taking place** every day in their routine life. As the title suggests, each episode is **packed with hilarious jokes** and conversational exchanges between friends, which definitely gives you **hysterical laughter** and is something really effective to **let off steam** after a **backbreaking** day at school or work.

What strikes me most about this series is the strong bond between friends. Despite many **ups and downs** in life, they won't hesitate to **go the extra mile to get over** difficulties no matter what are **thrown at** them and forgive each other for their silly mistakes. It is a TV series **worth watching**, particularly for those fans of **comedy and reality TV**. Despite its age, it is still as fantastic as ever and very addictive and will be watched for many years yet!

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

2.1. Do you think (watching) TV have (has) educational benefits?

Absolutely, I think. Take romantic films as an example, they can help educate people about the value of love, honesty, and faithfulness. They can make the audience **sympathize with** other people and respect what they have. Indeed, films can teach people **good virtues** to become better citizens through stories. Besides, in most high school and college courses, movies, whether documentary or narrative, are a creative approach in teaching, helping students have a brief idea about the history, social issues, or scientific experiments. History, for example, indeed becomes more approachable and interesting in movies.

Vocabulary

Good virtue (n) behavior showing high moral standards

Sympathise (v) to feel sorry for somebody, to show that you understand and feel sorry about somebody's problems

2.2. In what ways are documentary films and films only for entertainment different?

From my perspective, they are different in various aspects, especially their purposes. Documentaries are a reliable source of information and a powerful **means of conveying social message** to the world. It brings many benefits to the society. For instance, by watching documentaries together, many sensitive social issues, such as **homosexuality**, are discussed freely between parents and children instead of attempting to hide it. Films for entertainment, in another way, are mostly for people who need to **chill out** after work or study. Those movies tend not to discuss nothing but relationships between people.

Vocabulary

Means of Sth (n) a tool or a way to do Sth (commonly used with unc. noun transportation, entertainment)

Homosexuality (n) sexual attraction to people of one's own sex

To chill out (v) to relax

2.3. Why do you think documentary films are not so popular?

Personally, I think the foremost reason which makes documentary films are not as popular as entertainment films is that documentaries require the audience to think critically about a current issues, b help them escape from the **harsh realities** of everyday life. For example, the series of “Prison life – love in prison”, which describes the prison sex, is an educational and emotional documentary that brings a different view about prisoners. Another reason is this kind of movie **aims to** provide education and lack entertaining features compared to other kinds of movies, therefore, it’s hard to reach a wide range of audience.

Vocabulary

Rather than (phrase) used with the infinitive form of a verb to indicate negation as a contrary choice or wish

Harsh reality (n) the difficulties

(The) naked truth (n) the complete, unembellished truth

To aim to do Sth (v) to have a purpose to do Sth

2.4 How are movies and real life different ?

Life in movies is so much different than real life. In real life, there is no script and you will write your own story day by day. Life is full of **ups and downs, twists and turns**. However, they both inspire each other since real life is a great material for **making movies**.

Vocabulary

Ups and downs (n) good and bad times

Twists and turns (n) challenges or turning points in life

To make a movie (n) to produce a move

2.5 Do men and women like to watch the same kinds of films?

It depends, I guess. It is thought that men like action movies with shocking and dangerous scenes like Fast and Furious or **sci-fi** movies with imaginative, futuristic plots like Avatar while most women prefer romantic movies or comedies with meaningful messages. It seems logical; however, there are still

many converse cases. Therefore, I think there is no boundaries for preferences between men and women **when it comes to** films.

Vocabulary

Sci-fi movies (n) science-fiction movies

When it comes to (phrase) speaking about

2.6 Do different age groups like the same kinds of films?

Obviously. It's undeniable that different generations prefer different kinds of movies. Children, for example, are usually **fond of** cartoons or funny movies such as Frozen or Tangled. Adults, on the other hand, tend to watch various types of movies such as action films, romantic films, documentaries or romantic films depending on their tastes.

Vocabulary

To be fond of (adj) to be interested in

2.7 Do you like any particular film star? Why?

I like Emma Watson, a British actress, model and activist. She is **famous for** her first professional acting role as Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter film series. What I love about her is that not only is she an outstanding actress with **admirable** personalities but also she is the spiritual inspiration as the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador. My favorite quote is "I don't want the fear of failure to stop me from doing what I really **care about**", encouraging me to **chase my dream** despite many troubles ahead.

Vocabulary

To be famous for (adj) to be known about by many people

To care about (v) to feel concern or interest; attach importance to something.

3. Describe an invention changed the people's life

You should say:

- *What it is*
- *Who invent it*
- *When it was invented*

- *And explain how it changed people's life.*

Before computers came into existence, TV had been one of the **epoch-making inventions** in the 20th century.

People watch TV every day, **regarding it as a box with magic power**. Through TV we **are informed of the latest events taking place** around the world such as the war in Iraq, tsunami in Southeast Asia, and hurricane in the US. Though we may not have the opportunity to travel around the world, TV **entitles us to enjoy the picturesque scenery** in every corner of the world and **experience offbeat living styles** of people from different countries. Therefore, TV plays an important role in modern life. It not only **enriches our knowledge** but also **broadens our minds**. TV can also give people a refreshing experience, especially when people are **up to ears in** their exams or **tied up at the workplace**. After such **backbreaking** periods of work or study, watching their favorite programmes on TV can help the tension **melt away**.

By and large, TV has transformed how people spend their free time and made life **much** more thrilling and meaningful. Despite some negatives brought by this invention, I'd have to say that without it, people would have **lagged behind** and **fed up with** this world.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Do you think people's work in the future will be heavily affected by technology?

The **prospect** that all work will be **automated or computer-based** is quite **feasible**. Given the situation today that teaching can be done online via **video tutorials or skype**, the students would no longer feel the need to **travel hundreds of miles** to the classroom. Another case is **telecommuting**, people just need to hand in their work via emails or even join meetings through **teleconferencing**. Another likelihood is that robots will **take the**

place of human workforce in manual labor in the not-so-distant future.

What are the pros and cons of new inventions?

On the positive side, new inventions have made life more comfortable and convenient. Dishwashers save people plenty of time after daily meals **while washing machines** reduces the amount of laundry people have to carry **out**. These are just few examples of the **wondrous benefits** technological devices bring. On the downside, however, people's over-reliance on hi-tech gadgets can cause addiction. Youngsters **have their eyes glued to the computer screen** all day and **skip meals or play truant**, which is a worrying trend. Another case in point is that people **entrust all their household chores** to machines and simply **lazy around** all day, being a **couch potato** and this **does harm to their health**.

4. Describe a painting or work of art

You should say:

- *when you saw this work of art*
- *where you saw it*
- *what it looked like*
- *and explain your impression of it.*

When it comes to arts and anything that is art-related, some of the most **recognized** artists immediately **pop up** in our minds such as Picasso, Van Gogh, Mozart and the like. **Honestly speaking**, I am not an **art savvy** or **hold any particular interest in** paintings or musical performance, yet, it would be a shame if I haven't heard about some of the world's **renowned masterpieces** that have **gained public attention** and **recognition** like Mona Lisa, The Scream and so on. I was especially impressed by The Starry Night, one of the Van Gogh's most famous **artworks** and the pride of **impressionism** of all time.

I first heard about The Starry Night when I was still in primary school. The photo of said painting was printed in our artbook and even though it was poorly **depicted** due to the quality of the paper, The Starry Night still caught my **attention**. I, then, came across it once again in a **documentary** on TV, which **was dedicated to** present about a Dutch artist Van Gogh and his career. The Starry Night was created after Van Gogh had **mutilated** his own ear and been residing in a **mental asylum**. It is an oil on canvas and currently **displayed** at Museum of Modern Art in New York City. The painting was a night sky filled with swirling clouds, eddies of stars and a bright crescent moon. Beneath the hills lies a small town which appears to be **tranquil** and **sluggish**. To the very left of the painting is a significantly tall and **imposing** structure that is hard to **interpreted** and can be explained differently according to any **beholder** himself. The Starry Night gives me a sense of **peacefulness** and **seclusion** at the same time, which can also be why I always feel calm and secure everytime I see it. And I hope that I would be able to see this authentic piece of art **in person** in the near future.

- **When it comes to:** as for something; speaking about something
- **Pop up** (phrasal verb): to appear or happen, especially suddenly or unexpectedly
- **Honestly speaking:** to be honest
- **Art savvy** (n): well informed about or experienced in art
- **Hold interest in:** be interested in
- **Renowned** (a): well-known, famous
- **Gain (public) attention:** to draw attention
- **Recognition** (n): public praise and reward for somebody's work or actions
- **Impressionism** (n): a style in painting developed in France in the late 19th century that uses colour to show the effects of light on things and to suggest atmosphere rather than showing exact details
- **Artwork** (n): a work of art, especially one in a museum

- **Depict** (v): to describe something in words, or give an impression of something in words or with a picture
- **Be dedicated to:** designed to be used for one particular purpose
- **Mutilate** (v): to damage somebody's body very severely, especially by cutting or tearing off part of it
- **Mental asylum** (n): psychiatric hospitals
- **Display** (v): to put something in a place where people can see it easily; to show something to people
- **Tranquil** (a): quiet and peaceful
- **Sluggish** (a): moving, reacting or working more slowly than normal and in a way that seems lazy
- **Imposing** (a): impressive to look at; making a strong impression
- **Interpret** (v): to explain the meaning of something
- **Beholder** (n): a person who sees or observes someone or something
- **Peacefulness** (n): the state of being quiet and calm; the state of not being worried or disturbed in any way
- **Seclusion** (n): the state of being private or of having little contact with other people
- **In person:** if you do something in person, you go somewhere and do it yourself, instead of doing it by letter, asking somebody else to do it, etc.

5. Describe a plan you haven't done yet

You should say:

- *What is about*
- *When you plan to do it*
- *Why do you want to do it*
- *And explain why you haven't done it*

Well, one of the plan I made but haven't **put it into action** is to **take up** a Yoga class.

I intend to **enroll on** a Yoga class at a fitness center near my neighborhood. Since this center has a good reputation for Yoga, it would offer me a really good course so that I can efficiently learn it. However, it will need to **devote a great deal of regular time** and require strong determination to learn the necessary skills.

The greatest benefit this Yoga class offers is a discipline and self-control. Besides, the physical exercise, patience and diligence, Yoga requires a great deal of physical and mental power, calmness and a type of discipline which are necessary for a modest person's life.

I would like to **engage in** this kind of activity because can **lift up my spirit** and **relieve stress** after a **hectic** day at work as well as improve my physical health at the same time. However, I have to delay this plan because I have been working as an office worker, this means that I'm always **up to ears in** work. Nevertheless, I really hope I can **put some time aside to go ahead with** this plan in a few weeks.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Why do people set goals?

There are a number of reasons why people **make a plan** and **set their target**. The first reason is that we can feel more motivated on the path to achieving it. For example, a student sets an 8 bandscore in the IELTS exam and he can **stay up all night** revising and reviewing the lessons to **make a proper preparation**. The chances are that he can further approach his goal and becomes less lazy, you see. The second reason can be we simply want to **test our limit**, to see how far we can go. To illustrate, people often **make New Year resolutions** like giving up smoking the next year. Such a decision is to prove to others that they are being serious and **try their utmost** although it might be **challenging** for them to achieve.

6. Describe an interesting neighbor

You should say:

- *Who the person is*
- *How long do you know the person*
- *And explain the reason why you think the person is interesting*

Sample 1

There are many households in my neighborhood, and if you ask me to **give you an account of** a person who I reckon the most **intriguing** I wouldn't be hesitant but say it's Mr X, who is in his early 50s.

As for his **outer appearance**, he's a **well-built** person with **broad shoulders** and **wavy hair** not typically seen among his **peers** at that age. This can be explained by the fact that he **works out** quite regularly in the gym as he has nothing to do during the day.

What strikes me about this man is that he's a real fun, always **crack a joke** whenever he can. He can **mimic the voices** of celebrated figures in the media. So you can see, every time he **pays a flying visit to** my house, everyone **jumps for joy**.

If I recall correctly, when I was undergoing a **nerve-racking** period of my life, **up to ears** with revising and reviewing for the finals, he came to me like a hero, and **playing some jokes on** my the bad side of my character, making me forget all the hardships and continue studying. At the end, I passed the test **with flying colors**.

Vocabulary

Give an account of (expression) describe somebody/something

Intriguing (adj) arousing one's curiosity or interest; fascinating

Outer appearance (noun) physical appearance

Well-built (adj) (of a person) large and strong

Wavy (adj) rising in waves

Peer (noun) someone who is of the same age as another person

Work out (phrasal verb) do physical exercise

Strike (verb) [for a person] to impress someone as something or a particular type of person

Crack a joke (phrase) say something fun

Flying visit to (phrase) a short visit

Jumps for joy (phrase) to jump into the air because you are very happy

Nerve-racking (adj) making you very nervous or worried

Up to ears in something (idiom); very busy doing something; involved in a difficult situation, or with more work to do than you can deal with

Play a joke/trick on someone (phrase) to do something to someone that you think is funny because it makes them look silly or feel embarrassed

With flying colors (phrase) very successful

Sample 2

My family live in a truly friendly neighborhood where people are more than willing to support each other whenever somebody is in need, which is also why we are all very close. Among them, Charlie – a kind **middle-aged** man and my father’s best friend – is the one I find most **intriguing**, yet mysterious at the same time.

Charlie has been living next door for how long that I can hardly recall, but I know for certain that his baking skill **is off the charts** – another reason why he’s my favorite. When I was younger, Charlie and his wife usually came over our house on weekend where we had barbecue and cold drinks together and Charlie would make special chocolate cookies for me everytime. My first **impression** about him wasn’t that pleasant though since he grew full beard and had a scary eagle tattooed on his bicep, which was terrifying for any little girl. In spite of his not-so-friendly appearance, Charlie is a true **softie** who acts like a **mother hen** occasionally. Then I understand why there’s a saying “**Don’t judge a book by its cover**”. Besides his talent in the kitchen, he is such an amazing story teller that I kept tailing him, literally, as a kid for more extraordinary tales. What makes his stories **appealing** is not only his warm

voice but the **underlying** messages that he tries to deliver through them. I have learnt a lot from Charlie and he is like my unofficial god father, which makes him hold a very special place in my heart.

Vocabulary

Middle-aged (adj): no longer young but not yet old

Intriguing (a): very interesting because of being unusual or not having an obvious answer

Be off the charts: much better than usual

Impression (n): an idea, a feeling or an opinion that you get about somebody/something, or that somebody/something gives you

Softie (n): a kind, sympathetic or emotional person

Mother hen (n): a person who likes to care for and protect people and who worries about them a lot

Underlying (a): important in a situation but not always easily noticed or stated clearly

Appealing (a): attractive or interesting

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

6.1. Do you think people's relationships with their neighbors today are the same as they were in the past?

It's noticeable that relationships among people in this modern society have **significantly altered** over the last few decades and I **reckon** that it's a positive change. Most people are no longer as friendly and helpful as they used to without getting something **in return**, especially in **urban** neighborhood. If you could easily run into a small group of women gathering to talk about nonsense things many years ago, it probably takes you a while, if not forever, to find one in the city nowadays. People live in their own world with limited contacts with their neighbors.

Significantly (adv): in a way that is large or important enough to have an effect on something or to be noticed

Alter (v): to become different; to make somebody/something different

Reckon (v): to think something or have an opinion about something

In return: as a way of thanking somebody or paying them for something they have done

6.2. Do you think it's important to have a good relationship with one's neighbors?

My philosophy is to **maintain good relationships with** everyone that I have spent time and effort making friends with and neighbors are one of them.

Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away. In some certain circumstances, even the one sharing the same blood line may not be as helpful as your next-door buddy. For example, if you go on a vacation for a few weeks and you live alone, who is going to watch out for your apartment better than your neighbor. Even if you don't need their help in any case, having someone nearby to talk to and have fun with is wonderful enough.

6.3. How can people improve relationships with their neighbors?

The key in any lasting relationships is **sincerity**. You don't have to **overdo** or change yourself to promote a perfect friend-next-door image but be true and confident **in your own skin**. Smiling and saying hello to your neighbors can be the simplest way to make friends and **initiate** a conversation. You cannot actually improve relationships with your neighbors if you don't have one. Besides, people should make effort to **engage in** groups' activities within the neighborhood such as street party or knitting class, whichever you find captivating to **widen your network** and share memories.

Sincerity (n): the quality of showing or saying what you really think or feel

Overdo (v): to do something too much; to exaggerate something

Initiate (v): to make something begin

Engage in something (phrasal verb): to take part in something; to make somebody take part in something

6.4. What makes a neighborhood a good one to live in?

When it comes to an ideal neighborhood to live in, each person has his own expectations. To me, good place to live goes with low **crime rate** which gives people **sense of ease and calm**. It will trouble anyone living in an area if

they don't feel **secure** every time going for a walk for the fear of robbery. Another factor is entertainment and outdoor activities. For an active resident like me, there's nothing cooler than being close to fitness centers and swimming pools to exercise and relax during my spare time. Lastly, excellent restaurants will make a neighborhood a must-stay place since many people keep a habit of dining out since they have no time cooking.

Crime rate: the ratio of crimes in an area to the population of that area

Secure (a): able to avoid being harmed by any risk, danger, or threat

6.5. Do you think it's important to know your neighbours?

If yes:

Yeah, I suppose it is, because I think it helps **create a good community spirit** if we know our neighbours. In other words, it **kind of** gives the neighbourhood a nice, friendly feel, instead of a cold, unwelcoming one, if you know what I mean!

If no:

No I wouldn't really say it is, because for me I think friends and family are enough. And I mean, in my case I don't spend nearly enough time with my family as it is, so I can't really see the need to **get to know** my neighbours as well. And this probably goes for a lot of people, not just me.

Vocabulary

Kind of (phrase spoken) use as a filler in speaking; when you are talking about someone or something in a general way without being very exact or definite

Community spirit (collocation) friendliness and understanding between local people

Get to know (phrase) to spend time with someone or something so that you gradually learn more about him, her, or it

6.6. What sorts of problems can people have with their neighbours?

Well I guess one of the main ones would be noise. You know, like putting on music too loud or having the TV on full volume, that kind of thing. So that's probably the biggest complaint that people have with their neighbours. And as

well as this, I suppose another problematic issue could be pets. For example, a lot of neighbours who have dogs don't **keep them on a lead** which I think is quite **inconsiderate**, as a lot of people are quite **scared of** dogs.

Vocabulary

On a lead/leash (phrase) a long narrow piece of leather, chain etc that you fasten to the collar around a dog's neck in order to control the dog. The usual American word is **leash**

Inconsiderate (adj) not thinking about other people and their feelings

6.7. In what ways can neighbours help each other?

I'd say they can help each other in all manner of ways. For example, **babysitting**, **looking after** a pet while you're away, um, what else, um, oh yeah, keeping a **spare house key** for emergencies, you know, stuff like that.

Vocabulary

Look after (phrasal verb) to take care of someone or something

6.8. What are the differences between neighbours and friends?

These two are first different in definition. Neighbours are those who live geographically near you, while friends are people **attached to** you by **affection** or **esteem**. They don't have to be near you; however they are **always there for you** in one way or another.

Vocabulary

Attached to (adj) liking someone very much, or loving them

Affection (noun) a feeling of liking and caring about someone or something

Esteem (noun) a feeling of admiration and respect for someone

6.9. Do you think neighbours are important?

I think neighbours are very important because they are some of the people that you are around practically every day. If you ever have a problem you may need to **ask a neighbour for help**, since they are right nearby, if you are new in a place, you can always ask a neighbour where to find something. And they are also right there if you are **in danger** and knowing they are there might make you stronger or less afraid.

Vocabulary

In danger (phrase) a situation in which harm, death, damage, or destruction is possible

6.10. What are the qualities of a good neighbour?

I think the most important quality of a good neighbour is friendliness. For example, saying “Hello” when you see each other is a good **virtue**, I often speak to my neighbours and try to be friendly because one day I might be lonely and sad, and if I have been friendly to my neighbours they will be friendly to me and **cheer me up**. I also like for my neighbours to be patient and honest. If I **make noise** and disturb them I would like them not to **lose temper** but to just tell me that the noise is bothering them. I also think neighbors should be polite and not disturb each other unnecessarily.

Vocabulary

Virtue (noun) a good quality or habit that a person has

Cheer someone up (phrasal verb) to make someone feel less sad

Lose temper (phrase) to suddenly become angry

7. Describe an occasion that you have a cake that is special

- *What kind of cake it is*
- *When you ate the cake*
- *Who you ate with*
- *and explain why you think the cake is special*

I'm a type of guy who **rarely goes the extra mile** to do stuff that is time-consuming, but one special occasion that made me dedicate the whole afternoon to preparing a meal and even baked a big cake is my mother's birthday.

As for the cake, it was **a medium-sized cake with three tiers**, which I **had a hard time planning out** how to put different cakes on each other. Thankfully, with the **timely help** from my sister we managed to **get my**

original idea carried out. We decorated the cake with colorful cream, placed some candies and cherries on the top to **make the coating more elaborate.** The highlight of the cake is **a line of finely written words** containing my mother's nickname "Omna" in the middle of the cake. It took us approximately 12 hours to bake and **finish off the decoration.** The birthday party was organized with all the family members and some close friends of my families. We **did have a blast** and my mother was absolutely **astonished at** how gorgeous the cake was and I received plenty of compliments for my work. We ate **to our heart's contents** and I didn't forget to **give out best wishes** to my mother, hope she would live long and stay with me for the rest of my life.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Have you ever made cakes yourself?

As I have mentioned, I'm rather lazy and prefer convenience to going to great pains to **do something which is available with a small amount of money to buy. Mostly,** when it comes to **my friends' birthday parties or** other casual occasions, nothing beats dashing to the nearest bakery **and making a purchase** for one ready-made cake. **Having said that, for those** beloved family members, **it's** worth the pains you spend, **especially when you** have an intention of springing a surprise for **others or** showing off your meticulousness. **At this point I'd not care the trouble** preparing a cake if it pleases others.

8. Describe a favorite part of your city or home that you often visit/ Describe a place where you relaxed

In this **hectic** life, it is easy for people to get **stressed out** from different situations. Therefore, we all need a place of rest and relaxation where we can temporarily **get away from the hustle and bustle** of the daily life. Everyone needs a place to **hide away.** For me, that is the kitchen. I choose blue and white for kitchen's wall because those colors help me to **unwind.** On

top of that, I **enjoy every single moment** spent in the kitchen. When I cook in the kitchen, I find myself in another world where I am able to mix all ingredients together to **try out a brand new recipe**. Therefore, there are many baking stuff and machines **arranged nicely** in my kitchen. After cooking, I usually invite some of my close to **come over** and **throw a party** to enjoy my home-made cakes and dishes; but **every now and then**, I just cook for my family. My mother and father always **give some generous compliments on** my cooking skills and keep telling me that cooking is my inborn talent, which makes me **jump for joy**. That's why I always love to be in the kitchen. It also becomes a very social place where everyone in the house gathers together to **have a small chit-chat** about our daily life. Therefore, kitchen, for me, represents a place of **spiritual meaning**. I believe that the warm from kitchen will **warm up** the house and the moments we spend in the kitchen can help **strengthen the family bonds**.

Vocabulary

Stress out (verb) be nervous, worried

Get someone or something away from someone or something (phrasal verb) to take someone or something away from someone or something, in any combination

The hustle and bustle of something (phrase) busy and noisy activity

Hide away (phrasal verb)

Try out a brand new recipe (phrase) try a new recipe

Unwind (verb) To become free of nervous tension; relax

Every now and then (idiom) sometimes

Throw a party (phrase) arrange a party

Chit-chat (noun) friendly conversation about things that are not very important

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

8.1. How often do you visit parks?

My area is **filled with** parks and there's a park very close to where I live, so I probably go there once or twice a week if the weather's neither **scorching hot** nor **freezing cold**. I love to go jogging with my father in the early morning where we can enjoy **fresh air** and **spectacular scenery**.

Fill with (verb) To supply or provide to the fullest extent

Scorching hot (adj) extremely hot

Freezing cold (adj) extremely cold

8.2. Do we need big parks or small parks in the city?

Personally, small parks in the city are much more convenient than big parks. Firstly, it would serve better quality for citizens in an area. Parks are the places for people to not only take physical exercise, but also **wind down** and relax. It would also create a friendly environment for everyone. Second, a big park **takes up** too much available space in the city. This space can be used for educational purposes rather than just for entertaining ones.

Wind down (phrasal verb) to relax after a period of excitement or worry

Take up (phrasal verb) to fill a particular amount of space or time

8.3. Why is it important to have parks in a city?

Parks **play an important role** in a city. The foremost reason is that parks **contribute to** reduction of the urban heat effect. Another reason is Parks provide space for neighbourhood residents to **interact with** each other and meet new people. They're also great spaces for events and for people to **engage in recreational activities**. This allows people to develop **a sense of community**. A park is perfect for a picnic, a concert, or a farmer's market - whatever your community feels it needs.

Vocabulary

Engage in something (phrasal verb) to take part in a particular activity, especially one that involves competing with other people or talking to them

A sense of community a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together

8.4. Do you like to visit movie theatres?

I love to spend time watching movie in cinema with my friends. That is a moment that we can **chill out** after working and **build up** our friendship by sharing our common hobby.

Chill out (phrasal verb) relax

Build up (phrasal verb) to create and develop something over a long period of time

8.5. Where do people like to go on weekends?

In the past, most people usually stayed at home and spent time with family. However, this habit has changed currently. Shopping malls and restaurants have been increasingly opened and become the entertaining place for everyone, especially families with children. Moreover, officers participate in yoga classes or sport centres to exercise.

8.6. What do old people do to relax?

Stress in the elderly has many sources, including the loss of a partner, money worries, health problems and a lack of independence. They tend to **isolate** themselves at home with negative thoughts. Therefore, the elder people should be encouraged to find and maintain **social contact** as interaction with other old friends. Joining to a club or community service is another way to make them feel happier.

Vocabulary

A sense of community (n) a feeling of belonging

To chill out (v) to relax and stop being angry or nervous, or to spend time relaxing

To be spectacular (adj): extremely impressive

Wind down (v): to relax after a period of excitement or worry

**9. Describe a holiday you want to go on in the future/
describe a bicycle/motorbike/car trip you want to take
in the future**

Frankly speaking, I'm not an **extrovert**, so I haven't been on many trips up to now. However, I would **crave for** having a pleasant experience on a **package tour/ motorbike trip** to [place] - only within a 50- kilo meter drive from my house. I intend to travel **on my own** to **do the sightseeing**, which may **save me from the hassle and nuisance** from my friends, who usually complain **all the time** while being on a long holiday. If everything goes according to plan, the tour should be **reasonably priced**, at 40 USD for at least 2 days 1 night and it should promise **luxurious accommodation** and **scrumptious** food. So you see, I tend to go for cheap holiday without **second thoughts** as it is exactly what I want to expect. The first part of the journey will probably be good enough for me because it will take me not too much time to **reach the destination**. Besides, I am **looking forward to** chances to **engage in** any gossip with other passengers so that the trip will go by with a lot of fun.

I imagine that the moment I **check in** at the hotel near the beach, I will be really glad that the quality of the room will definitely be **up to standard**. If I recall correctly, I **made it quite clear** to the travel agency that the bed must be cozy and comfortable and the air-conditioner has to work well. Regarding the swimming and the seafood, the weather on that day will be so sunny for sunbathing, which will make me feel like jumping my feet into the seawater. **To add to the fun**, because I am going to travel during **off season**, the seafood won't be too **pricey** and the **servings** will be therefore large for a person like me.

Vocabulary

Extrovert (noun) someone who is very confident, lively, and likes social situations

Crave for (verb) to want something very much

Package tour (noun) package vacation, or package holiday comprises transport and accommodation advertised and sold together by a vendor known as a tour operator

On my own (noun) unaccompanied by others; alone

Do the sightseeing (phrase) the activity of visiting the famous or interesting sights of a place

Hassle (noun) argument

Nuisance (noun) disturbance

Scrumptious (adj) delicious

Second thoughts (noun) a change of opinion after considering something again.

Engage in (verb) take part in a particular activity

Up to standard (phrase) good enough

Make it clear to somebody (phrase) If you make something clear, you say something in a way that makes it impossible for there to be any doubt about your meaning, wishes, or intentions

Off season (phrase) a period of the year when there is less activity in business

Serving (noun) a quantity of food suitable for or served to one person.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

9.1. What can people benefit from travelling?

Clearly, there are a number of **merits** brought by travelling. But I would probably say that the thing that really **stands out** is we can **broaden our horizons** of the world. To be more specific, when coming to a new region or a country, we have the chances to **sample the local life**, enjoy the cuisine and learn a great deal of interesting stuff. Besides, a second positive point could be that we can **let our hair down** after **undergoing nerve-racking period of time** of hard work or study. **A flying visit to** somewhere can help us **recharge our batteries** and work more effectively afterwards.

Vocabulary

Merit (noun) the quality of being particularly good or worthy

Stand out (verb) to be easy to see or notice because of being different

Broaden one's horizon (phrase) to make you see a wider range of opportunities and choices

Let hair down (idiom) relax

Nerve-racking (adj) nervous

Flying visit to (phrase) short visit

Recharge one's batteries (phrase) to rest and relax for a period of time so that you feel energetic again

9.2. Do you like to travel on your own or with your family?

Personally, I like the former option. Travelling on my own can **free me from** the burden of others and so I can have more freedom and independence to **explore to my heart's content**. To be more precise, when you travel on a **package tour** with your family members, you have to plan your budget, must **keep an eye on** the small kids or have to follow the instructions of the tour guide. However, when you are **on your own**, you can head to anywhere you feel like, stay with the local people, experience many different feelings, and become more independent. You can also have **me time** to reflect on your life or **contemplate** the meaning of life.

To one's heart's content (phrase) as much as one wants

Keep an eye on (phrase) to watch someone or something; to monitor someone or something closely

On one's own (phrase) alone

Me time (phrase) time that you spend relaxing and doing things that you enjoy rather than time spent doing things for other people

Contemplate (verb) to think very carefully about something for a long time

9.3. Do you like to visit popular places or less-known places?

If you choose to visit touristy places:

If you ask me, I would say that I'd rather **pay a visit to** popular tourist destinations. The main reason for my choice is because I will feel more safe and secure in a place that I **know like the back of my hand**. To be more precise, I could know where to **get a good bargain for** a service or won't **fear the risk of** getting lost. On the contrary, if you venture to visit tourist places of no good reputation, you may risk your life or get **ripped off** in some

cases. In addition, I am not a kind of extrovert and dynamic person, so I'd prefer to go to popular sites instead.

Know like the back of my hand (idiom) be entirely familiar with a place or route.

Get ripped off (verb) to be cheated, especially by charging them too much money for something

If you prefer less-known places:

To be honest, I **have proclivity for** travel to not touristy places where I can have more space **to capture the breathtaking landscapes** without disturbing other travelers. Besides, visiting a site which has not yet been well-known makes me enjoy to discover more about that place. This is because I want to become the **pioneer** who can help introduce the place to more visitors with my photos I snapped and travel guidance I wrote.

Have proclivity for (phrase) have a tendency or inclination to do something

Breathtaking (adj) causing awe or excitement

9.4. Where do people like to travel in your country?

It depends on different preferences and ages. For example, young American, who are adventurous and **curious about** new places, tend to choose **brand new** places where haven't exploited by tourist, whilst old people prefer to stay in a resort nearby a beach or in a village in order to bring back their memories and do meditation.

Curious about (adj) Eager to learn more about something

Brand new (adj) completely new

9.5. Is international travel popular with people in your country?

Recently, most of the people spend their time to travel abroad. Their common first destinations are South East Asia area such as Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries like China, Taiwan, Hongkong, etc. The reason might be because more and more cheap flight from a number of air lines either domestic or international one are available in my country. Tourist

agencies also have various promotions for group people or family. Therefore, international travel seems like not a dream any more.

9.6. What is the relationship between travel and the environment?

Obviously, travel has an adverse impact on the surrounding environment. Air pollution is one concern. This is because people must get on a coach, a train to reach their travel destinations and these means of transport give off huge amounts of emissions into the surrounding air, making the air quality from bad to worse. Another thing is litter dropping issue. All the travelers do is enjoy the services, and throw away trash onto the ground, spit anywhere and these things really spoil the cityscape.

9.7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of travelling alone?

Well firstly I'd say the good thing about travelling alone is that you get to do what you want, without having to ask for anyone else's approval. So basically, you can be really flexible with your plans. But on the downside, if you're travelling on your own, you might feel lonely at times, especially if you've got no one to talk to.

9.8. What are the differences between young people and old people when they go travelling?

I guess there are **a handful of** differences, of which one would be that young people generally like doing quite exciting and energetic things, like **bungee jumping**; or, if they're going somewhere coastal, they might wanna do some watersports like jet skiing, whereas I would say the elderly, **on the whole**, tend to simply like relaxing when they go on holiday, so they'll probably take a few books with them and spend most of the time on a deck chair next to a swimming pool **soaking up** the sun and enjoying the feeling of doing nothing.

A handful of (phrase) A small, undefined number or quantity

Bungee jumping (noun) a jump made by someone from a high bridge, building, etc, secured only by a rubber cord attached to the ankles

Soak up (verb) to absorb

10. Describe an activity that you feel excited

Sample 1

By nature, I'm easily **captivated by** numerous things around me, and **off the top of my head**, one such a thing is learning foreign languages, particularly English. This is a habit I picked up since I was **knee high to a grasshopper**, at about 10, to acquire a huge number of vocabularies in English.

I try to **devote a great deal of my time to** revising and reviewing English words, in which I take careful notes and keep them in my pocket all the time. Each time I'm free from work or academic study, I take them out and start whispering to myself all the words that I have **jotted down**. I feel really **exhilarated** when I recall correctly a word after hiding my fingers over it. If I remember exactly, there was a time I was **thrilled to bits** and even shouted out loudly on the bus because I recited correctly all 100 vocabularies in my notebook in succession.

Learning English is an activity which I have **engaged in** for so many years, and I **take a great pride in** saying this that I have never been **fed up with** learning this marvellous language. There is no limit to knowledge **when it comes to** a beautiful language like English.

Vocabulary

Knee high to a grasshopper (idiom) very small and young

Devote/Dedicate something to doing something/somebody (verb) to give all of something, especially your time, effort, or love, or yourself, to something you believe in or to a person

Jot down (verb) to write something quickly on a piece of paper so that you remember it

Exhilarated (adj) very excited and happy

Thrilled to bits (adj) extremely pleased about something.

Engage in (verb) take part in

Take pride in (phrase) to feel very pleased about something

Fed up with (phrasal verb) be bored of something

When it comes to (phrase) as for something; speaking about something

Sample 2:

I suppose there are a number of great moments that I have had throughout my life, but for now I would like to talk about the first time I went **ice-skating**.

It was the summer break when I was studying abroad. We're so bored of going to shopping malls and eating out, thus our seniors who has lived here for more than 5 years suggested us to try ice-skating. I was quite **freaked out** because I was the only person who has never known how to skate and I was so scared of falling. However, my friends encouraged me as they said they were going to help teach me how to skate. The skating area was very crowded. A lot of children were **proficient in** skating as they could go really fast. As an **amateur** I fell a number of times and got my skin scratched and bled a bit. However, I was strong enough to get up and continue practicing. **At the end of the day**, I finally can skate slowly without any help. After 3-hour skating we had a large meal and headed home.

I think what I've learned from skating or playing any other sport is the "never give up" spirit. I have to **take it seriously**, spending countless time on it with **full of passion** and energy despite failure. Even though it hurted quite badly in the following days, I'm still thankful that my friends gave me an unforgettable experience that I've never thought I could gain.

Vocabulary

Amateur (n): newbie, opposite to "profession"-(pro)

Freak out (verb) be shocked or frightened

Proficient in doing something (adj) skillful at doing something

At the end of the day (idiom) used for saying what you consider is the most important thing about a situation after thinking about it

Take something/someone seriously (phrase) to think that someone/something is important and should be given careful attention

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

10.1. Is it good for people to try new things?

I guess, people should rise to the occasion and take chances to have novel experiences, the main reason being that they can discover their potential in new fields and cultivate their talent. For example, if you're always seared of water and never jump in the swimming pool to have a swim, you won't ever know that you **have an inborn talent for** swimming. After all, changes can be tough at first, but the long-term effects are worthwhile.

Have an inborn talent for something (phrase) God-given talent; have ability to do something better than others from birth

10.2. How can we help others when they try new things?

There are a couple of methods that people can **take into account** when they want to help their friends or children to have more informed decisions when trying new things. The first one is that they should give advice from their **own experience** which can makes their friends feel more **confident in** their decisions. The second approach can be that adults should **encourage** their kids **to be on the go**, actively **seeking information** and experience from others rather than being passive and randomly **making a decision**.

Take into account (phrase) consider something; think carefully

On the go (adj) active

10.3. Why some people are afraid to try new things?

Probably they fear the possible bad consequences of their actions. What I'm trying to say is some people don't **have a knack for** certain stuff, and believe that they will perform poorly at it, without even **making an attempt**. Such reasoning can prove to be wrong as some are an **expert on** it after their first try. Besides, some fear injuries or wounds as some tasks may involve some risks, and if not managed well, you may have to **pay a big price**.

Have a knack for something (phrase) To be exceptionally proficient at (doing) something

Pay the price (phrase) to suffer the consequences for doing something or risking something.

10.4. Should young people play dangerous sports?

Personally speaking, we should give them the freedom to do what they like. After all, **Extreme sports** can bring huge benefits as it **boosts their confidence** and gives them **unforgettable real-life experiences**. Through some sports like **bungee jumping** or bull riding, the young want to **test their own limit** and try to **overcome their fears** in some areas. Having said that, the authorities should be responsible for ensuring the **minimum safety standards**, like they should not allow those having **cardiovascular diseases** to join the dangerous sports, as well as this, the equipment must be **up to standard** to minimize the likelihood of an accident **taking place**.

Extreme sports (noun) a sport that is physically hazardous, such as bungee jumping or snowboarding

Bungee jumping (noun) a sport in which a participant jumps from a high bridge, building, etc, secured only by a rubber cord attached to the ankles

Cardiovascular disease (noun) Heart and blood vessel disease

Up to standard (adj) good enough

11. Describe an experience you spent your time with a child

Sample 1

Children, with their **innocent** mind, could make people around laugh by their witty words and funny actions. I'm going to talk about my niece, a four-year-old energetic girl who did something that really made me **laugh my head off**.

As usual, after finishing dinner, she played toys by herself. There was a night when I was doing my assignment. Suddenly, she knocked the door and told me **tenderly** that she wanted me to **come over** to her room. I thought she needed to take any toys on the shelf so I came there immediately. Surprisingly, she asked me sit down and started to sing a Korean song named "Three little bears". She sang and did funny actions that I **couldn't help** laughing. Her parents and my mom heard the noise, they came to her room. She was **aware**

of many people around. Interestingly, she opened the wardrobe, chose a pink dress like a princess, took a lipstick from my bag and acted like a true singer that everyone **couldn't take their eyes off** her. Whenever she finished, she always questioned whether we like to listen to more songs.

We had a nice night together. Our life is so busy and it's hard to find a true happiness that makes us laugh and enjoy. That was probably the best part of our family memories that I will never forget.

Vocabulary

Innocent (adj) morally good and with no wish to harm anyone

Laugh your head off (idiom) laugh loud and long

Tenderly (adv) softly and gently

Come over (phrasal verb) visit someone

To be aware of (v) Having knowledge or perception of a situation or fact

Can't help something (v) used for saying that someone cannot stop themselves doing something

Can't take your eyes off somebody (phrase) unable to stop looking at them because they are so attractive or interesting

Sample 2:

Well, a child? This topic **challenged** me a lot. I think the last time I played with a child was 2 weeks ago. It's not very long, right? The child who is 2 years old is my aunt's son. He is quite **mischievous** and really cute. Since his mom had to go out for shopping, I **took care of** him for 2 hours, which I must say that it could be a **disaster**. Playing with a child is not easy even when he is still very young. I **looked after** him, not letting reach any high places and checking his **diapers**, which nearly killed me. That the kids are very **active** and curious means that a second without looking after him would **cause** a **consequence**. Therefore, I ought to watch every step and **prevent** him from doing anything dangerous like **approaching** a plug or trying to take a pen. 2 hours was just like 2 **decades** that already scared me to death, not because I am get bored with the child but because I'm afraid that something

unexpected would **harm** the kid. Now I agree that **experience** is a good lesson for me though.

Vocabulary

- **challenge** [v] to test someone's ability or determination
- **take care of = look after** [phrasal verb] to take care of or be in charge of someone or something
- **disaster** [n] (an event which results in) great harm, damage or death, or serious difficulty
- **diaper** [v] a square of thick soft paper or cloth which is fastened around a baby's bottom and between its legs to absorb its urine and solid waste
- **active** [a] busy with or ready to perform a particular activity
- **cause** [v] to make something happen, especially something bad
- **consequence** [n] a result of a particular action or situation, often one which is bad or not convenient
- **prevent** [v] to stop something from happening or someone from doing something
- **approach** [v] to come near or nearer to something or someone in space, time, quality or amount
- **decade** [n] a period of ten years, especially a period such as 1860 to 1869, or 1990 to 1999
- **unexpected** [a] not expected
- **harm** [v] to hurt someone or damage something
- **experience** [n] something that happens to you that affects how you feel

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

11.1. Are sweets a good thing to reward children?

Definitely yes. From my experience, children are often **thrilled to bits** when they **catch sight of** pieces of candies, especially those **with colorful packaging**. It can be easily understandable because children **have a sweet tooth** and candies are **no wonder** a perfect suit for them.

Vocabulary

Thrilled to bits (adj) excited and happy

Have a sweet tooth (phrase) like to eat sweet things

11.2. What social values should parents teach children?

I strongly believe that parents should **take more responsibility for** educating their kids about various social values as early as possible. Out of these, the thing I'd like to **single out** is that children should be taught about the **sense of community** when they are still young. For example, they should **lend a hand** to those in need of support by stuff like helping an elderly cross the road or yielding their seat to the disabled on the bus. On top of this, adopting moral and social etiquettes should be another thing worth teaching them. Kids today are becoming **cheeky and stubborn**, some even fail to greet elderly people, or use **bad language**. Considering this, they should be taught to behave more politely.

Vocabulary

Take more responsibility for (phrase) be more responsible for

Single out (phrasal verb) choose one out of a group of things

Sense of community (noun) the feeling that you belong to a community

Lend/Give somebody a hand (phrase) give somebody help

11.3. Why do children feel happy easily?

As the mindset of a small child is very simple and optimistic, he has quite an outgoing and relaxed **attitude towards** life. What a child does is to play and he also receives much protection and care from their parents. They don't have to worry much about how to make ends meet or other complicated situations in life. Moreover, they tend to **take things less seriously** and only **retain sweet memories** in their minds.

11.4. How important is childhood?

It is perhaps the most important stage in one's life. It **shapes most of one's personality** in addition to all those beautiful memories that can **last with one for a life-time**.

11.5. Do parents in your country spend a lot of time with their children?

As far as I can tell, most people **are constantly up to ears in their work** and **hardly spare enough time for their kids**. Instead, I reckon grandparents are often the ones who **look after** them as people in my country generally **live in extended families** and these elderly members have more free time. The direct result of this is that children **end up being closer to their grandparents** than their own mother and father.

Up to ears/neck in something (idiom) very busy doing something

Extended family (noun) a family unit that includes grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, and uncles, etc. in addition to parents and children ><

Nuclear family (noun) a family consisting of two parents and their children, but not including aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.

11.6. Why do children tend to be happier than adults?

I guess the **first and foremost** reason is because children tend to **let** their feelings **go** while adults tend to **hold** their feelings **back**. In fact, children's thoughts are simple and innocent. They also have the ability to simplify everything that they see, feel and encounter, which helps them to be more careless and not **over-analyze** things like most adults do. Besides, they don't have to **face up with** any troubles at work and they often forget what just happened. They have no worries, no doubts, no disappointment about anything. Thus, their life is much easier and happier.

Vocabulary

First and foremost (phrase) most importantly; more than anything else

To let Sth go (v) to allow someone or something to escape or go free

To hold Sth back (v) to hesitate to act or speak

To face with (v) to deal with

12. Describe an event in history/historical event in your country

[The name of your country] is often **widely acclaimed** for its **time-honored traditions** and long periods of wars and battles. **Off the top of**

my head, the most prominent one that **stands out** in my mind would be the victory of [August revolution in 1915], an event that **marked a huge milestone** in history: the peace and a **brand new** start of our country.

Before the success of the revolution, people had to **suffer from immense hardship**. There were many lives sacrificed, mothers losing their sons in the meaningless battles, and the whole country was **in a state of fear and instability**. At the time, people lived in **poor living conditions, burning the candles at both ends** working for the landlord to earn a **meager income**, so their lives were miserable indeed.

This historic event **ushered in** the new era for our country with no more wars and hunger. On top of that, people were liberated from their past sufferings, and given a chance to **start a fresh life**, with their own freedom and the right to rule their own country. In a nutshell, the victory of [August evolution in 1915] was truly a unforgettable **turning-point** for the people in my country. We are really proud of our ancestors

Vocabulary

Acclaim (verb) to give public approval and praise

Time-honored (adj) respected or valued because it has existed for a long time

Off the top of my head (phrase) without giving it too much thought

Milestone (noun) a significant event in life, history, etc

Brand new (adj) completely new

Burning the candles at both ends (idiom) to work very hard and stay up very late at night

Meager (adj) deficient in quantity or quality

Usher in (verb) To make known the presence or arrival of

Turning point (noun) an event marking a unique or important historical change of course

QUESTION FOR PART 3

12.1. How can people learn about history?

Knowledge is one of the most **precious** treasures and fortunately, they are easily accessible and widespread around the world thanks to the **advent** of technology. For people who are passionate about history, there are many ways to **trace** back time and learn about historical events. The most traditional and authentic way is to visit museums where hundreds of ancient pieces are **on display** and historical movies are shown for public to be able to visually **immerse** in the event. Furthermore, historical websites and **virtual** courses are also available for anyone who misses history class or has no time for museums. Most of them are incredibly informative and carefully **revised** by experts so you may find them helpful.

Precious (a): valuable or important and not to be wasted

The advent of something: the coming of an important event, person, invention, etc.

Trace (v): to find the origin or cause of something

Be on display: has been put in a place where everybody can see it

Immerse (v): to become or make somebody completely involved in something

Virtual (a): made to appear to exist by the use of computer software, for example on the Internet

Revise (v): to change something, such as a book or an estimate, in order to correct or improve it

12.2. Will museums be replaced by technology someday?

Even if I can't tell for sure at the moment, I don't think it would be a smart move to replace everything with technology, museums included. Museums are not **merely** historical **institutions** for **artifacts** and objects collected from time to time but also considered **national landmarks** and **public treasures** that can hardly be replaced. The Louvre in Paris or British Museum in London are iconic features that attract hundreds of visitors every year to learn about history as well as the architectures themselves. Without them, these cities will surely not be as appealing as they are and citizens have one less **phenomenal** educational place.

Merely (adv): just; only

Institution (n): a large important organization that has a particular purpose, for example, a university or bank

Artifact (n): an object that is made by a person, especially something of historical or cultural interest

Phenomenal (a): very great or impressive

12.3. Are history museums useful?

It would definitely be a yes in my opinion. **First and foremost**, history museums are where most of historical objects are displayed with thorough information about what it is and its usage. Students who find history class **tedious** and too **theoretical** can be more enthusiastic with such **authentic** experiences. Besides, museums are open for public with reasonable ticket fees that can not only help to **preserve** their best condition but attract tourists to the city. Finally, these institutions are interesting places to hang out with your friends and families or meet new people, **nurturing** relationships in a positive way.

First and foremost: more than anything else

Tedious (a): boring

Theoretical (a): concerned with the ideas and principles on which a particular subject is based, rather than with practice and experiment

Authentic (a): true and accurate

Preserve (v): to keep something in its original state in good condition

Nurture (v): to help somebody/something to develop and be successful

12.4. Should museums be free?

I am partly **on board with** the idea that people should be charged upon visiting museums but carrying out that plan may result in some **undesirable** responses. Most museums are financially sponsored by governments for constant **maintenance** and **renovation**, however, public also **contribute** to the preservation of these places with their spending on entrance tickets. Without that amount, I believe museums can still function by itself but with a little struggle indeed. Having said that, many people are having second

thoughts on whether to visit museums if they will be charged when there are other attractions without entrance fees required. Therefore, whichever way authorities decide to go, two sides of the issues need **taking into consideration**.

Maintenance (n): the act of keeping something in good condition by checking or repairing it regularly

Renovation (n): the act or process of repairing and painting an old building, piece of furniture, etc. so that it is in good condition again

Contribute (v): to give something, especially money or goods, to help somebody/something

Take into consideration: to think about a particular fact or detail and allow it to have some influence when you are making a decision

12.5. What is the importance of history? Do you think history is important?

Definitely yes, history **has a significant role to play** in our daily lives. Through historical lessons, people are more aware of their **ancestors'** achievements and therefore **appreciate the freedom and peace** they are enjoying.

12.6. What is the importance of learning about history?

Studying history enables us to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. History is **illuminating** and allows us to understand how past human actions influence the present and the future, it teaches us many **lessons of life**, therefore it helps us be able to think more logically and **make sound judgments** about current and future events. History enlightens future generations.

Illuminate (verb) clarify

12.7. Do you think the internet is a good place to learn about history?

It is true that the Internet is a good **source of information** and a **means** through which people can discover and learn more about the past history. However, it's quite unpopular among people nowadays as more young people

merely see the internet as a place to relax themselves. Therefore, TV programs or films, I suppose, are better alternatives.

12.8. Do you think people should be able to see historical exhibitions for free? Do you think museums should be free?

To be honest, although **charging a small amount of entrance fee** will give the organizers funds to **continue their operations** and encourage the artists to **produce more decent works**, in my country, people seem to **show no appreciation of artistic values**. Therefore, the local authorities had better let people enter for free to **arouse the public's interests** first and then, if people are interested, a **small admission fee** should be considered afterwards.

Decent (adj) good

12.9. Do people like visiting museums and art galleries?

Not everyone enjoys going to museums. Most of my friends are not interested in art, but I **have a great passion for** it. After I graduated, I began to enjoy taking trips to various art exhibits. Since then I have made a few friends that are artists, and now they invite me to their galleries quite often.

12.10. How can more people become interested in history?

I'm not that sure, but I suppose the way it's taught at school could be improved, and possibly made more interesting. So for example, instead of simply staying in the classroom, teachers could take students out more to visit historical sites and anything of historical relevance. So that's one thing, and as well as this I guess, um..., increasing the amount of history documentaries on TV could also **have a positive effect on** developing people's interest in history.

12.11. Would you say movies help people develop more interest in history?

Yeah, I'd say they can, because after all, movies are quite **vivid** and so they make history **come alive**. And another thing is that a lot of people can't be bothered to read a book about history, but they'd gladly go and watch a film

about it, simply because movies are a bit more entertaining. So yeah, I'd say they generally do help people become more interested in history.

Come alive (verb) If you make something come alive, you make it seem real and interesting

13. Describe a garden you visited and like.

You should say

- Where the garden is
- How do you feel about it
- Why do you like it

As a citizen in a **metropolitan** city, I **am usually partial to** fresh outing spaces for relaxation after being **up to my neck in** work. The list of **ideal** places to visit is in fact pretty long but if I have to **single out** the most preferable one, I would probably pick the Queen Botanical Garden **on the outskirts of my city**. I really need to add that whenever I am **under pressure** of the **fast – paced** living, I will pay a visit to this **amazing** park, **stroll around** a bit to **decompress**. The fresh and peaceful atmosphere at this Garden totally enables me to **get away from the hustle and bustle** of the city. After **going for a stroll** in the park and get a **full lung of fresh air**, I feel like I've been **fully recharged** and ready for any challenges ahead. The factors **accounting for** my special love to this park are not only the fresh **ambiance** but also the meaning of this botanical garden **dedicated to** the collection, **cultivation** and display of **a multitude of** plants, especially **endangered plant species**. For years, this park has always given me lots of **precious opportunities** to enjoy the **stunning fauna and flora** with a **plenty of** gorgeous flowers and trees. There is no doubt to confirm that this garden has **made great contributions to preserving** local plant diversity as well as **diversifying** people's recreational activities. Almost every individual comes to this park **show their great appreciation for** the local authority's **attempt in conserving** nature lives.

Vocabulary

Metropolitan (adj) belonging to a big city, or typical of big cities

To be partial to (phrase) to like something very much

Up to one's neck in something (idiom) very busy doing something

On the outskirts of something (phrase) a part of the city far removed from the center

Under pressure (phrase) be stressed

Fast-paced (adj) including a lot of different things happening quickly

Stroll around (verb) to walk around casually

Decompress (verb) to relax

Hustle and bustle (phrase) busy and noisy activity (usually + of)

Go for a stroll (noun) a slow walk for pleasure

Account for (verb) explain

Ambiance (noun) atmosphere

Dedicate to (verb) to use space, time, or money for a particular thing

Cultivation (noun) the process of growing crops or plants

Fauna and flora (noun) animals and plants

Plenty of (noun) many

Make contribution to something (phrase) an amount of money or something else of value that you give in order to achieve something or to help make it successful

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

13.1. Are there many public gardens in your country?

To be honest, there are only a few public gardens due to the shortage of **residential areas** especially in large towns and cities. The authorities seem to pay **excessive** attention to economic growth and ignore the provision of green spaces for citizens' enjoyment and relaxation. For example, Madrid City has a small number of public gardens, but a lot of **high-rise** buildings.

13.2. Do you think there are enough public gardens in your hometown?

Personally, I think the number of public gardens in my hometown is **insufficient**. Due to the shortage of housing and the increasing number of citizens, people tend to make use of land for living or cultivation rather than giving priority to public areas such gardens or parks.

13.3. What do you think are the benefits of having gardens in the city?

Having sufficient **urban green spaces** will bring many ecological and health benefits for the city and its residents. Regarding the environmental benefit, public gardens help to **preserve** various species of wild plants, they have beautiful flowers and they keep the **ecological** balance of the area. City gardens also have a positive impact on the health of city dwellers and factory workers.

13.4. Very often, public gardens are not designed in a simple way but, instead, are laid out in a rather complex way. Why do you think this is the case?

In my opinion, a public garden built in a complex design pattern is very **eye-catching** and attractive for people to visit. A garden consisting of sculptures, various rare species of plants and special **landscaping** will be more **appealing** to visitors who wish to explore something **unique**. To make an **analogy**, I believe that public gardens are designed to capture public attention in the same way that architects design the structure of their buildings.

13.5. Do you think governments should provide more public gardens for people to visit?

Of course, I definitely agree with the idea that governments and authorities ought to provide more public gardens for their citizens for the following reasons.

Public gardens are collections of plants and flowers; they are used not only for enjoyment but also education so that people, especially children, can have the chance to understand and be close to nature. In this function as outdoor

classrooms , they **raise an awareness of** environmental issues as well as the **conservation** of special species.

Also, urban green spaces play an important role in leisure and recreation – imagine the pleasure of sitting and reading a book or strolling and chatting with friends, surrounded by the sight and smells of beautiful flowers.

13.6. What do people do when they go to a public garden?

There are various reasons why citizens go to a public garden, but I think the main one is to find an **oasis** of peace and tranquility amid the **frenzy** and **chaos** of city life. Residents in general can go there to enjoy the fresh, tranquil atmosphere and relax themselves simply by **appreciating** the beauty of the flowers and the songs of the birds.

Moreover, it is very practical for children and students to visit public gardens in order to be **in touch with** nature and acquire knowledge about it. As a student, I would say that public gardens are also a great place to read a book and to reflect on the lectures or seminars of the day.

13.7. How do people of different age groups use public gardens?

Different age groups will have dissimilar preferences in using public gardens. For example, elderly people tend to go there to relax, go jogging or doing exercises like tai chi. Then again, when public gardens also **incorporate** play areas, these are very safe environments in which parents can **keep a watchful eye** on their children.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Residential areas** [noun]: areas consisting of houses, not factories or offices

Example: She lives in a quiet **residential area**, but she has to travel a long way to work.

- ✓ **Excessive** [adjective]: greater than what seems reasonable or appropriate
Example: They complained about the **excessive** noise made by their neighbours.

- ✓ **High-rise** [adjective]: a building that is very tall, and has lots of floors

Example: She lives on the 10th floor of a **high-rise** apartment block.

- ✓ **Insufficient** [adjective]: not large, strong or important enough for a specific purpose

Example: There was **insufficient** time in the exam to answer all the questions.

Urban green spaces [expression]: areas of open land within large towns or cities
Example: In our city there are insufficient **urban green spaces** for residents to enjoy.

- ✓ **Preserve** [verb]: to keep something in existence and in good condition
Example: The society was founded in order to **preserve** elephants from extinction.

- ✓ **Ecological** [adjective]: the relationship between plants and animals to their environment and to each other

Example: When rats were introduced to the island, they destroyed the **ecological balance** between the animals already living there.

- ✓ **Eye-catching** [adjective]: immediately noticeable, because it is very attractive

Example: The actors wore beautiful clothes in **eye-catching** colours.

- ✓ **Landscaping** [noun]: the process of making a garden or other pieces of land more attractive by changing the design or planting trees and flowers

Example: The new campus at the university has beautiful **landscaping**, making it a very attractive place at which to study.

- ✓ **Appealing** [adjective]: attractive and interesting

Example: The design of the doll is very **appealing** to young girls.

- ✓ **Unique** [adjective]: very special or unusual

14. Describe a happy event from your childhood that you remember well.

You should say:

- *What the event was*
- *When and where it happened*
- *What you saw or did*
- *And explain why you remember this event so well*

Ok right then, after **a bit of thought**, the family event that I'd like to talk to you about was the wedding of one of my aunts. And I guess the reason I remember it so well is because it was the first wedding I'd ever been to, so it **left quite a lasting impression on me**. And I was **knee high to a grasshopper**, you know, only about 5 or 6, so I guess I must have been one of the youngest people there.

The wedding **took place** in some restaurant in our hometown. **I can't tell you the exact name of the place cos I honestly can't remember**, but what I can tell you is that it was a pretty big place, because there must have been at least a couple of hundred people there.

And **as for** what happened, well it was basically just a typical wedding party, you know, **with loads of food and drink**, although unfortunately I was too young to be able **to enjoy all the wine and champagne on offer!** But at least I got to enjoy all the food, which there **were absolutely masses of!** And another thing I remember quite clearly was **playing around with the microphone**, and saying a few words into it. You know, I'd never seen a microphone before, so it felt pretty cool when speaking into it and **hearing my voice come out through the speakers**.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

14.1. Wasn't your impression of your childhood?

The memories of childhood are precious. I can't forget that **I clung to my mother**, asking her to sing **nursery rhymes** to me; I can't forget that I **burst into tears** the first time I went to school; I can't forget the big red flower my teacher gave me. **Childhood is a memory without pressure**,

competition and hypocrisy. In my viewpoint, it is **the most innocent period of time** which we cannot experience twice, and the most wonderful part of my life.

14.2. What kinds of tips do you use to keep things in mind? What kinds of things people can do to prevent bad memory?

As I have mentioned, some tips like taking advantage of the **applications available on your smartphone** or **developing a habit of note-taking** can be a useful first step. Furthermore, you can rely on your buddies or family members to remind you of important dates like an upcoming exam or interview, which is the method I **make use of** quite frequently.

14.3. How would you define happiness?

“What is happiness” is a difficult question that remained unanswered for centuries. For me, happiness doesn’t mean feeling good **all the time** or being rich. Happiness is a combination of how satisfied I am with my life and how good I feel on a **day-to-day** basis. Happiness can come from a very simple thing like waking up with a delicious breakfast prepared by my mom or receiving a **good morning message** from my beloved one.

Vocabulary

Day-to-day (adj) daily, everyday

14.4. What do you do when you feel unhappy?

I tend to be alone when I’m **in a bad mood** because I think it would be better for me and people around me. In those **chunks of bad time**, I read the Holy Bible and pray to help myself **calm down** and release all negative thoughts. Sometimes, when I’m **in a chatty mode**, I find some friends to talk to. We could hang out or walk around. Taking a deep breath and **going sightseeing** also make me feel better.

Vocabulary

In a bad mood (expression) unhappy

In a chatty mood (phrase)

To go sightseeing (v) The activity of visiting places of interest in a particular location

Chunks (n) A significant amount of something

14.5. Why do children tend to be happier than adults?

I guess the **first and foremost** reason is because children tend to **let** their feelings **go** while adults tend to **hold** their feelings **back**. In fact, children's thoughts are simple and innocent. They also have the ability to simplify everything that they see, feel and encounter, which helps them to be more careless and not **over-analyze** things like most adults do. Besides, they don't have to **face up with** any troubles at work and they often forget what just happened. They have no worries, no doubts, no disappointment about anything. Thus, their life is much easier and happier.

Vocabulary

First and foremost (phrase) most importantly; more than anything else

To let Sth go (v) to allow someone or something to escape or go free

To hold Sth back (v) to hesitate to act or speak

To face with (v) to deal with

15. Describe a future plan which is not related to work or study

You should say:

- *What it is*
- *Why you have this plan*
- *What you will happen need to do in order to make the plan*
- *How you think you will feel after you achieve this*

Sample 1

You may or may not notice but we have **run across** at least one or two articles illustrating how people should **live their lives to the fullest** every single day. Reading those sharing has **struck** me hard that I haven't tried doing something worth risking or adventurous enough in my life, which will somehow leave a regretful feeling to my older self when years **come by**. And that's why I have **scratched** my original plan to **settle down** first to **make time for** traveling for at least 3 months within the next 2 years.

It may sound **far-fetched** to give up your usual lifestyle and stable income to commit for long-term retreat which **holds no guarantee** to be beneficial for your next job, however, life is not always about the results but the experience. It will take serious time and effort to carefully prepare for the journey unless you want to **let the grass grow under your feet**. Fortunately, I am that type of person; hence, I have already **sketched** a plan. The first thing crossing my mind when thinking about travelling is money, which is also the most crucial tool in any situation. Saving up to the amount that can cover at least all my basic needs is the goal. Besides, it's nearly impossible to truly discover local cultures without understanding them and languages can break any **boundary**. Therefore, based on the list of countries I would love to visit, I will try to learn a little about their languages as well as look into their cultures and customs to be able to communicate more efficiently and avoid **taboos** that visitors usually make. **Emerging yourself in** an entirely different nature and people will definitely change how you **perceive** the world and **cultivate** your appreciation with everything offered.

Vocabulary

Run across (phrasal verb) meet or find by chance

Live life to the fullest: to fully enjoy one's life

Strike (v): (of a thought or an idea) to come into somebody's mind suddenly

Scratch (v): to decide that something cannot happen or somebody/something cannot take part in something, before it starts

Far-fetched (a): unlikely and unconvincing; implausible

Let the grass grow under your feet: delay in acting or taking an opportunity

Sketch (v): to give a general description of something, giving only the basic facts

Boundary (n): a line that marks the limits of an area; a dividing line

Taboo (n): considered so offensive or embarrassing that people must not mention it

Perceive (v): to understand or think of somebody/something in a particular way

Cultivate (v): to develop an attitude, a way of talking or behaving, etc.

Sample 2

The significant development of transport has made traveling nowadays more easily and comfortably. Especially when you're still young, the desire to know more about the world outside becomes even stronger. And **I'm no exception**. Traveling is definitely one of my goal before I'm 35. Although for now I've not yet **thought of** any specific countries or places, but I'm planning to have a perfect vacation with my lover after **putting aside** enough money.

Firstly, I want to spend my vacation with my lover. It may sound a bit **cheesy** but things would be quite boring if I didn't have someone to share with. Traveling is of course a good chance for us to make more memories. Moreover, as I suppose both of us prefer travelling by ourselves, having someone to assist you is necessary when it comes to new countries, especially in case you don't speak the language or you're not **familiar with** the culture.

Quite and peaceful places with nice weather would be a perfect destination for me. So beaches, highland or countryside are **on top of the list**. For me traveling is such a perfect time to just **let my hair down, recharge our own energy** after working hard **all year long**, to **get away from** busy lifestyle of the **concrete world** and to enjoy some fresh air. Thus, instead of crazy shopping or **stuck in traffic jam** for hours, walking or cycling **here and there** and trying some local foods would be amazing.

Finally the length of the vacation appears to be not so important to me **as long as** we can manage our time and health for work.

Vocabulary

To be no exception (adj): to be similar to other people

To be on top of the list (adj): to be considered as the first priorities

Let my hair down (idiom): relax

All year long (phrase): the whole year

Traffic jam (n): the situation when a large number of vehicles close together and unable to move or move slowly (peak hours)

Here and there (phrase) in or to several different places

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

15.1. Which do you prefer? Having plans or having no plans?

I **have inclination for** becoming organized and prepared for upcoming challenges. **Drawing up** a plan **in advance** can **equip people with** some knowledge when something unexpected **comes up**, or when everything just doesn't go according to plan. Without a plan, people can feel **at a loss** and have nothing to **fall back on** when they are **in the face of adversity**. However, it should be **pointed out** that we shouldn't **get into too much detail**, instead, just **getting the picture as to** what's gonna happen and how plan can be developed is enough for us to tackle it. I mean that plan there are a lot of external circumstances which **preclude** our detailed plan **from** coming true; as a result, there is no need to be too precise.

Have inclination for (phrase) have a feeling that you want to do something

Draw up (phrasal verb) to prepare and write something such as a document or plan

Equip somebody/something with something (phrase) to provide a person, object, or place with the things that they need for a particular purpose

Come up (phrasal verb) if a problem comes up, it happens and needs to be dealt with immediately

To be at a loss (phrase) unable to know how to act or what to do

Fall back on (phrasal verb) to depend on something after a loss or failure

Adversity (noun) a difficult period in your life in which you have many problems

Point out (phrasal verb) to tell someone something

In detail (phrase) including many facts or aspects of a situation

Get the picture (idiom) understand something

Preclude something from something (verb) if one thing precludes another, the first thing prevents the second one from happening

Precise (adj) exact and accurate

15.2. Do you think most people can carry out their plans?

I think only the minority have the ability to realize their plans. What need to be pointed out is that the majority tend to set up their plans in an ideal and perfect way without being **aware of** the fact that **external circumstances** can **prevent them from** being fulfilled. Some might **end up** being driven to a **dead-end** and feel **at a loss** as to what to do next. We should **blame this on** our **inflexibility** and inexperience, rather than regarding the plan as a bad one. **At the end of the day**, what counts most is our capacity and experience to make our intentions **come true**, not just preparing a **detailed plan** beforehand.

Blame something on someone/something (verb) to say or think that someone or something is responsible for an accident, problem, or bad situation

Inflexibility (noun) no willingness to change your ideas, beliefs, or decisions

At the end of the day (idiom) used for saying what you consider is the most important thing about a situation after thinking about it

15.3. What's the difference between dream and goal?

As far as I'm concerned, there's only one big difference that **distinguishes a dream from** a goal, which is your determination and **stamina**. In other words, when you are **committed to** something, you will

probably spend more time on it; **make concerted efforts** to **achieve the goal you have set**. **On the contrary**, just like its literal meaning, a dream is what you only wish to come but it is almost impossible to **come into reality** as you are lazy and **take no actions** to make your dream come true.

As far as I'm concerned (phrase) used when you are giving your opinion about something, especially when this may be different from other people's opinions

Distinguish from (verb) to recognize the differences between things

Stamina (noun) the ability to work hard or to make a lot of effort over a long period of time without getting tired

Committed to (adj) loyal to a belief, organization, or group, and willing to work hard for it

Make concerted efforts (phrase) work hard

Achieve goal (collocation)

Set goal (collocation)

On the contrary (phrase) used for emphasizing that something is true, even though it is the opposite of something that has been said

15.4. In general, do you think planning is important?

To be honest, I am a great planner and can hardly stick to my original plan. Yet, that's what planning is all about. They say "**plan to fail and fail to plan**" for a reason. Even though I usually end up ruining my schedule, I **make a habit of** noting my thoughts and what I have to do the next day, next week and next month since I think it's one of the best way to organize my mind and my life as well. Without a plan, even a **generic** one, you're just going around without **making any progress** towards your goals and advance in your career. Therefore, making sure to **keep track of** my schedule and personal goals through planning is my top priority.

Make a habit of: to do something so often that it becomes a habit

Generic (a): not specific

Make progress: to move forward in one's work or activity

Keep track of: to continue to know what is happening to something or someone

15.5. Do you think people should make highly detailed plans or just general plans?

There's no such fixed rules on whether people should detail their plans or not as it mainly depends on people's **preference** and the duration of the plans. They could be short, medium or long-term plans and usually the longer the time, the more general they seem. But again, it's **flexible**. I believe each kind of plans has its own advantage. For more detailed ones, planners would know exactly what to do to achieve specific goals in the period of time given. On the contrary, general plans are more about what directions you want to head rather than a list of to-do things daily. Therefore, depending on your purpose, plan wisely.

Preference (n): a greater interest in or desire for somebody/something than somebody/something else

Flexible (a): able to change to suit new conditions or situations

15.6. What type of people likes to make plans?

From my experience and observations, people who want to **make best use of** their time and aim to **take control of** their lives are dedicated planners. Lots of people are losing focus everyday and have no ideas what to do with their current situation. They hold onto the excuses of having no passion or necessary skills to **fulfill** their dreams, which **makes no sense** to most planners. Planners are convinced that in order to achieve anything, either big or small, plans should be made and efforts should be taken. As a result, the majority of successful people are those who make times to organize their thoughts and plan ahead.

Make use of: to use someone or something for a particular purpose, especially one that brings a benefit to you

Take control of: to get the power and right to direct someone or something

Hold onto: to continue feeling or believing something

Fulfill (v): to do or achieve what was hoped for or expected

Make sense: to be understandable, reasonable => **make no sense:** not understandable

15.7. Why do you think some people like to make plans?

Some believe planning is not for everyone since many want to live **spontaneously** without thinking too much but others have different opinions. People are into planning since many benefits it may bring. Planning helps you **clarify** your goals, **strategize** your tactics and **stay on track**. Even if sometimes you mess it all up, you will eventually get back to your **ultimate** destination. Without a plan, you are simply lost in a maze of **inconsequential** decisions.

Spontaneously (adv): in a way that is not planned but done because you suddenly want to do it

Clarify (v): to make something clearer or easier to understand

Strategize (v): devise a strategy

Stay on track: to stay on the path that one is on

Ultimate (a): most extreme; best, worst, greatest, most important, etc.

Inconsequential (a): not important or worth considering

15.8. Do you think it's important for a person to have a career plan?

There's no doubt about that. In fact, questions about career plan or personal growth are brought up in almost every job interview that every candidate has to carefully prepare. It's **justifiable** to ask such questions to further assess whether applicants are passionate about their job or not. If they already have a vision for their future selves, it's **praiseworthy**. But if that's not the case, people should keep looking for their purpose and **come up with** a career plan when possible, which will help you have a clearer picture of whom you're going to be in the next few years.

Justifiable (a): existing or done for a good reason, and therefore acceptable

Praiseworthy (a): deserving praise

Come up with: to think of something such as an idea or a plan

15.9. How do most people plan their future education and their future career? (What factors?)

They usually start from the very basic steps, I **presume**. In order to **obtain** further education, young students may start with improving their current performance at school today. Without an acceptable **transcript** or **references** from teachers, it's challenging to be offered a place at any high-ranking university. And to be able to cover the tuition, they probably start saving up as soon as they can to afford four years of college. Same thing with their future career. Plans are usually drawn out to **determine** where students will go and how to **land their dream job** after graduating. Finding an internship or a part-time job is most of students' way to gain **hands-on** experience to fill up their resume.

Presume (v): to suppose that something is true, although you do not have actual proof

Obtain (v): to get something, especially by making an effort

Transcript (n): an official record of a student's work that shows the courses they have taken and the marks/grades they have achieved

Reference (n): a letter written by somebody who knows you, giving information about your character and abilities, especially to a new employer

Determine (v): to officially decide and/or arrange something

Land a job: to find a job and be hired

Hands-on (a): doing something rather than just talking about it

15.10. Do you think it's important for young people to get advice from their parents when planning a career?

Parents are predecessors with years of **wisdom** and experience so it would be an **oversight** not to **seek** career advice from your own folks. Since fresh graduates or young employees have not been through many situations, which can be either good or bad, and mainly concentrated on studying, they probably lack practical knowledge and determination to decide which career is suitable with their characteristics and **ambitions**. Hence, as part of parenting, it's parents' responsibility to help guide them towards their desired place.

Wisdom (n): the ability to make sensible decisions and give good advice because of the experience and knowledge that you have

Oversight (n): the fact of making a mistake because you forget to do something or you do not notice something

Seek (v): to look for something/somebody

Ambition (n): the desire or determination to be successful, rich, powerful, etc.

16. Describe a leisure activity near or on the sea

You should say:

- *What it is*
- *Who do you play with*
- *Why you have to prepare*
- *And explain how you feel about it*

Ok, well I'd say the activity I probably like most when I'm on the beach is beach volleyball.

Unfortunately, I don't have a lot of chances to play it because I live quite far from the coast. So I only get the chance to play it when I'm on holiday, which is probably only about once or twice a year. It would be nice to do it more often, but with my **hectic** life, it's just not possible.

With regard to who I play it with, well, what normally happens is that I start playing with a few of my friends who are with me on holiday, and then other people at the beach see us and ask if they can join.

The reason I enjoy it so much is that it's just so fun, especially jumping around in the sand, what makes it fun is that it's something that I normally don't get the chance to do. The other cool thing about it is that you can dive for the ball and land softly in the sand, whereas you tried doing that on a hard surface like concrete, it would be extremely painful, as you can imagine!

It's also really good exercise, and I am always **overwhelmed with** joy after playing it. It's also a good way to make friends, because as I mentioned just

now, I often end up playing with other people on the beach and afterwards we might hang out for a bit.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

16.1. Why do so many people like going to places with water such as lakes, rivers or the ocean?

As far as I'm concerned, there are often a lot of trees and the atmosphere is **fresh and tranquil** in some places like the river bank or some lakes. This gives them the opportunity to **escape from the hustle and bustle of city life**, breathe some fresh air and **let their hair down** a bit. On top of that, some places near water like the beaches is a source of great fun and **folks** can **enjoy various outdoor activities** with their friends or relatives like going for a swim or going sunbathing

16.2. What kinds of leisure activities do people like to do in places such as on the ocean, at a beach, at a river, at a lake etc.?

There is a **great deal of stuff** we can take part in when going to such places. Firstly, we can take advantage of some **voyages** to **do the sights**, look at the blue sea and skies and enjoy life. Secondly, we can go for a swim or **soak in the sunshine** on the beach, **feel the cool breezes in our faces**. Finally, at some riverbanks or lakes, we can have a good time **recharging our batteries**, and **enjoying our temporary escape** from the **hustle and bustle of city life**

16.3. As a place to spend some leisure time, do you think the beach or the seaside is more suitable for children or for old people?

If you ask me, I would have to say that the youths benefit more from going to the beaches or the seaside than the elderly. The first point worth mentioning is that young people **are dynamic and adventurous**, so they are pretty into taking part in a **mixed diversity of outdoor activities**. So obviously, they **can take a full advantage** of their trips. On the contrary, the older citizens

are passive and wouldn't love to move their bodies around. This means that they **merely** consider such travel trips as an occasion **to** idle their time away

16.4. Do you think children and old people do the same types of things when they go to a beach?

No, I don't really think so. The range of activities and their interests vary a lot. For the young, they **show a fancy for strenuous physical activities** like surfing, swimming or **sand castle building**, so they tend to be really **engrossed in** what they are doing. By contrast, old people would rather **pick up a good book** to read, **prepare some snacks** for their kids to **graze** or find time to have a chat with one of their relatives, whom they **may not haven't been in touch for ages**.

17. Describe a positive change in your life

You should say:

- *What the change was*
- *When it happened*
- *How it happened*
- *How it happened*
- *and explain why it was a positive change*

Many things have changed since the last time I woke up just **in time** for lunch. That was when I realized I had been wasting hundreds of mornings in the last few years without **accomplishing** anything. It was a **wakeup call** which completely changed me. Now, I'm an **early riser** and have been for more than 2 years.

They say **old habits die hard**, which **made perfect sense** to me when I first started to **get rid of** my **unhealthy routine**. There were so many temptations during night time that kept me awake for hours. And it could be anything such as the latest episode of The Walking Dead, a music video that I

had been **counting down** for weeks to be released or a **deadline I needed to meet** because I had been **procrastinating** for a month and so on. As a result, going to bed after 1 or 2 AM was **inevitable** to me. It took me long enough to **fully aware of** how **destructive** this sleeping habit could be for me, both physically and mentally, especially **in a long run**. Therefore, I **had no choice but** to give up that kind of toxic.

I have learnt a lot since starting waking up early in the morning. The key is starting small and taking one step at a time. It was so **tiresome** and **torturing** at the beginning that I tended to get irritated whenever anyone approached me about 10 minutes into my running session. However, everything has its own way of getting better and so is my temper. I now feel **fully energized** and extremely **refreshing** in the morning and even more **productive** at work.

Vocabulary

- **Accomplish:** to succeed in doing or completing something
- **early riser:** person who wakes up early in the morning
- **old habits die hard:** People find it difficult to change their accustomed behavior
- **make sense:** to be clear and easy to understand
- **get rid of:** to remove or throw away something unwanted
- **meet deadline:** finish something in time
- **procrastinate:** to delay doing something that you should do, usually because you do not want to do it
- **inevitable:** that you cannot avoid or prevent
- **tiresome:** making you feel annoyed

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Is your country changing rapidly?

Without a doubt, it has **experienced numerous transformations** compared to some decades ago. In the past, used to be an **agrarian country** with **backward** ways of life. However, with the fast development of

technologies, many companies are **springing up all over the place** and we have been focusing more on **the industry and service sectors**. It's also worth pointing out that the standard of living has been dramatically raised, and people are **feeling way more satisfied than** they were in the past.

Why old people dislike changes?

It would be because as people grow old, their brain doesn't work as effectively as before and any abrupt change would cause them traumatic effects. Elderly people have already been used to the old ways of doing things and expecting them to cope with new changes seems counterproductive. For example it's difficult for an aged citizen to learn how to operate an air-conditioner as he might not know which button to adjust the fans' speed or increase the temperature in the room.

18. Describe a time when you moved to a new house or a new school.

You should say:

- *When it happened*
- *What kind of home did you moved into*
- *Why you moved:*
- *And explain how you felt about the moving.*

I'm a type of person who **detests instability** and quite **reluctant to change my accommodation** when I have got used to it. Yet, there was a time when I **had no choice but move to a new place**, which is during my second year at university.

My previous lodging place/house is quite far from the school so I **made up my mind to** move to somewhere **within a stone's throw** from the school **for ease of travelling**. Also as a student, I used to **have a hard time covering the daily expenses** so moving would be a nice way to **cut down my travel costs**. As well as this, I was **fed up with** the living

condition in my former place of living as the air was polluted with **obnoxious smells** a small factory nearby and the **incessant noises** every night of some neighbours who **frequently threw a party** and sang karaoke loudly at night. Actually, I **didn't sleep a wink** for weeks, and **felt under the weather** for the whole semester.

The place I'm currently living is way better. **It's a small and cosy house, well-furnished with tables and chairs.** On top of this, the atmosphere is so fresh, **tranquil and serene** so that I can focus 100% on my study without feeling being **disturbed by troublemakers.** Although the rent is a bit higher, **it is definitely worth the extra cost.** Now I'm **feeling over the moon** in my flat.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Why people move to a new house?

As I see it, people change their residence as they are **fed up with the living condition** or want to **have more prospects** with their work or study. All I'm saying is there can be some nasty neighbours making incessant noises that get you distracted or **cannot sleep a wink at night**, or the neighbours are **unfriendly and unhelpful** in daily life. On top of this, if your study or job requires that you have to **live closer to schools or offices, it seems to be a must** that you have to move so that it'll be more convenient when it comes to **daily commutes.**

Why do some people stay in one place forever?

Personally, I'd put it down to the fact that some people prefer stability and would refuse to **take up challenges** in life. They are willing to **give up precious opportunities to make further progress in** their work of study and just **stick to their own way of life.** Besides, it can be because the living condition they have been having is too perfect that make such people **reluctant to give it a change.** They might have **hostile neighbours** if

they move to a new place, and such fears **often keep them at one place throughout their life.**

19. Describe a famous person that you admire

You should say:

- *Who is this person*
- *What is their specialty*
- *Why do you admire him*

Sample 1

In my to-meet list, there are so many **well – respected** celebrities whom I am desired to meet and spend time with. However, I would like to share about Pele, who is nicknamed as the greatest soccer player around the Globe.

Initially, I really need to **kick off** with the point that Pele was just seventeen when he first played in World Cup in Sweden of 1958 for Brazil. Despite his very young age, he was selected as to the national team participating one of the biggest sport competition on the planet. Back then, he was not the star player but when his teammate was hurt, Pele went into the game. He immediately scored goal and Brazil won the World Cup. By his amazing **aptitudes** and skills, Pele was feared by other teams. The Brazilian government even named him as a **national treasure**. It is not doubtful to say that Pele is one of the biggest factors making Brazil's soccer so **well – known**. His last World Cup was in Mexico in 1970. Brazil scored 4 goals against Italy to win the World Cup for the third time.

Another point that I would like to share is that Pele has an admirable career that every soccer players **craves for**. Pele **holds many soccer records** such as having over 1000 goals in his career. He was **nominated** as a athlete of the Century in 1980 and became a member of a soccer Hall of Fame in 1993. Although he's now retired from professional competition, Pele is still **considered as** a great inspiration for soccer players and lovers.

Vocabulary

Kick off (verb) start

Aptitude (noun) natural ability that makes it easy for you to do something well

Craves for (verb) to want something very much and in a way that is very hard to control

Hold a record (phrase) make the best achievement so far in a particular activity, especially sport

Nominate (verb) to officially suggest that someone should be given a job, or that someone or something should receive a prize

Sample 2:

Speaking about a well-known person that I **look up to**, I would choose Nick Vujicic. I believe I am not the only person who is inspired and **moved to tears** by his journey.

Nick Vujicic is an Australian **evangelist** and motivational speaker. What makes him so special is that he was born without legs and arms due to a rare **disorder** called phocomelia. Like other **disabled people**, Nick faced countless physical and mental difficulties throughout his life. However, his successful career is the dream to a lot of people. How he stay positive to **overcome the obstacles** and **move forward** is so incredible that he becomes a good role model for everyone.

I first knew about Nick when his visit to my country was live broadcasted on TV. His speech touched every audience regardless of age and occupations. After the live program, his books called 'Life Without Limits' become best-sellers both online and offline for several months.

Vocabulary

Evangelist (n): a person who tries to persuade people to become Christians, often by travelling around and organizing religious meetings

To be moved to tears by SO/Sth (adj): feeling very emotional that you want to cry

Disoder (n): an illness of mind or body

To be disabled (*adj*): not having one or more of the physical or mental abilities that most people have

To overcome obstacles (*phrase*): to win a situation when something blocks you that any movement, going forward, or action is prevented or made more difficult

To move forward (*v*): to get up and try again after failure

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

19.1. In general, how do people become famous?

In the era of technology, being famous has never been easier. People who have **extraordinary** skills or abilities /talents in any field would be able to become famous **with the assistance of** the media.

19.2. What kinds of people become famous?

In my opinion, there are two kinds of fame that are consistent with two types of people. The first type is well-reputed people with admirable skills or dedication to the civilization. They are usually scientists, researchers, athletes, or soldiers spending their lifetime working toward success without the desire to become well-known. The other type is attention/publicity-seeking people, who often are celebrities in the entertainment industry, politicians or those **becoming famous overnight.**

19.3. Do you think, to be famous, a person needs to have some special talent (or ability)?

No, I don't think so. Besides incredible **aptitudes**, people can also be famous for other qualities such as beauty or charity work.

19.4. What are some general qualities of famous people? Do they have any qualities that are different from ordinary people?

The basic benchmark of famous people is special talent or ability, which not so many people can possess. However, there are other qualities which are common that anyone can have such as beauty or kindness because these are

not difficult to achieve, for example, **undergoing cosmetic surgery** or doing charity work.

19.5. Compare how people become celebrities today with how people became celebrities years ago, for example, 30 or 50 years ago.

Nowadays, thanks to the modernization of technology, it takes only a few seconds to change a person's life. The invention of smart devices as well as social networking has made a person famous **at one fell swoop** whereas in the past, the only way to be celebrities was appearing on the television or radio.

19.6. Can you give me some examples of celebrities in your grandfather's time (i.e., about 50 years ago)?

Hmm...50 years represent a **considerable** generation gap, therefore, I only know a few celebrities in that time. They are actress Marilyn Monroe, rock star Elvis Presley and the pop music band The Beatles.

19.7. Compare what kinds of people were famous in China in the past (e.g., when your grandfather was young) to the kinds of people who are famous today.

In the my grandfather's era, only people who dedicated their talents and knowledge to achieve great feats were respected by the public in China. However, the young Chinese generation today is **familiar with** social **networking where they can easily gain either good or bad** public attention. For instance, videos about a group of bullying girls were so popular on the Internet that school violence became **phenomenal** in the country.

19.8. In your opinion, were the standards for judging who is famous before better than they are now?

From my personal point of view, the qualities of being famous in the past were **by far** more appropriate than they are at the present. Today, the invention of smart devices as well as social networks has made it easier to be famous. People can gain public attention just by sharing controversial photos or videos **regardless of** common sense.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **extraordinary** [adjective] very unusual, special, unexpected, or strange.
Example: She has an extraordinary memory that is able to remember small details in a novel after the first time reading it.
- ✓ **with the assistance of** [phrase] helped by something
Example: With the assistance of her private tutor, she passed the final exams with flying colors.
- ✓ **prominent** [adjective] very well known and important
Example: The shop occupies a very prominent position on the main street.
- ✓ **reputation** [noun] the positive beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something
Example: Harvard University has a worldwide reputation for quality of higher education.
- ✓ **notorious** [adjective] famous for something bad
Example: Although its dishes are delicious, the restaurant is notorious for poor customer service.
- ✓ **becoming famous overnight** [phrase]
Example: There are various ways to become famous overnight on the Internet since many people are using social networks.
- ✓ **aptitudes** [noun] a natural ability or skill
Example: Apart from her passion for swimming, this youngest swimming athlete also possesses an aptitude for this sport.
- ✓ **undergoing cosmetic surgery** [phrase]
Example: Being ashamed of her round face, Mary decided to undergo cosmetic surgery to obtain a V-line jowl.
- ✓ **at one fell swoop** [idiom] all at once.
Example: I got all my Christmas shopping done at one fell swoop.
- ✓ **Considerable** [adjective] large amount or of noticeable importance

Example: You wouldn't have failed the exam if you had put considerable effort and time into revision.

✓ **Familiar with** [phrase] Having a good knowledge of something.

Example: Our English teacher tries not to use too much local idioms or slangs during lectures as other students may not familiar with the language.

✓ **phenomenal** [adjective] extremely popular or special, especially in a surprising way.

Example: His first movie was quite phenomenal which brought him two nominations for the Oscar.

✓ **by far** by a great amount

Example: She is by far the best student in the class.

✓ **Regardless of** [phrase] without being influenced by any other events or conditions.

Example: She deserved to know the truth, regardless of how desperate it was.

20. Describe an occasion you waited for someone/ something special to happen

You should say:

What you were waiting for

How you felt

What you did while waiting

Why you had waiting

Sample 1

I think during our lives, we have to wait a lot for different **purposes** but waiting for something special to us is **worth it**. Honestly, I would choose the time when I first waited for my first salary as a teacher after my **graduation**. That moment couldn't be described by any words as it made me happy all day

long. I felt proud and excited as my **efforts** were **treasured** by others, which was presented by my salary. Interestingly, during that waiting, I always thought about how much I would be paid or if they checked my work correctly. Then I **took out** my notes all the time to **write down** my teaching hours and the total I guess. I treasured those notes a lot as it proved how hard I tried and how much I was waiting for this special thing. And I said it was special due to the time I had to wait for the salary. It was 2 weeks later than the **expected** time, so it made me more **curious** about my **upcoming** salary. Up to now, I still think of that time a lot which is also a motivation for me to work harder in the future.

Vocabulary

- **purpose** [n] why you do something or why something exists
- **worth it** [phrase] enjoyable enough or producing enough advantages to make the necessary effort, risk, pain, etc. seem acceptable
- **graduation** [n] when you receive your degree for finishing your education or a course of study
- **effort** [n] physical or mental activity needed to achieve something
- **treasure** [v] to take great care of something because you love it or consider it very valuable
- **take out** [phrasal verb] to remove something from somewhere
- **write down** [phrasal verb] to write something on a piece of paper so that you do not forget it
- **expected** [a] thinking that someone should behave in a particular way or do a particular thing
- **curious** [a] interested in learning about people or things around you
- **upcoming** [a] happening soon

Sample 2

I must admit that I don't like being kept waiting by anyone at all. Now I am going to talk about one such incident in which I had to wait for my brother **for ages**.

Last December, my elder brother who lives in Canada, was returning home. Before **setting off**, he asked me to **do a favor**, which was to come to ABC airport to pick him up I was **thrilled to bits**, thinking that I could see my brother so I went to the International Airport straight away without wasting much time. However, I soon **found out** that due to **dense fog**, the flight which was to **land in** ABC was **diverted to** Mumbai.

I had no ideas **as to** what to do and I could not **have any contact with** my brother. I was not sure about his **whereabouts**. So I thought of waiting for his call to be able to discuss the next **course of action**.

I first went around the airport for some time but then sat on a sofa in one corner in a lounge. I **went through** a newspaper on the table after which I started to play a game on my mobile phone. It was only after an hour or so that my phone rang, and indeed it was my brother. He told me that he would be taking a domestic flight to ABC in the afternoon when the **weather clears up**.

At first, I didn't know what to do next, but then I decided to leave the airport premises and go to a multiplex nearby, where I quickly bought a movie ticket and spend the next three hours watching the **latest** Hollywood **blockbuster**.

Finally, after waiting for nearly 5 hours I got to see my brother. Anyways, after seeing my brother after such a long time, I forgot everything about the long wait for him that day.

Vocabulary

For ages (phrase) for a long time

Set off (phrasal verb) to start a journey, or to start going in a particular direction

Do somebody a favor (phrase) to do a kind and helpful act for (someone)

Thrilled to bits (idiom) extremely pleased; happy

Land in/on/under (verb) to come down to the ground or to a surface after moving or falling through the air

Divert someone/something to something (verb) to make something move or travel in a different direction

As to (phrase) concerning someone or something

Have contact with (phrase) have communication between people, countries, or organizations either by talking or writing

Whereabouts (noun) the place where someone or something is: can be followed by a singular or plural verb

Course of action (phrase) the things that you choose to do in a particular situation

Go through (verb) to examine or search something very carefully

Clear up (phrasal verb) if the weather clears up, the clouds or rain go away

Blockbuster (noun) something that is very successful, especially a film, show, or novel

Latest (adj) most recent, or newest

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

20.1. What are the differences between waiting for friends and a service?

What a tricky question! **To the best of my knowledge**, the main different aspect is that people tend to be given some beverages or can **entertain themselves with** the background music while waiting to be served. However, in the case of waiting for friends, people tend to be apprehensive, annoyed or **infuriated!** That is the reason why it is not uncommon to **catch sight of** some people glaring continuously at the smartphone screen for a phone call or **walking back and forth** while waiting for their beloved buddies to show up

20.2. Do you think people are not so patient due to the technology?

I suppose that there are a number of obvious **merits** of spending time outside. The most obvious one is that doing outdoor exercise is the best way to keep

healthy and stay fit. For instance, if I walk, jog or cycle outdoors, I'll have to **expend** a lot of energy and burn more calories, and the fresh air outside also helps to improve the blood pressure and heart rate. Otherwise, when I stay indoors, especially when working on the computer for several hours, it's easy to get dizzy and feel **aches and pains** in my back. Another plus point is that being outdoors can greatly **boost** my mood and creativity, so everytime I feel bad or try to **come up with** a new idea, **wandering** around outside always helps.

20.3. What do people do when they are waiting?

It is an interesting question. The answer **relies on** each individual I think. But I suppose that people would prefer to **glue their eyes onto** the smartphone screen to check Facebook notifications or text-message their buddies to hurry and come. Others are more impatient and just **walk to and fro** or utter some swear words if their friends keep them waiting for too long.

20.4. Why is it difficult for children to be patient?

It is because children have a hard time controlling their actions and emotions. Also, they have a tendency to follow their interests and do whatever that comes

to their mind. Therefore, being patient and waiting for things is almost out of the question for small children. For example, when watching a movie, my daughter is really **thrilled to bits** at first, but after some thirty minutes, she is **fed up with** the plot and **lends up** not seeing the whole movie.

20.5. How to teach children patience?

There are a number of ways that are available to help small children learn to become more patient and determined. The first method worth mentioning is that parents should **set an exemplary role model for** their children to follow. By that I mean, a parent should be patient like staying calm when waiting for a bus or maintaining interest when watching something so that his or her small kid could see and learn. The second approach is giving more encouragement and rewards for patient actions that the kid do. For example,

we can give our son a piece of candy if he can sweep the floor enthusiastically without complaining about feeling tired and bored.

20.6. Have you ever been late for meeting someone?

Most of the times, i am a punctual person; however, there is one occassion that showed up late at an appointment, which is my highschool class reunion. At that time, my travel was **held up** by bad traffic jams; particularly it was on the weekends so many people took their motorcycles out to hang out with their friends or sweethearts. To make matter worse, although it is a standard practice that people usually arrive 15 or 20 mins later than the agreed time, on that they everyone was so on time that I became the last to come. I ended up being in a bad mood at the party

21. Describe an important plant in your country.

You should say:

- *What the plant is*
- *How you know it*
- *Why it is important*
- *And explain how much you like the plant*

Ok then, well after a bit of thought, I have decided to talk to you about bamboo. However, I honestly don't know if I'm gonna be able to talk for two minutes about it, but I'll **give it a try!**

So first of all, as for how I know about bamboo, well I can't really remember exactly how I first got to know about it, you know, it could have been in a biology class at school, or when I was out somewhere with my parents, but my guess would be that I probably first knew about it at primary school, because that was about the time when we first started learning about things like that. Anyway, moving on to why bamboo is important, well I'd say it's pretty important for a number of reasons, the main one of which would be that it can be used to make so many different things, you know, such as chopsticks,

chopping boards, flooring, what else, and musical instruments, like the bamboo flute for example. So it's extremely useful, and what's good about it is that it grows incredibly fast, you know, not like most other trees, and although a lot of it's cut down to make stuff, there will still always be an **abundant supply** of it here.

But anyway, finally then, as for how much I like bamboo, well I'd say it's actually probably one of my favourite plants! Because I mean, it kind of just **gives me a nice, pleasant feeling** whenever I see it. And it's also a plant which is often associated with our culture, because we grow so much of it here, so it's something that kind of reminds me of my own culture, if you know what I mean.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Why do people grow these plants?

The simple explanation for this is that the tropical climate **creates favorable conditions for** those plants to grow healthily. For example, durians are exclusively found in some countries with a warm climate all year round and it's a good idea to **take advantage of** this to **have certain trees planted** for fruits. Some decide to plant some trees merely for their shade and cool breezes.

What are the benefits for having plants indoor?

Plants can be good indoor decoration. Some people put some flowers or **neatly strewn** small trees or hang some pot plants in their house. This practice helps fill the blanks in some rooms and gives people a fuller picture. On top of this, it can help **purify the air** in the room, making it more **well-ventilated** and airy. **Having said this**, it's important to take the plants out at night as they will **absorb oxygen and suffocate people**.

What's the difference between having plant indoor and outdoor?

Benefits of plants?

I think it's simply **a matter of interest**. Some prefer to make their **porch** look gorgeous so they had better place the plants outdoors so that **passers-by**

can **take a glance at** them. Some big trees outside the house can provide shade and cool breezes during summer days, which is a refreshing experience. By contrast, as I have mentioned, placing trees in the house can be **a good adornment** as some plants can **fill the gaps** in the room, and making the room appear less empty.

Do you think we need to protect trees?

Yeah, most definitely. You know, if all the news reports are **authentic**, trees are being **cut down at a alarming rate!** So, like, vast areas of rainforests are **being blown down** for commercial purposes. And I don't think anyone would argue the fact that if this goes on, it's gonna **lead to pretty dire consequences**. So yeah, I think it's vital that we protect trees, otherwise the state of our planet's gonna get even worse!

22. Describe a website you like to visit.

You should say:

- *What type of website it is*
- *How you found out about it*
- *What it allows you to do*
- *and explain why you like it*

Today, I am going to tell you about one website which I'm really interested in. It's name is **m.ebay.com**.

It is an **e-commerce website** used for online shopping purposes. This website advertises various items classified by categories such as fashion, electronics, and motors. It allows people to order products, and make **transactions** online.

I always **give priority to** shopping online whenever I have spare time instead of going to stores or supermarkets. So, this website is very **handy** for me as I can take advantage of my mobile phone or computer with an Internet connection to access it and purchase what I need.

I find this website very **appealing** due to its good **layout** and attractive images of products. There is a box for me to enter what items I'm looking for so I can avoid **browsing** items unnecessarily, as I'm able to find quickly the things I need. After that the items I have bought will be delivered right to my door so I can save a lot of time. Not only that, there is always the chance to **get a good deal** and discounts as there are various promotion programs.

This website has important advantages for me, such as convenience and the benefits of saving time and money. Now it plays a useful role in my daily life. In the future I will continue to visit the site and of course recommend it to my friends.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **E-commerce:** the business of buying and selling goods and services on the internet
Example: Ebay is an **e-commerce** website used for online shopping purposes.
- ✓ **Transaction:** a piece of business that is done between people, especially an act of buying or selling
Example: You can call your bank and carry out a **transaction** using a TouchTone phone.
- ✓ **Give priority to:** something that you think is more important than other things and should be dealt with first
Example: The hospital **gives priority to** those patients who require urgent medical attention.
- ✓ **Handy:** convenient
Example: My flat is very handy for the shops and the park.
- ✓ **Appealing:** attractive or interesting
Example: Brightly colored packaging made the pens especially appealing to children.
- ✓ **Layout:** the structure of a website rather than its styling

Example: This page uses a 2 – column layout with one sidebar to the left of the main content area.

- ✓ **Browse:** the act of looking through a number of things in a book, a store or online

Example: I have only **browsed** through the new book on dinosaurs, but I intend to read it fully this weekend.

- ✓ **Get a good deal:** make a good agreement to buy or sell something

Example: I **got a good deal** on my new car – I bought it for half the price that the man was asking for it.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

22.1. What are some of the different reasons why people use the internet?

Speaking of the internet, obviously it has already surpassed newspapers and television to be the main source of information today. And that's the most common reason why people use the internet. Another reason is that people use the internet as a **superior** means of communication. We no longer require a place like cafes or offices to keep in touch with people. We can do it **literally** anywhere we happen to be with the availability of Internet access.

22.2. Some people say that different age groups have different tastes on internet content. What do you think?

I agree that how one uses the internet varies a lot by age. For example, young people rely almost entirely on search engines for information about entertainment, study materials and job opportunities, while older people prefer using the internet to get information about national and international news.

22.3. What influence can (or, does) the internet have on children? And what about teenagers?

Well, I guess most people immediately think of negative aspects when it comes to internet influence on our younger generation. For example, using the internet too much makes them socially isolated and teenagers in particular

seem to spend hours on social network sites. But actually, there are plenty of positive ones as well. The internet's wealth of information can add to the child's store of knowledge, while online games enhance their creativity and imagination.

22.4. Do you think parents should control what internet sites their children visit on the internet?

I would say yes. Because the sources of internet information are not always reliable, it's essential to judge the **suitability** of those materials. As a result, parents should **keep an eye on** their children's internet usage that until the child has learned to **discriminate** between good and bad information sources.

22.5. What (kinds of) people don't use the internet and what are the disadvantages that these people suffer because they don't use the internet?

Well, right **off the top of my head**, I can only think of older people, who are not **accustomed** to using the internet, and people whose jobs are not **relevant** to the internet.

Personally, I think inability or unwillingness to use the internet will restrict their **circle of friends** and also make it harder to access information. In some cases, they have to spend countless hours looking for some news they need through printed materials, while they can do it in a matter of seconds with search engines which are available on the internet.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Superior** [adj] better than average or better than other people or things of the same type

Example: The weapons of the government troops were **superior** to those of the enemy.

- ✓ **Literally** [adv] used to emphasize the truth of something that may seem surprising

Example: They were responsible for **literally** millions of deaths.

✓ **Suitability** [noun] the quality of being right or appropriate for a particular purpose

Example: At the interview, he convinced them of his **suitability** for the job.

✓ **Keep an eye on sth** [idiom] to watch or give your attention to someone or something

Example: The mother sat by the side of the playground, **keeping an eye on** her sons as they played.

✓ **Discriminate** [verb] to treat a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc.

Example: She felt she had been **discriminated** against because of her age.

✓ **Off the top of my head [idiom]** if you say something off the top of your head, you say it without thinking about it for very long or looking at something that has been written about it

Example: Off the top of my head I could probably only name about three women artists.

✓ **Accustomed** [adj] familiar with something

Example: She quickly became **accustomed** to his messy ways.

✓ **Relevant** [adji] connected with what is happening or being discussed

Example: Education should be **relevant** to the child's needs.

✓ **Circle of friends** [expression] a group of people who like each other because they have the same interests or hobbies

Example: She is very popular and she has a wide **circle of friends**.

23. Describe a city that you have visited.

You should say:

- *where the city is (and its name)*
- *when you went there*

- *what you liked / disliked about the city*
- *and explain why you visited this city.*

Ok right then, well after thinking for a little bit just now, um, the city that I'd like to talk to you about, **which left a really strong impression on me**, was X. I'm not sure if you have been there, but it's somewhere in Y, I think in the kind of north-eastern, no sorry, the north-western part of the province.

I went there about 10 years ago or something, so it was quite **a while ago**. And what I liked about it was the fact that first of all it just seemed like, um, I dunno, it's really hard to describe! But it was just, kind of like, not so crowded, and you know, the locals were **super-friendly**, the food was great there, it just seemed like such a nice, relaxing city. I mean, everyone in the streets looked cheerful, for example, and you know it wasn't like one of these huge cities with, like, **a fast-paced life** and everyone frantically getting to where they need to go. It wasn't like that at all. Everyone was just **chilled out**, the whole city had a really kind of **laid-back atmosphere** to it.

Um, and the other amazing thing about it that I shouldn't forget to mention was the scenery. You know, it was **just spectacular** and before I went there, I never imagined it would be such a beautiful place. I mean, it's not one of those places which everyone talks about, so **going on all the walks** around the nearby mountains and tea fields was just, like, **incredible!** It was a really great experience!

I've been back there a few times since my first visit, and it always has the same effect on me, it's just a really nice place, and I always have a really cool time there! So yeah, that's about it then, thanks for listening!

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Do you think that landmarks will make a city more famous, why?

Of course it is. Landmarks such as **picturesque landscapes** or **places of historical significance** often **draw huge numbers of tourists**, making **a city well-known to the rest of the world**. For example, people often visit Canada for its **breathtaking views in rural areas or mountainous regions**, as well as other coastal cities which offer **splendid sandy beaches**. Without such attractions, it would be hard to convince foreigners to **pay a visit** to my country.

What interesting things can we do in big cities?

We can have a lot of fun in big cities. If you like shopping, you could **go shopping for beautiful clothes** and see the **designs of famous brands**. We have to admit that major museums are usually located in big cities. In these places, we can **appreciate our culture and history**. There're also some **amusement parks and leisure centers** for people both young and old.

What's the difference between living in the city and countryside?

I think that many differences could be counted. Firstly, the infrastructure in city is significantly more modern, comprehensive and convenient for traveling than that of the countryside. Additionally, rural citizens' lifestyle is less competitive and hectic than urban counterparts. A reasonable explanation for this is that development of the economy and technology in vibrant cities is accelerating more than ever before

24. Describe a piece of good news that you received from someone

You should say:

- *what this news was*
- *when and where you heard it*
- *how you heard it and explain*
- *why you think it was good news*

Today I'm going to share with you an **article of news** in the place I am living which **was particularly thrilling to** me. It was an **announcement** that X, the top celebrity in my country, was going to **show up** in my neighborhood. It was when I **stepped out of my house** that I heard the piece of news from a **next-door neighbor**. He said that X was going to **film a comedy show** near my house. This **filled me with great delight** during the day. I was really **looking forward to** meeting him **in person**, enjoying his humorous comments **and** unique acting. I heard that there would be a couple of other famous guys accompanying him on stage **and** that he would have a **fan signing session** after the performances. This news is pretty of interest to me since comedy is what helps me **let my hair down** after a **hard-working day** and having a chance to meet my idol is an **out-of-this-world experience**.

Two days went by and he appeared in front of my **naked eyes**. I recall that I did **have a blast** on the day. After I went home **I couldn't help bursting into profuse laughter** several times.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

How do people share good news?

There's a number of ways that people can use to inform others of a piece of **good snippet**. The most common way is notifying others via **social networking websites**. It is not difficult to catch sight of many teens sharing their high IELTS results on Facebook to boast of their **academic achievement**. Besides, some may prefer it in a more personal way by texting their **beloved ones** or merely give a telephone call to break the news. It is worth mentioning that some would write a letter, maybe a **thank-you letter** to **express their gratitude towards** the one who helped them **sail through difficult period**.

When do people share good news?

There are many occasions when people feel it necessary to keep others posted about some news. The first and most popular one is when you **accomplish some exceptional deeds**, like when you pass your university entrance exam **with flying colours**, or your attempts to hunt a scholarship **paid off**. Another case is when the news is passed by a third party, usually the parents or colleagues. This can be understandable simply because others just feel more delighted when spreading the good news than you do. Maybe they do it for some **treat** from you, I guess so.

25. Describe a book that you would like to read again.

You should say:

What the book is

Why you read it

Why you want to read it again

Sample 1:

Although I don't read a lot of books, I still have my favorite one. For this question, I would like to choose my English 12 **textbook** as the book I want to read again. I guess you'll be surprised at my choice **owing to** its **content** and **cover**. This English book is the course book of grade 12. There are a variety of topics related to our daily lives with the **combination** of 4 skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing. I used to use it to study English when I was in grade 12. Interestingly, at the time, I just focused on grammar because it's the main part of the final tests, so I don't really **pay attention to** other parts, which is such a pity. Now when I have a look at it again, I realize that the reading text is quite cool and **academic** with a number of useful words and **structures**. Reading it again gives me a **chance** to **fulfill** my English knowledge more, especially reading skill and vocabulary. I guess I would spend more time re-reading and taking notes of important points in this book, which is very exciting.

Vocabulary

- **textbook** [n] a book that contains detailed information about a subject for people who are studying that subject
- **owing to** [pre] because of
- **content** [n] the ideas that are contained in a piece of writing, a speech or a film
- **cover** [n] something which is put on or over something else, usually to protect it, to keep something in, etc.
- **combination** [n] the mixture you get when two or more things are combined
- **pay attention to** [phrase] to watch, listen to, or think about something or someone carefully or with interest
- **academic** [a] relating to schools, colleges and universities, or connected with studying and thinking, not with practical skills
- **structure** [n] the way in which the parts of a system or object are arranged or organized, or a system arranged in this way
- **chance** [n] an occasion which allows something to be done; an opportunity
- **fulfill** [v] to do something that is expected, hoped for or promised or to cause it to happen

Sample 2:

The book I am going to describe to you is titled Da Vinci Code authored by Dan Brown, one of the most **influential** and **remarkable** bestselling American authors of all time. His numerous **bestsellers** include Digital Fortress, Angels & Demons and Deception Point. I have read them for like a hundred times but none of those could ever **top** Da Vinci Code and plus the movie starring Tom Hank was **a huge blockbuster worldwide**.

Of all the books I have ever read, Da Vinci Code was the only one that I managed to finish within two weeks and you know, the book is not just a few pages long. Anyway, the book deals **with the hunt for the truth**. Regarding the Holy Grail by **symbolologist** Robert Langdon and the victim's granddaughter Sophie., they attempted to reveal the answers to mysteries like

“Is Jesus God?” “Did he get married?”. And if they succeed, it could possibly **shake the foundation of mankind**.

Well, my reading adventure wasn't **off to a good start**, **for** there were lots of Religious terms involved and **twists and turns** were so confusing that I could rarely **figure out** where the story was going. But I **kept up** reading, I was **totally into** the book and I could hardly **put it down**. **In a nutshell**, this was the best book I have ever read.

Vocabulary

Influential (adj) able to influence the way other people think or behave

Remarkable (adj) Making you feel surprised or amazed

Best-seller (noun) a book that many people buy

Top (verb) exceed something

Blockbuster (noun) something that is very successful, especially a film, show, or novel

Symbologist (noun) A person who studies or interpret symbols or symbolism.

Shake the foundation of (phrase) to cause a person or organization to question the truth of something it strongly believed

Off to a good start (phrase) to start a particular activity correctly or to have a successful beginning

For (preposition) because

Twists and turns (phrase) surprising changes

Put down (phrasal verb) to put someone or something onto a surface, especially the floor

In a nutshell (phrase) used for saying that you are going to express something in a simple direct way

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

25.1. Do people read more nowadays?

Reading can be seen a part of modern culture and has become easier than ever thanks to the advent of technology. If books and specialized documents were

only available for **scholars** and those with high **social status** in the past, anyone with **curiosity** and burning desire to learn can now **get access to** such materials easily. People can read not only from printed materials such as newspaper or magazines but digital ones like eReaders or online.

Scholar (n): a person who knows a lot about a particular subject because they have studied it in detail

Social status (n): a person's standing or importance in relation to other people within a society

Curiosity (n): a strong desire to know about something

Get access to: to get the right to see

25.2. Do you read before going to bed?

I don't have a habit of reading before going to sleep but in the morning instead. I am an **early riser**, which **saves** me lots of time to **schedule** my day, starting with reading. Normally, I often exercise first, make myself breakfast before grabbing my unfinished book. I don't have a study room in my apartment so the balcony is my favorite place to read. There's nothing I rather do than sipping a cup of coffee and **immersing** myself in a good book for hours.

Early riser (n): a person who usually gets out of bed early in the morning

Spare (v): to make something such as time or money available to somebody or for something

Schedule (v): to arrange for something to happen at a particular time

Immerse (v): to become or make somebody completely involved in something

25.3. What's the difference between films and books?

I presume it's not only me but the vast majority of avid readers are left **unsatisfied**, or more honestly, disappointed when books are **adapted** into movies since its lack of **persuasion** and significant details. Original books are always more **in-depth** with **consecutive** plot line, which makes them more fulfilling and convincing. Movies, on the other hand, tend to focus more on visual and sound effects that they fail to deliver the true message of the story.

Hence, most people who have read the story find its **film adaptation unappealing**.

Unsatisfied (a): not having got what you hoped; not having had enough of something

Adapt (v): to change a book or play so that it can be made into a play, film/movie, television programme, etc.

Persuasion (n): the act of persuading somebody to do something or to believe something

In-depth (a): very thorough and detailed

Consecutive (a): following one after another in a series, without interruption

Film adaptation (n): a movie based on a book

Unappealing (a): not attractive or pleasant

25.4. How will ebooks affect paper books?

Ebooks are the **advancements** of modern technology and have rapidly becoming popular among readers, especially those who constantly **commute**. You can store hundreds of ebooks in your cellphone or eReader and read anywhere you happen to be, which is probably one of the best advantages ebooks have over paper ones. However, with those who prefer the smell of printed papers and the weight of an actual book on their hands like me, nothing can replace printed materials, not even ebooks.

Advancement (n): the process of helping something to make progress or succeed; the progress that is made

Commute (v): to travel regularly by bus, train, car, etc. between your place of work and your home

Have an advantage over something: be in a superior position to something

25.4. How often do people in your country read novels?

Personally speaking, I'm not **a fan of** novel but from my observations, only the teenagers have time to read novels. I guess for others, they have to spend time on working and studying but as far as teenage girls are concerned, I have to say that they read a great deal.

25.5. What kinds of books that old people like to read?

Since I'm not an elderly person, what I'm going to say is **just guesswork** but old people are really into novels which tell about the daily lives of ordinary citizens or those books which give them the chance to **reflect on** their life. This is because, they are at an age where **spiritual well-being** is **of more importance**, and many old citizens would choose books containing some **philosophy or moral lessons** to read. The reason I feel this way is they can not only can while away the time, they can also improve their personality and pass the experience they read onto their grandchildren.

25.6. Does reading books become a less common activity because of ebooks?

I strongly disagree with this view. Although **the advent of the internet** gives us a wide array of options when it comes to reading, like we can read ebooks on our laptop or Ipad, nothing can compare to the experience of holding a book in your own hands, and **read it from cover to cover**. Another point is that you can jump to the page you want to read by turning your fingers and browsing for the desired contents with your eyes, which is much more convenient and user-friendly than having to use a computer screen or a mouse to do the job.

25.7. What benefits do young people get from reading?

As far as I can tell, reading brings people a wide range of benefits. Firstly, I'd put it down to the fact that you can **broaden your horizons** and **improve your outlook on** life. The thing is the more you read, the more knowledge you acquire regarding the world around, and this helps you learn to accept and tolerate differences in life. The second point worth mentioning is reading can be an entertaining activity as well. Comic books are a prime example, which gives you a good time through the witty comments and funny drawings as well as a suspenseful storyline.

26. Describe a helpful person in work or study

You should say:

- *Who it was*
- *What this person did*
- *How this person helped*
- *And explain how you felt after this person helped you:*

I'm often **poor at sorting out tricky problems** and often **ask a favor of others** when it comes to a **dilemma** I can't solve. Off the top of my head, one of the times, Adam - a close buddy of mine - is a very helpful person at school, and he recently **helped me out with my mathematic problem** that I had long been **struggling against for days**.

It was part of the assignment from my teacher who **has a tendency to challenge her students** in every aspect. She usually gives **tricky homework** and **expects her students to finish them off** when coming to class. **I'm no expert at Maths** and often **rely on others for help**. The Maths question is about **an equation**, a **lengthy** one that could **bewilder** anyone **at their first glance**.

I was so desperate for the answer to the question that I **burnt the midnight oil for two straight nights**, but fortunately **the answer was still out of my reach**. Not knowing what to do, **I gave Adam a ring** and **asked him out for a coffee to muse over the question**, and he agreed.

Eventually, **we had an encounter at a local coffee shop** and I **showed him the question**. Without much thought, he **kicked off offering detailed explanations** which reminded me of the fact that I had forgotten a very **important clue to solve the mystery**. **I was quickly on the ball**, and thanks to his **straightforward explanation**, it took me just minutes to **work out the correct answer** to that **seemingly tough maths question**.

I have to say that Adam **is a genius** and he grasps what it takes to **enlighten** others, especially with his **easy but effective approach** to any problems, not just in his studies but also real life.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Do you like helping others?

Yes, definitely. I always **hold a belief** that every person has a **moral responsibility** to do others a favor; it is a kind of **give and take**. Only by **lending others a hand** can we **expect something in return**. For example, if you lend a pen to your classmate, when yours runs out of ink, the others will lend you back, for sure I believe

In your view, should children be taught to help others?

Yes, definitely. I always hold a belief that every person has a **moral responsibility** to **do others a favor**; it is a kind of **give and take**. Only by **lending others a hand** can we expect something in return. Especially small children should be educated how to do others a favor so that they can **grow up** to be a helpful member of society. For example, if you lend a pen to your classmate, when yours runs out of ink, the others will lend you back, for sure.

Do you think people are less willing to help others these days, compared to the past? (Why?/Why not?)

Yes, I have to admit the fact that modern people show an increasing willingness to lend a helping hand to their surrounding needy people. In the past, people helped others out of good will and intention and were often considerate and thoughtful of others. Yet, nowadays assistance is carefully calculated to extract certain benefits. It is saddening to say but people today tend to alienate themselves from there, let alone help them. However, it is good news to see many other are pretty eager and try to be helpful when there is someone Describe a place where you feel crowded / you went to that was crowded.

27. Describe a crowded place you visited

You should say:

- *Where it is:*
- *When do you usually go there:*

- *What you do there:*
- *And explain why it is crowded*

I **detest** public places as they're always **packed with** people and I feel like a **fish out of water** in such circumstances. **Off the top of my head**, the last crowded place I went to was the time I had a **medical check-up** at a general hospital near my house. It is a big hospital of international standard, divided into public and private service. The public service is for those of **meager incomes** and involves long hours of queuing. Because I was **in a hurry**, I **opted for** the speedy private service. However, the **choice** fell short of my expectations and it **turned out** that there were **hordes of** patients waiting for medical check-up and there were even no seats left, and I had to stand the whole time. What a frustrating experience, you know! My legs felt like **jelly** after one hour standing on the floor. It was so crowded that the staff had a hard time **dealing with** the paperwork and there were some mistakes with the order of the patients as well.

Luckily, it was finally my turn, I was so relieved to **get away from** the crowd in the waiting room, and then received quite a professional care from the doctors. However, when going to the basement to get my motorbike, I was so shocked at the line of people queuing at the exit, and again it took me another 30 minutes simply to **inch a few meters**.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Why do some people dislike going to crowded places?

Frankly speaking, I would put it down to the fact that you would waste a great deal of time in a place packed with people. This is particularly true when waiting to be served, like a meal in a restaurant or you have to queue for hours to receive something you have to pay. It's quite frustrating as the service might not be up to standard as a place is overloaded with customers. Another reason worth mentioning is that some people can't stand the deafening noises at

public places, and it is the worst situation when there are small kids crying and nagging their parents.

Is it more dangerous to go to crowded places?

Yes, certainly the security issue is quite a headache currently, and people are worried about their own safety when being in a crowded area. There are several cases when children are kidnapped because their parents don't keep an eye on them, which creates favorable conditions for suspicious people to do unlawful acts. On top of this, in some democratic countries, terrorism is going out of hand, and there have been reported cases of bombs going off in public places packed with people. All in all, the world is becoming a dangerous place and avoiding places with many people is a safety measure that anyone should take into account.

28. Describe an occasion where everybody smiled/laughed.

You should say:

- *What happened:*
- *When it happened:*
- *Who were there:*
- *And explain why everyone smiled/laughed.*

Our family love children a lot. We usually find their innocence and cuteness **overwhelming**. A few days ago, as I was surfing the Internet, I **came across** this hilarious video of a little girl, which is definitely the funniest baby video that I've ever watched. Therefore, I showed the whole family the video and we did **have a whale of a time** together. In the video, there was a five-year-old girl holding a microphone and singing along one hit of Justin Bieber named "baby". The way she sang and danced around the room made me **burst out laughing** as her **choreography** was incredibly adorable. I remember

that she was crawling, hip-hopping and waving her hands enthusiastically, trying to convey her feelings and emotions through the song she was singing. Besides, what made it so funny about her was the fact that she danced exactly the same way an adult would, with the deep feelings and perfect timing and rhythms and everything! You know, it was completely **out of the blue**. At the end of the video, she humbly said “thank you” to the viewers for watching her performance.

We broke into hysterical laughter for some times. My mother was chuckling, my sister was giggling and my grandparent was grinning, everyone showing a sign of happiness on their face. Since then, we often gathered together for some funny clips that I found on Youtube.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Why do people smile?

Smiling is a way to express one’s satisfaction and happiness for most of the cases. For example, when you finish off something challenging, it’s typical to give a smile as **a sigh of relief** after you sail through a period of difficulty. On other occasions, a smile is treated as symbol of friendliness, and it’s commonly used as a part of our daily greetings. When we meet some acquaintance or a stranger, giving a smile shows our hospitality towards others, and help to **break the ice** amongst people.

What’s the difference between fake smile and true smile?

You can **figure it out** by a distinct difference like this. A genuine smile often involves the movement of other body parts on your face like the eyes, nose, lips all in quite a harmonious way. **On a contrary**, for those who give a fake smile, it’s a piece of cake to spot this, a fake one often doesn’t last for 6 seconds, and that person tends to hide their face or turn to somewhere else for fear of being spotted by the opposite person.

29. Describe an interesting house or apartment that you visited

You should say:

When you visited this home

Where it was

Why you went there

What it looked like

Why you like it

Sample 1

One of my classmate is an exchange student from London and she has been staying in my city for 4 months in an apartment pretty near to our school all by herself. That's why we often **hang out** at her place, which I fell in love with since my first visit there.

The building was situated in a luxury **residential** area where most of the **inhabitants** were **expatriates**. It took us roughly 10 minutes to get there by taxi from school but it would be longer if we traveled during rush hours. My friend's apartment was on 10th floor and at the corner, **overlooking** a mighty river, a signature landmark of the city. We were so **overwhelmed** by its **breathtaking** view at night which could be seen from the balcony that we decided to have a sleepover the first time we came over. The place was not exactly **spacious** but neatly organized and a true **realm** of a live-alone girl: a **king-size bed** with many stuffed animals lying around, a **make-up desk** full of **iconic** brand names, **floral wallpaper** and the like. It was also beautifully decorated with **fairy lights** that were hung around the apartment which gave every girl a **dreamy feeling**. We **threw a pajama party** that night and silently enjoyed the magical sound and view of city from above when the party was over – definitely my favorite way to spend a night.

Vocabulary

Residential (a): (of an area of a town) suitable for living in; consisting of houses rather than factories or offices

Inhabitant (n): a person that lives in a particular place

Expatriate (n): a person living in a country that is not their own

Overlook (v): if a building, etc. overlooks a place, you can see that place from the building

Overwhelm (v): to have such a strong emotional effect on somebody that it is difficult for them to resist or know how to react

Breathtaking (a): very exciting or impressive (usually in a pleasant way)

Spacious (a): large and with plenty of space for people to move around in

Realm (n): a kingdom

Iconic (a): very famous or popular, especially being considered to represent particular opinions or a particular time

Throw a party: organize a party; put on or hold a social gathering

Sample 2

Last week I had chance to visit my close friend who live in an apartment belonging to a **twenty-storey building, in a close proximity to** X Road.

I must say that that apartment is the most **magnificent** one I have ever seen. **On top of that**, the neighborhood there is really pleasant with many **amenities**, such as **convenience store**, the gym and the park.

His apartment is on the 8th floor. It is about 150 square meters with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and one living room. It has also a **comfy and cozy** dining room beside the kitchen. Opposite the living room is a spacious and **well-ventilated** area and the **rolling chair** on the balcony.

Among all the rooms in his apartment, the bedroom is my favorite. It is about 20 square meters. The window faces the south, so It can have **rich sunlight**.

The most noticeable and interesting object in this bedroom is a traditional mask hanging on the wall. It is a souvenir he bought during a trip to Yunnan.

It is said that it can bring good luck and happiness, which those who **pay a flying visit to** his house often **give it lots of compliment**. The bookshelves are **packed with** books of various **genres** which are **his cup of tea**.

He told me that he has lived in the apartment for nearly 5 years, which made me feel really **jealous of** his life with such a **spectacular** house. If I can **put**

aside enough money **down the road**, I will definitely buy an apartment next to his.

Vocabulary

In a close proximity to (phrase) near

Amenity (noun) something that makes it comfortable or enjoyable to live or work somewhere

Comfy (adj) comfortable

Ventilated (adj) to allow fresh air to enter a room or building

Pay a flying visit to (phrase) pay a short visit to

Packed with (verb) containing a lot of something

Be one's cup of tea (idiom) be someone's favorite thing

Put aside (verb) to save an amount of money so that you can buy or pay for something in the future

Down the road (phrase) in the future

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

29.1. Would you like to live in the countryside in the future?

You know, life in rural regions seems to be more tranquil and less competitive than that of vibrant cities. Particularly, the air is fresh, and the local residents are hospitable, so I think when I get older, countryside would be an ideal spot for me either to live in or travel to.

29.2. What's the difference between living in the city and countryside?

I think that many differences could be counted. Firstly, the infrastructure in city is significantly more modern, comprehensive and convenient for traveling than that of the countryside. Additionally, rural citizens' lifestyle is less competitive and hectic than urban counterparts. A reasonable explanation for this is that development of the economy and technology in vibrant cities is accelerating more than ever before

29.3. How are modern homes different from older homes?

I suppose there are a number of differences really. On the one hand, modern homes tend to be **equipped with** all the mod cons, ranging from **well-furnished** interior to **state-of-the-art** household appliances; you can **come across** many high-tech products in a modern house like vacuum cleaners and dishwashers. Meanwhile, older homes are usually plain in their designs with less **furnishings** and have gloomy **interior design**.

29.4. Do most people in your country live in an apartment or house?

Well, I guess it depends on the ages really. For young generation, there is a **sweeping trend** that they live more apart from their families and take out a mortgage for a rented apartment in the urban areas since they are dynamic and would love city life pretty much. For older citizens, living together with their children and grandchildren is usually the norm. As they're old and weak, a house offers them the care and affection from others, which can hardly be found in an apartment.

29.5. Do young people in your country like to live with their parents or by themselves?

From my perspective, the young generation today **has a tendency to lead an independent life** from quite early and would rather **live on their own** than with their parents near them. The reasons for this can be that small children are educated to do things by themselves and many students often **migrate from rural areas to the urban ones to pursue tertiary education**. This is a time they have to rely on themselves by going to the market to buy foods, wash their own clothes and so on. Gradually, this **becomes a habit** and the youths no longer want to see their parents regularly.

30. Describe a decision you disagree with

You should say:

- *what the decision is*

- *who made that decision*
- *if you told this person that you disagree*
- *why you think it was wrong decision*

It was a few years back when I was still in college that I was **offered an opportunity** to go on a voluntary trip to X, the most worth-living city in our country. I **was over the moon** when first hearing the news but all my **anticipation** and happiness fled away when my parents **flatly rejected** the idea. I was **dumbfounded** since my time and effort spent on the preparation for our project wasn't about to be **paid off**. However, I was old enough to know better than **making a fuss** about it at the moment; instead, I gave myself time and peace before **reasoning** with my parents. **It came as no surprise to me** when they took their all-time-favorite excuse that I was too immature to take care of myself and that there were plenty of **untrustworthy** people willing to take advantage of me out there when I was unaware. Much as I tried to assure them how well I would manage to stay safe and help other **underprivileged** people, I just couldn't **get through** them. As a result, I had no options but **withdrawing** from the project with regrets. However, I wasn't able **to hold a grudge against** my parents for long because I understood they were just **overprotective** and **genuinely** concerned about my well-being.

Vocabulary

Offer/ give/ provide an opportunity

Be over the moon: to be very pleased

Anticipation (n): a feeling of excitement about something (usually something good) that is going to happen

Flatly (adv): in a way that is very definite and will not be changed

Come as no surprise to someone: will not be surprising [for someone] to learn [something]

Underprivileged (a): having less money and fewer opportunities than most people in society

Get through (phrasal verb): succeed in communicating with someone in a meaningful way

Withdraw (v): to stop taking part in an activity or being a member of an organization; to stop somebody/something from doing these things

Hold a grudge against someone: to stay angry (at someone or something)

Overprotective (a): too anxious to protect somebody from being hurt, in a way that restricts their freedom

Genuinely (adv): in a sincere and honest way that can be trusted

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

30.1. What skills are necessary when making decisions?

Off the top of my head, there are quite a few skills which should be **made use of** when we make a decision. The first one is that we should **have a clear vision of** what the future is like before a decision is reached. To be precise, we must **weigh the pros and cons** as well as **the worst-case scenarios** of each option. Secondly, it ought to be noted that **judging our own ability correctly** is another skill which is usually ignored. We should be aware of our **strengths and weaknesses** before deciding whether to **take risks** or not.

30.2. Do parents in your country allow their children to make important decisions about the future?

Usually, parents are really **influential when it comes to** big decisions in a person's lifetime. Since they have previous experience, they often **impose their thinking on** their kids and sometimes urge them to follow their advice. However, the final decision usually depends on the children themselves. This is simply because they are the ones who will **take responsibility for** their actions.

30.3. Do you think that parents should make important decisions for their children?

It's true that parents **have previous experience** and they often **impose their thinking on** their kids and sometimes urge them to follow their advice. However, the final decision should **depend on** the children themselves. This

is simply because they are the ones who will **take responsibility for their actions**. So, a father's or mother's role here is to **inform** the young **of the consequences they have to bear** if a certain decision is made.

30.4. How can older people (parents) help young people (their children) make their own decisions wisely?

There are a couple of methods that older people or parents can **take into account** when they want to help their grandchildren or children to have more informed decisions. The first one is that they should really give advice from their own experience rather than from **word of mouth**. Sometimes, the success of others might be one's failure. The second approach can be that adults should encourage their kids to be **on the go**, actively seeking information and experience from others rather than being passive and randomly making a decision.

31. Describe an enjoyable experience/activity you had in the countryside/ Describe an unforgettable experience you have had.

You should say:

- what the activity was
- when you did it
- who you did with it
- why it was enjoyable

Sample 1

It was two years ago when I had my very first motorbike trip with my friends to the first and most ancient village which is located in the Southern [your country]. It is an unforgettable trip that I've ever had.

Our group had 3 people, Jack, Jenny and me. We chose to visit that village because we wanted to **get away from the hustle and bustle of the city** and **get off the beaten track**. Moreover, because the village is also the

birthplace of my grandparent, I felt really excited to visit the village and **get a closer insight into** the lifestyle of local people as well as my grandparent. We set out for a day trip to date back to the tradition of our country really early. I'm always **a night owl**, not **an early bird**, so leaving the city at 5 a.m made me feel like I was **deprived of** sleep. However, I was **deliriously happy** shortly after **embarking on** the trip to the village. This was because on the way to get there, we **admired the breathtaking landscapes** which is totally different from the city we are currently living in. After 1 hour drive, we got to the **picturesque village** which made me feel **over the moon**. We rented some bikes to cycle around the village with a lot of small **alleyways filled with** green grass. After riding a bike to the **paddy field** to **get the vibes** of the village, we visited some 400 year old ancient house which **made of** mud and **laterite** and **had a look at communal** houses where the local people gathered for festival celebration or public meeting. After that, we had lunch with many **scrumptious** food which is locally and **organically grown**. In the afternoon, we joined a cooking class with the villagers who were extremely friendly and **clever at** making traditional cakes. The **highlight** of the trip to the village was going to the paddy fields to help the farmers **harvest** the crop. It was such an **once-in-a-lifetime experience** which I really enjoyed.

That was our first motorbike trip to the **outskirt** of the city and first time in the countryside so we really enjoyed **every single moment** there. Jenny was **like a dog with two tails** while Jack and I were also **on cloud nine**. We **relished** everything in the village from the fresh air, cozy **ambiance** to beautiful landscapes such as small houses or paddy fields. We **very much hope** that we can **embark on** a longer trip to the countryside **down the road** if we have more spare time.

Vocabulary

Hustle and bustle (phrase) Noisy and confused activity

Off the beaten track (phrase) far away from the places that people usually visit

Get insight into (phrase)

Night owl (phrase) someone who enjoys going out at night or does not go to bed until it is late

Early bird (phrase) someone who gets up early in the morning

Deliriously happy (collocation) very very happy

Embark on (verb) to start a new project or activity, usually one that will be difficult and will take time

Breathtaking (adj) extremely impressive or beautiful

Picturesque (adj) a picturesque place or scene is attractive, especially because it is old and interesting

Over the moon (idiom) very happy

Alleyway (noun) a narrow street or passage

Feel the vibe (phrase) a general feeling that you get from a person or place

Laterite (noun) a kind of brick

Have/take a look at (phrase)

Communal (adj) relating to a particular community

Scrumptious (adj) very delicious

Once-in-a-lifetime experience (collocation) very special experience because you will probably only have it once

Sample 2

Well, I love this topic a lot because it gave me a chance to share my interesting activities in the countryside. In fact, I can't visit my father's **hometown**, Ben Tre very regularly because of my workloads at work, so I come back to Ben Tre before Tet holiday. And last year was such a **fantastic** year to me. It was the first time that I could **travel by boat** on a big river, which is Hau river. I sat on a boat using **machine**, then going around, visiting the **floating** market and seeing people sell things for Tet. Life in that area was very happy and lively. Everyone enjoyed what they were doing. The **scenery** was just so **picturesque**. I went with my family, so nothing better can be **expressed**. Every member loved this trip so much that we took a lot of pictures and talked

a lot to show our **enthusiasm**. This trip was a good **memory** to me as everything was the first time. Besides, it was Tet, so we could see the very **special features** of people's life by the river, which was simple and friendly. I wish in the future I could visit it again with my beloved family.

🚩 Vocabulary

- **hometown** [n] the town or city that a person is from, especially the one in which they were born and lived while they were young
- **fantastic** [a] extremely good
- **boat** [n] a small vehicle for travelling on water
- **machine** [n] a piece of equipment with several moving parts which uses power to do a particular type of work
- **float** [v] to stay on the surface of a liquid and not sink
- **scenery** [n] the general appearance of the natural environment, especially when it is beautiful
- **picturesque** [a] (especially of a place) attractive in appearance, especially in an old-fashioned way
- **express** [v] to show a feeling, opinion or fact
- **enthusiasm** [n] a feeling of energetic interest in a particular subject or activity and an eagerness to be involved in it
- **memory** [n] something that you remember from the past
- **special** [a] not ordinary or usual
- **feature** [n] a typical quality or an important part of something

QUESTION FOR PART 3

31.1. Do you think it is better to live in the countryside or in the city?

As often as this question is raised, I believe it remains a tough decision to make **when it comes to** choosing between living in the countryside and living in the city. Many people have been attracted to live and work in big cities because of better **employment opportunities** and higher **living standards**. This massive **rural-to-urban** migration has, however, led to

increase in environmental pollution, traffic and social issues in urban areas. It would be a better idea for people to live in the suburb and travel into the city to work every day so that they can enjoy **the best of both worlds**.

31.2. What are some of the challenges facing towns and cities?

I suppose **traffic congestion** is the first and most serious problem most people choosing to live in the cities have to **deal with**. During the **peak hours**, there are an **influx** of people on the roads while the **infrastructure** can't furnish people enough space for driving their own cars. Besides, the **marked increase** in **out-of-town** supermarkets and retail parks mean lots of town centre shops are closing down. I think these are the major challenges.

31.3. What are the advantages of living in the countryside?

Living in the countryside can definitely benefit people in **a wide range of** ways. For one thing, living in the countryside is better for one's **health condition** thanks to significantly lower levels of **air pollution**. It is undeniable that, air quality in big cities is so bad that **long-term exposure to** it may cause **respiratory diseases** and other health problems. Besides, the cost of living in rural areas is likely to be lower than that in cities. Although people in the city tend to make more money than people in the countryside do, they have to spend more on food, accommodation and transportation. Therefore, one can actually save more money by living in the countryside without working as hard.

31.4. Do you think that people should have permission to build houses in the countryside?

I certainly think people should be encouraged to build houses in less developed areas. This is because house prices in big cities have become unaffordable for the masses while it costs much less to purchase land and build houses in the countryside. By making more land in the countryside available for building on, the government can attract people to live and work in the countryside, which will not only benefit the economy but also help to reduce burdens on big cities.

32. Describe a well-paid job you would like to do/you will be good at in the future

It's difficult to predict the future **as to** what job will **dominate the labor market**, but I'm pretty sure that teaching English as a foreign language **stands a good chance** of being one of the hottest professions in the **upcoming** years. And, to be honest, I'm **working hard on** enhancing my English teaching ability to **prepare myself** properly for this **golden opportunity** and become an IELTS examiner **down the road**.

Teaching English requires patience and **perseverance** and if you're **an impetuous** and **bad-tempered** person, then this noble profession is not **cut out** for you. In this job, I will have to **get exposed to** people of different educational and **cultural backgrounds**, some of them might be too **stubborn** to be a good listener or simply they're too lazy to **acquire any knowledge**. The two qualities I have mentioned is my **strong suit** actually. I have been employed as an English teacher and somehow learnt about the art of **imparting knowledge** and encourage students to **actively participate in** the lessons without being **fed up with** the students, I think this **characteristic** can be **tackled over time** and that being not too **lenient with** the students means I care for them pretty much.

At the moment, teaching social subjects like Literature or History admittedly doesn't guarantee a **lucrative income**. Yet it's not the same for English as it's an international language and is a **prerequisite** for international students or those working in multinational corporations. So, I speculate that **in the foreseeable future** the job as an IELTS examiner will promise a bright future.

Vocabulary

As to (phrase) concerning someone or something

Labor market (phrase) the number of people who are available to work, considered together with all the available jobs

Stand a chance (phrase) to be likely to achieve something

Down the road (idiom) in the future

Impetuous (adj) done quickly, without thinking about what the effects will be

Bad –tempered (adj) angry, irritable, or ungracious

Cut out for someone (phrasal verb) to be the right type of person to do something

Impart (verb) To pass on; transmit

Be fed up with (phrasal verb) be bored with something/somebody

Lenient with someone (adj) if a person or system is lenient, they punish someone less severely than they could

QUESTION PART 3

32.1. What kinds of jobs are well-paid in your country?

As in other nations, how high a person's salary is is determined by their time and efforts. It is not unrealistic that doctors or CEOs of certain corporations receive significantly higher incomes compared to other professions because they have to spend years improving their skills and accumulating **hands-on experience** before practicing their career. Besides, celebrities like MCs or comedians also have a **handsome salary** since they **contribute greatly to** our lives. Just imagine how life would be if there are no comedy shows or reality programmes.

32.2. What kinds of jobs are poorly-paid in your country?

Obviously, **manual workers** receive the lowest income in my country; they work hard physically but with no good pay. Some of these occupations don't require much brain work and usually include factory workers, street cleaners or caretakers. Somehow; it is proportional to the efforts and time they spend when they were young.

32.3. Do people who have different levels of income feel happy about how much they earn?

This is a fascinating question, really. The **discrepancy** in income levels generally reflects the degree of happiness a person may feel. This is due to the fact that when people have the means, they can easily afford **high-quality**

services and **enjoy their life** better. They can go to the cinema with their buddies to watch a **blockbuster** or hang out at some coffee shops. These things make people satisfied in life. On the contrary, if people can't **take their mind off** stuff like how to **earn a living** to support their family financially, definitely they sense no happiness in this life.

32.4. Do you think it is good to change jobs frequently?

If i have to choose, the answer would be no. Instead of **job-hopping** in a frequent basis, it would be better if we **reflect on** our interests or make greater efforts and determination in what we are doing. This helps us to have an overall picture of our genuine abilities and better adapt to an environment for longer stay. Another plus point is the promotion prospects are more promising if we **set our heart on** staying at the same place because the more we work, the more **hands-on experience** we gain. This makes us qualified for a pay rise or a good promotion.

33. Describe a quiet place you visit/like

You should say:

- *where it is*
- *how often you go there*
- *what you do there*
- *why you like this place*

Waking up to a **daily nine to five job** and dealing with all kinds of **irksome** issues everyday will surely **drive you insane** someday unless having a healthy way to **relieve** stress and boredom. Fortunately, I have my own cure – a retreat to ABC, a mountainous area – which I have taken **every once in a while** whenever life is giving me a hard time.

ABC is located roughly 300 km to the northeast of my city and about 1,500 m above sea level, which is well-known for its year-round cool weather. Even though it is one of the most popular tourist attractions, there are plenty of

remote areas where people looking for a **tranquil** and nature place **to get away from** their **tight schedules**. Since it's not very far from the city center, only half an hour if traveling by plane, I go there quite often, around 4 times per year. And every trip holds its own **fascination** depending on what activities I participate in. Normally, I would go trekking **into the wild** to **burn up my energy** and enjoy the feeling of sweat soaking my clothes and being physically **exhausted**. It makes me feel alive and **rejuvenated** again. Sometimes when I feel like **pushing myself to the limit**, **extreme sports** such as water sliding or cliff jumping are my favorites. Those kinds of entertainment require good health condition and **adventurous** spirit, hence, they're not for everyone. I usually spend 3 days in ABC everytime I visit it and although it's only a short time, I do feel some of the **burdens** I shoulder are **swept away** and am prepared to face whatever comes next.

Vocabulary

Nine to five job (phrase) a job with normal daytime hours

Irksome (a): annoying or irritating

Drive someone insane/ crazy: to make you upset; to annoy or irritate someone

Every once in a while: sometimes, but not regularly

Remote (a): far away from places where other people live

Tranquil (a): quiet and peaceful

Fascination (n): a very strong attraction, that makes something very interesting

Rejuvenate (v): make (someone or something) look or feel younger, fresher, or more lively

Exhausted (a): very tired

Extreme sports (n): sports that are extremely exciting to do and often dangerous, for example skydiving and bungee jumping

Adventurous (a): (of a person) willing to take risks and try new ideas; enjoying being in new, exciting situations

Burden (n): a duty, responsibility, etc. that causes worry, difficulty or hard work

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

33.1. Are there many quiet places in your city?

I reckon there aren't many **tranquil** places in our city unless you wander around the **border** to the countryside. I suppose any **cosmopolitan** city is as crowded and active as mine so it's quite **tricky** to find a **peaceful** spot to escape just for a while. Nevertheless, if you don't mind an hour riding to the edge of the city, you will be **hypnotized** by many endless **paddy fields** and colorful flying kites.

Tranquil (a): peaceful

Border (n): the line that divides two countries or areas; the land near this line

Cosmopolitan (a): containing people of different types or from different countries, and influenced by their culture

Tricky (a): difficult to do or deal with

Hypnotize (v): to interest somebody so much that they can think of nothing else

Paddy field (n): a field planted with rice growing in water

33.2. Why do people sometimes prefer to be alone?

I don't think there is a simple explanation for why people sometimes **seek solitude** to enjoy life by themselves. It has happened to me a few times as well when I feel **suffocated** by a **bustle and hustle** of city life. You have to spend two-third of your day being surrounded by all kinds of people and work that you barely have time for yourself and things you love, which is physically and emotionally **detrimental**. Therefore, in order to **balance** their personal lives, people often try to **minimize** contacts with outside world to find their inner peace when possible.

Seek (v): to look for

Solitude (n): the state of being alone, especially when you find this pleasant

Suffocate (v): feel or cause to feel trapped and oppressed

Bustle and hustle: busy and noisy activity

Detrimental (a): harmful

Balance (v): keep or put (something) in a steady position so that it does not fall

Minimize (v): to reduce something, especially something bad, to the lowest possible level

33.3. Is there much noise around your home?

My house is far from the city center, so the neighborhood is quite peaceful and **livable**. I can hardly imagine myself living elsewhere, especially the urban center due to its **noise pollution** and terrible **congestions** during rush hours. Admittedly, there are certain advantages when living there: short-distance **commute**, fabulous restaurants, various entertainment facilities and so on, which is pretty **tempting**. However, I am a **social butterfly** and prefer a good book to any meeting, hence, I love my tranquil place now.

Livable (a): (of life) worth living

Noise pollution (n): harmful or annoying levels of noise, as from airplanes, industry, etc.

Congestion (n): the state of being crowded and full of traffic

Commute (v): a regular journey of some distance to and from one's place of work

Tempting (a): something that is tempting is attractive, and makes people want to have it, do it, etc.

Social butterfly (n): a very sociable person who flits from one social event to another

33.4. Does this noise affect you in any way?

Since my neighborhood is relatively **restful**, I am not often **disturbed** by noises. Yet, every once in a while when some neighbor throws a party or has their house **refurbished**, I tend to get **distracted**. I don't work well under stress or any kind of **distractions** since it makes me unfocused. Even if it's a bit loud, I don't want to complain since most of the time they are incredible

well-behaved. Hence, I choose to do my chores or hang out with some friends instead to make my time useful.

Restful (a): that makes you feel relaxed and peaceful

Disturb (v): to interrupt somebody when they are trying to work, sleep, etc.

Refurbish (v): to clean and decorate a room, building, etc. in order to make it more attractive, more useful, etc.

Distract (v): to take somebody's attention away from what they are trying to do

Distraction (n): a thing that takes your attention away from what you are doing or thinking about

Well-behaved (a): behaving in a way that other people think is polite or correct

33.5. How do you think noise in cities could be reduced?

It will **take great effort to** be able to reduce noise pollution in cities and everybody will need to join hand. Firstly, **turn off** your electronics when you're out of home or office. It may sound unnecessary and **trivial** but imagine the whole neighborhood let the music play all night long, it would be a nightmare. Secondly, **put on** your earphones in public places. Nobody wants to know your music taste or to be disturbed when trying to focus on their reading. Besides, encourage your friends and family do the same. The more participants, the less noise population.

Take effort to: to do something even though you do not want to or you find it difficult

Turn off (phrasal verb): to stop the flow of electricity, gas, water, etc. by moving a switch, button, etc.

Trivial (a): not important or serious; not worth considering

Put on (phrasal verb): to wear

33.6. Is there a completely quiet place?

What a fascinating question! My personal thought is that there's virtually no absolutely peaceful and quiet spot in modern society. At least there's some soft background noise or music to make the air **less dull and heavy**. Having said

this, at night, we can catch sight of many parts of the town noiseless and **dead quiet**, which can be explained by the fact that most people might have **fallen into a sound sleep**.

33.7. Do you feel like listening to music over and over again?

To be honest with you, I'd say that I don't have a habit of replaying any song on my Ipod, the main reason of which is that I've been always interested in novel stuff and repeating the same thing for me seems **redundant and mundane**, so I'd rather put on different song and experience different feelings and emotions.

33.8. Where do young people usually meet in your city?

Well, it's difficult to say because there are many good meeting places in my city, like cafes, cinemas or parks. As far as I am concerned, I usually meet my friends in the cafes. They have comfortable seats and pleasant background music. We can chat without being disturbed while enjoying a cup of coffee or juice. If the weather is fine we will go to the parks. It is agreeable to sit on the bench near the lake, enjoying the pleasant scenery far away.

33.9. What types of noises do you come across in your daily life? Do any noise bother you?

I usually hear the noises of traffic, music played aloud to attract more customers at the shops as well as the noise of construction. Most of the times, I get sickened by the high level of noise. Noises from traffic or construction sites bother me a lot. Anyway, I feel irritated at any kind of noise.

33.10. What are some of the advantages of quiet places?

There are many advantages that being in a **tranquil** and **serene** place can give us. The first plus point is that it's easier to concentrate, to think logically and rationally. In a word, it's good for my mind work. Also, quiet places enable people to feel relaxed and **light-hearted** or whatever type of positive feeling human has.

33.11. What kinds of places do people want to go to when they want to be alone?

Honestly speaking, **city dwellers** often try to manage a trip to the countryside, where the atmosphere is **tranquil and serene**, away from the **hustle and bustle** of city life. Some others who are **preoccupied with** their work tend to **make an escape** to a **secluded** lake or park where they spend time reading a book or **pursuing other hobbies** like drawing. Also, some people would rather just stay at home, in their room listening to music or doing other trivial stuff.

34. Describe a place people do sport in (swimming pool, stadium)/ Describe a popular place where people go swimming

You should say:

- *where this place is*
- *what kinds of people go there*
- *why people choose to go to this place instead of other places*
- *what facilities it has*

Sample 1

I don't usually **wander** far from my neighborhood when I am not at work, hence, I tend to find a local place if I need to catch up with some friends or simply, exercise. And lucky for me, we do have a **recreation and sport center** only 10 minutes away which has been attracting plenty of sporty people since its opening in 2014.

This center can be considered a symbol of the town, **showcasing** local **sportsmanship** and **unification**. It was built to replace the old stadium which was barely used by nearby residents and has become unexpectedly **well-liked** thanks to its wide range of facilities and **modernity**. The center has a large football field, 5 tennis courts, 3 swimming pools and many other rooms for different purposes. With people who enjoy swimming like me, this is

an ideal place where all necessary facilities are provided: 3 pools with 2 indoors and 1 indoor, saunas, water slides, shower areas as well as a cafeteria by the pool, which are all **neatly clean** and **nicely designed**. As a result, it's quite **self-explanatory** why people prefer this center and the number of visitors is increasing every month. Soon, anyone living in the area who wishes to exercise different kinds of sports is going to gather here due to its convenience and outstanding **infrastructure**.

Vocabulary

Wander (v): to walk slowly around or to a place, often without any particular sense of purpose or direction

Recreation center (n): a facility open to the public for leisure and recreation activities

Showcase (v): to present somebody's abilities or the good qualities of something in an attractive way

Sportsmanship (n): fair, generous and polite behaviour, especially when playing a sport or game

Unification (n): the act or process of joining people, things, parts of a country, etc. together so that they can form a single unit

Modernity (n): the condition of being new and modern

Self-explanatory (a): easy to understand and not needing any more explanation

Infrastructure (n): the basic systems and services that are necessary for a country or an organization to run smoothly, for example buildings, transport and water and power supplies

Sample 2

Our neighborhood has a community swimming pool. Lots of people go there during hot summer days. Some of them go to this swimming pool to **cool off** or just to **hang out** while others go there to **work out**. You know, swimming is probably one of the best **all-around** exercises in the world coz it **keeps you fit** and your body **in shape**.

The water in the swimming pool is treated by **ultraviolet technology** which benefits the quality of the water. It is safe there as full time **lifeguards** are supervising **all the time**. The pool is able to **cater for** not only swimming itself, but also for swimming lessons and even birthday parties.

But honestly, not all the people there can swim well. Yes, there are folks who swim like fish but some others just splash water around or even have a hard time doing the doggy-paddle.

On any hot day in July, the pool is **buzzing with kids**. There're even instructors giving swimming lessons to them. Enjoy the sun and get paid is a pretty good idea, right? And, you know, I don't have a girlfriend/boyfriend. So who knows? Maybe this pool'll give me a chance.

QUESTION FOR PART 3

34.1. Should swimming pools be free?

Even though it would be ideal to have swimming pools or any other sport facilities provided for free, I still think people should be charged upon entering. If we don't pay when using swimming pools, the authority will have to **rely on public spending** to cover **labor costs, renovation** and so on, which can be used in more meaningful activities such as helping the **underprivileged** or building a new medical center. And anyway, entrance ticket to the pool is not that pricey that people cannot afford.

Rely (+on) (v): to need or depend on somebody/something

Public spending (n): money spent by the state; government expenditure

Labor cost (n): the sum of all wages paid to employees

Renovation (n): the act or process of repairing and painting an old building, piece of furniture, etc. so that it is in good condition again

Underprivileged (a): having less money and fewer opportunities than most people in society => the underprivileged (n): people who are underprivileged

34.2. If one is scared of water should they keep learning how to swim?

We have **witnessed** many amazing stories in which people do not let fear **conquer** them but keep doing what they want. I personally believe that if

people can **overcome** their fear and learn to swim, it's incredible, otherwise, they're not **cowards**, either because everybody is scared of something for a reason. If someone **has a thing against** being in water, he might have been **traumatized** by an incident or sometimes, was born with it. Whichever is the case, it's their call to learn or not.

Witness (v): see something

Conquer (v): to succeed in dealing with or controlling something

Coward (n): a person who is not brave or who does not have the courage to do things that other people do not think are especially difficult

Have a thing against: to have a special fear or dislike of someone or something

Traumatize (v): to shock and upset somebody very much, often making them unable to think or work normally

34.3. Why do some people like water sports?

Obviously, some like the youths are extremely into **aquatic sports**. This can easily be understood because they are **dynamic and adventurous** so they are pretty **drawn by** water polo, surfing, snorkeling **to name but a few**. Some sports like those tend to be risky so it can be a time for the young guys to **challenge themselves** and **test their own limit**, which can give them **more confidence** in life.

34.4. What's the difference between swimming in the pool and swimming in the sea? It's a dilemma. I like swimming in the ocean because it makes me feel **close to the nature** and there's more space for me to **stretch my arms and legs**. However, if I have my private swimming pool, I'd love to swim in it because the water is fresh and shallow so I can enjoy my time without worrying about being drowned or swallowing the salty water.

34.5. Is it important to learn swimming?

Swimming is not only one of the necessary **survival** skills but a great **leisure** activity, hence, it would be both beneficial and **pleasurable** to know how to swim. Every year, there are many **heartbreaking** accidents related to water incidents and most of the victims cannot swim or are not good swimmers.

Thus, in order to **ensure** their own safety and help those in need, people should be able to swim well.

Survival skills (n): techniques that a person may use in order to sustain life in any type of natural environment

Leisure (n): free time

Pleasurable (a): enjoyable

Heartbreaking (a): extremely sad

Ensure (v): to make sure that something happens or is definite

34.6. Who is the perfect person to teach people how to swim?

The ones who know how the **techniques** and are able to swim well, of course. A swimming athlete would be much better, but I doubt we can find one easily. Swimming is a sport which means it has some risky **elements** that need **taken into consideration**. Therefore, to be able to handle unexpected situations such as **cramps** or **drowning**, a teacher should be trained about medical **in advance** and **improvise** quickly upon **emergency**.

Technique (n): a particular way of doing something, especially one in which you have to learn special skills

Element (n): a small amount of a quality or feeling

Take into consideration = take into account: to think about and include a particular thing or fact when you are forming an opinion or making a decision

Cramp (n): a sudden pain that you get when the muscles in a particular part of your body contract, usually caused by cold or too much exercise

Drowning (n): the process of dying because of being underwater and unable to breathe for too long; an act of dying in this way

In advance: before the time that is expected; before something happens

Improvise (v): to make or do something using whatever is available, usually because you do not have what you really need

Emergency (n): a sudden serious and dangerous event or situation which needs immediate action to deal with it

34.7. Do you think the government should invest money in developing facilities for water sports?

Not necessarily I reckon. This is because governments should rather provide more **essential services** for its citizens like **improving healthcare or education**. The task of **upgrading and expanding** water sports facilities should (rest with the clubs that **do business in** these areas Besides, not many people are into water sports these days since they even can't **find time to** go to somewhere with water during the whole year.

34.8. Where do people in your country like to go swimming?

People usually swim at the swimming pools or go to the beach. But I guess most people prefer to go swimming in the sea. The feeling is totally different. I bet no one can **resist the temptation** from the blue sky, the white clouds, the unbroken coastline and the cozy sea breeze.

35. Describe a café you enjoy/have been to

You should say:

- *Where it is*
- *How often you go there*
- *When you usually go there*
- *Why you like to visit this café*

Sample 1

I'm an **introvert** and not really keen on **socializing with** others, so I often find a noiseless spot to **frequent to** every time I'm **stressed out** from work study. It is the small and **cozy** café within a walking distance from my house.

Unlike other coffee shops **in the vicinity of** my neighborhood, the atmosphere here is extremely **tranquil and serene**, which greatly **lives up to my expectation**. As a person with heavy amounts of daily workload. The café gives me a certain degree of peacefulness and calmness, especially during

nerve-racking times like final exams when I am **up to ears in** assignments.

What **leaves the most profound impression on** me is the complete silence in the café as the shop owner fortunately is not interested in music of any kind, so no background music is expected when you come here. I can **increase my concentration span** while reading a book or other materials and finish work with great productivity, **compared to** when I'm at home, surrounded by many disturbances like babies crying and neighbors arguing. One bonus point is that the coffee there is **second to none** which **caters to** my unique tastes! The foods are really **scrumptious, giving me great refreshing energy** when suffering from **fatigue and stress** I have to admit.

Vocabulary

Introvert (noun) someone who tends to concentrate on their own thoughts and feelings rather than communicating with other people

Frequent (verb) to visit or go to (a place) often

Stressed out (adj) affected by stress

In the vicinity of (phrase) in the area that is close to

Tranquil (adj) quiet

Serene (adj) calm and peaceful

Live up to one's expectation (phrase) to be as good as good as someone thought something would be

Nerve-racking (adj) making you very nervous or worried

Up to ears/neck in something (idiom) busy doing something

Leave/create/make an impression on somebody (phrase) to produce a positive memorable effect on someone

Second to none (adj) as good as or better than all others

Scrumptious (adj) very delicious

Fatigue (noun) a feeling of being extremely tired, either physically or mentally

QUESTION FOR PART 3

35.1. What do old people like to eat?

Personally speaking, the elderly are more into vegetables and fruits rather than meat. As they have grown old, the **fiber** and vitamins obtained from the **intake** of salads, tomatoes, bananas **and so on** are particularly good for their health. **By contrast**, meat **does harm to** their **digestive system**. It's also worth mentioning that the older citizens can't chew thick pieces of meat, so they'd rather eat fish, which is softer and can be easily digested.

Intake (noun) the amount of a chemical or another substance that enters your body

And so on (phrase) etc; (used instead of mentioning more of a similar type of thing that has already been mentioned)

By/in contrast (phrase) used when you are comparing two things or people and saying that the second one is very different from the first

Do harm to somebody/something (phrase) cause physical or psychological damage or injury

Digestive system (noun) a group of organs working together to convert food into energy and basic nutrients to feed the entire body.

35.2. How important is it for a country to be able to grow all the food it needs, without importing any from other countries?

In recent times it hasn't been that important as it's been easy enough to import anything that was required. Maybe in the future there will be more **emphasis on** being independent in terms of food production, as well as other essential resources such as energy and fuel, it looks like there are going to be some major changes which could affect everyone in terms of how we look at our ability to survive in the event of another world conflict where food and possibly water become scarce.

36. Describe a kind of foreign food you tried/would like to have

Well, I spent 2 weeks of the summer vacation in Malaysia to visit my friends thus had chances to try a lot of local foods. However, the food that I miss most since I cannot find it in my hometown is called ‘Roti Susu’.

Indian food in Malaysia is highly diverse, yet my favorite one is this food. Basically, in Malaysian, ‘Roti’ means ‘bread’ and ‘susu’ means ‘milk’. We can add some curry sauce for more flavors. Because of such simple ingredients, this food can be found in any Indian restaurants in Malaysia.

My friends who were studying in Malaysia were also big fan of ‘roti susu’ so they introduced me this food on the first day I came to visit them. Because it is sold by an Indian food court on campus, they could have it most of the time. I prefer having it without the sauce and usually it’s my everyday-favorite. Probably as the soft bread with sweet condensed milk has often been my breakfast when I’m in my hometown, the taste of ‘roti susu’ seems **familiar to me**.

In the future, I would love to return to Malaysia someday to enjoy ‘roti susu’ again.

Vocabulary

To be familiar with Sth/SO (*adj*): to know SO or Sth well

QUESTION FOR PART 3

36.1. Why do some people taste change?

Well as we grow older, our tastes are also likely to change as well. The reason for this can be we don’t have time for a decent meal as most family members are **on the go**, meaning that the father and mother have to work longer hours to **make ends meet**, whereas the students must attend extra classes to **keep up with** their peers at school. So, we **end up** eating fast foods or **take-aways** and become used to it. The second reason is when we grow older, for health protection, we force ourselves to **refrain from** certain types of foods, like meat or fast food because they contain many health hazards.

36.2. Which are more popular in your country: fast food restaurants or traditional restaurants?

They're both popular, but in different ways and for different reasons. I think fast food restaurants are popular for **grabbing a quick bite** or snack, as they are fast and you can usually find one nearby. Traditional restaurants are more popular for special occasions or going out for lunch or dinner at the weekend when people have more time to sit and enjoy the food and the **ambience or atmosphere** of the place. They usually cost more too, so maybe people don't go as often, but they're still popular. I don't think anyone would consider going to a fast food place for a special occasion - unless it was a kid's birthday party or something similar, in which case **it makes a lot of sense**, as some of these places **cater specially for** such events.

36.3. Do you think there will be a greater choice of food available in shops in the future, or will there be less choice?

That's hard to say, but I think that due to the fact that most industries are becoming more and more **consolidated** and there are less and less independent producers of anything, you could safely say that the choice will probably be less, as it will be **dictated** by only one or two **giant global conglomerates** in the food industry.

36.4. Some people say that food in an expensive restaurant is always better than food in a cheap restaurant - would you agree?

In my experience it's not that simple. I've had some amazingly good food in cheap restaurants and some disgustingly bad food in a **supposedly classy** and expensive place. I think that's why **'word of mouth'** advertising is so important in the restaurant business. You simply can't guarantee that a place that looks expensive and charges a lot of money will indeed offer a better dining experience than a cheaper restaurant with fewer **frills**. The service can be just the same and the quality of food the same too - it might only be the surroundings that are more **upmarket** in reality.

37. Describe an occasion that you received a good service from a company or shop

- *What company or business it was and what this company does*
- *What the service was*
- *Who helped you*
- *Where you received this good service*
- *Why you think it was good service*

Well, I think this topic is a hot one because good service is a hot **trend** these days. A Paradise shop near my house is my first choice because of its **undeniable pleasant staff**. That shop mainly sells cellphones and laptops which require the staff very good general knowledge and IT skills. However, they **conduct** it very well. I went there 1 month ago to buy a new Samsung cellphone for my younger sister. The first thing that really impressed me was their welcome. The customers weren't **discriminated**, based on their **social status** or their **appearance**. Their **customer service meets the requirements** both of the buyers and the visitors. Since I wanted to buy a cellphone, an **expert** in cellphones came and **consulted** with me a suitable style and color for my sister. This point was good as they understand what the customers would need. Every step, every stage is taken care of very well. I would like to come back this shop just because I was **treated fairly** and carefully, which made me feel happy and comfortable. I love this shop a lot.

Vocabulary

- **trend** [n] a general development or change in a situation or in the way that people are behaving
- **undeniable** [a] certainly true
- **pleasant** [a] enjoyable, attractive, friendly, or easy to like
- **staff** [n] the group of people who work for an organization
- **conduct** [v] to organize and perform a particular activity
- **discriminate** [v] to treat a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, religion, sex, etc.

- **social status** [phrase] an accepted or official position, especially in a social group
- **appearance** [n] the way a person or thing looks to other people
- **customer** [n] a person who buys goods or a service
- **requirement** [n] something that you must do, or something you need
- **expert** [v] a person with a high level of knowledge or skill; a specialist
- **consult** [v] to get information or advice from a person, book, etc. with special knowledge on a particular subject
- **treat** [v] to behave towards someone or deal with something in a particular way
- **fairly** [adv] If you do something fairly, you do it in a way which is right and reasonable and treats people equally

QUESTION FOR PART 3

37.1. Is service better in large shops or in small shops?

From my experience, services provided by large shops with certain amount of **reputation** are often more professional and **consistent** than smaller ones. The reason can be that larger stores have already had their own system and **procedures** on how to treat customers and **handle** complaints and they even have budget for training newbies. Meanwhile, smaller stores tend to pay less attention to service but sales. Still, there are also exceptions.

Reputation (n): the opinion that people have about what somebody/something is like, based on what has happened in the past

Consistent (a): always behaving in the same way, or having the same opinions, standards, etc.

Procedure (n): the official or formal order or way of doing something, especially in business, law or politics

Handle (v): to deal with a situation, a person, an area of work or a strong emotion

Budget (n): the money that is available to a person or an organization and a plan of how it will be spent over a period of time

37.2. If customers feel difficult in the shops, who will they ask?

Not surprisingly, there's always someone for you to **make enquiries** in case you want for more information on a particular item. The shop assistant would just be pleased to **show you around**, explain the features and functions of something for you. A **prime example** is when I went to purchase a smartphone, I met a nice shop assistant who instructed me in detail about different brands, and I **ended up** picking the most suitable one.

37.3. What would you do if you receive a bad service?

Let me see. Different people have different **reactions** towards poor services, I suppose and it also depends on how service providers handle their customers' complaints. A waiter makes mistakes while serving a table, for example, ordering a wrong dish, a guest can **overlook** the **incident** if that waiter genuinely apologizes and cleverly offers some free drink or dessert as a **subtle** win-back manner. In contrast, if he insists on blaming the guest, the restaurant will end up having an angry customer.

Reaction (n): what you do, say or think as a result of something that has happened

Overlook (v): to see something wrong or bad but decide to ignore it

Incident (n): something that happens, especially something unusual or unpleasant

Subtle (a): behaving in a clever way, and using indirect methods, in order to achieve something

Or:

There can be a number of courses of actions I can consider when an item I bought fails to **live up to my expectations**. The first thing I would do in this case is to **note down** the address of the store owner and go directly there to ask him. This is simple because the sellers must have the responsibility if they provide products that don't **meet the standards** and fix them if there are any technical problems. Another thing I **would take into account** is that I would go to some local authorities and **claim my rights** if the seller refuses to repair the item; change another one or have a refund.

37.4. What qualities do the staff need? Why?

As far as I'm concerned, staff need to equip themselves with certain virtues and knowledge in **handling** with customers' enquiries and complaints. One thing is that they must really be patient and try their best to be a good listener, understanding the situation and **coming up with** proper measures to **sort the problems out** once and for all. Without this quality, everything will **be in a mess**, and no agreement will be reached between both parties. The second quality is a good ability to explain. From my experience, I see some staff **stammering or confused** and unable to answer the questions of the consumers. Such incompetence and lack of knowledge will prove a disadvantage in doing business with others.

37.7. Do you think it's important for a company to provide after-sales service?

After-sales service can be a plus point that **distinguishes** one company from another. Therefore, I believe it would be **beneficial** for any company to provide and **upgrade** the quality of after-sales service. It's not surprising if you treat your customers well when they are considering whether to buy your products or services. It will be **spectacular** if you take care of them with the same **dedication** after you already close the deal and that would make them feel important and **boost** their **loyalty** to your brand.

Distinguish (something from something else) (v): to recognize the difference between two people or things

Beneficial (a): improving a situation; having a helpful or useful effect

Upgrade (v): to improve the condition of something

Spectacular (a): very impressive

Dedication (n): the hard work and effort that somebody puts into an activity or a purpose because they think it is important

Boost (v): to make something increase, or become better or more successful

Loyalty (n): the quality of being faithful in your support of somebody/something

37.6. What's an example of a difficult situation involving the public that an employee might need to deal with?

A common **undesirable** situation that no company or employee wants to face is a negative feedback which is posted publicly for everyone to see, especially your **potential** customers. If it is not carefully dealt with, a company's reputation and image will have to **suffer severely**.

Undesirable (a): not wanted or approved of; likely to cause trouble or problems

Potential (a): that can develop into something or be developed in the future

Suffer (v): to experience something unpleasant, such as injury, defeat or loss

Severely (adv): very badly or seriously

38. Describe an interesting talk or speech you heard recently

You should say

- *Where you heard it*
- *Who the speaker was*
- *What the talk or speech was about*
- *Why you think it was interesting*

Sample 1

Well, to be honest, there aren't really that many speeches I've heard which I can remember in much detail, you know, I tend to forget most talks pretty much as soon as I've finished listening to them! But one talk that did **leave a particularly deep impression on** me was by X, who I'm not sure if you've heard of before, but he's one of the most accomplished and respected people here in my country, which is why I **made the effort** to listen to what he had to say.

But anyway, **as for** what his speech was about, well it was **quite a while** ago when I listened to it, so I can only remember bits of it, but **in a nutshell**, it was basically about success and how we can **go about** achieving it. And so in his speech, he outlined a few things that we can do if we want to **lead a successful and fulfilling life**, which most of us do of course. So for example, one thing he **touched upon** was how we should all **follow our dreams**, instead of simply doing what other people expect of us. And listening to this from X himself really made me believe in the truth of that statement because he's speaking from experience. And he also went on to explain that many other successful people also attribute their success to the fact that they **pursued their dreams**.

But anyway, finally, **with regard to** what I thought of the talk, well to put it simply, I thought it was really informative and so I was able to learn a **tremendous** amount from it, such as, you know, how to **succeed in** what we do, and also what values we should live our lives by.

Another thing that made his talk especially interesting was the fact that he used a lot of stories. So I mean, even though his talk went on for over an hour or so, I didn't feel bored at all listening to it, and in fact I even made a mental note that, if I ever have to do any public speaking myself in the future, I'll also try to include a few stories, like X did.

🚩 Vocabulary

Leave/make/create an impression on somebody (collocation) to provide a lasting memory for someone after one has left.

As for (phrase) considering or speaking about

Quite a while (phrase) a long time

In a nutshell (phrase) very briefly

Go about (phrasal verb) to do something

Touch upon (phrasal verb) to mention something when you are talking or writing

Pursue (verb) to try to achieve something

With regard to (phrase) concerning a particular subject

Tremendous (adj) extremely great, important, or strong

Sample 2

Uhm, this is my favorite topic. When I was a student, I wasn't very interested in any speech or talks. However, since I started my job as a teacher, I have enjoyed these talks a lot. I did hear a talk from a **lecturer** who comes from ERC University. He is a TESOL teacher, so the way he gave the talk really **impressed** me. Sitting in a big hall and listening to a talk actually isn't a boring thing. The lecture **presented** different **methodology** in teaching English for high school students. Then, the talk visualized a variety of games to **motivate** students' interests, such as snakes, battleships or puzzles. I have to **admit** that they are very **creative** and funny. Moreover, I did learn a lot from this talk, especially the games since I've never thought that games are really **effective** in class but they **proved** me wrong. The students like them a lot, which makes me believe in those new teaching methods. I think I will listen to these talks more when I have time.

Vocabulary

- **lecturer** [n] someone who teaches at a college or university
- **impress** [v] to cause someone to admire or respect you because of something that you have done or said
- **admit** [v] to agree that something is true, especially unwillingly
- **present** [v] to give, provide or make known
- **methodology** [n] a system of ways of doing, teaching or studying something
- **motivate** [v] to make someone want to do something well
- **creative** [a] producing or using original and unusual ideas
- **effective** [a] successful or achieving the results that you want
- **prove** [v] to show that something is true

QUESTION PART 3

38.1. Why do people feel nervous when they are giving a speech to others?

Public speaking has always been one of the **utmost** challenges for anyone, especially those lacking practices. Like any interpersonal skills, being able to deliver a thorough, yet **captivating** speech to a group of strangers requires certain factors. Reasons why most people fail, for me, fall into two main categories: the fear of audience's reaction and the topic itself. People are **judgmental** creatures and can **cast aspersions on** almost everything; therefore, presenters may suffer from the pressure of perfecting every detail. In addition, if someone is going to talk about topic that is unfamiliar to him or too **sophisticated** for listeners, it is possibly not as **well-received** as the one he knows more about.

Utmost (a): greatest; most extreme

Captivating (a): taking all your attention; very attractive and interesting

Judgmental (a): judging people and criticizing them too quickly

Cast aspersions on: to criticize someone or someone's character

Sophisticated (a): complicated

Well-received (a): getting a good reaction from people

38.2. How can people improve their public speaking skills?

Thanks to the Internet, information is now **disseminated** worldwide and easily **accessible** that you can get help from anyone about anything, including public speaking. There are several means to **acquire** and **harness** such skill as long as people are willing to such as enrolling in an online course or participating in forum where people with the same goal gather and share their experience. This is quite effective, flexible and most importantly, free of charge. If you want something more official and academic, talk to some experts in public speaking at some conferences or workshops. They will provide you more insights and tips to begin. Last but not least, **practice makes perfect**.

Disseminate (v): to spread information, knowledge, etc. so that it reaches many people

Accessible (a): that can be reached, entered, used, seen, etc.

Acquire (v): to gain something by your own efforts, ability or behaviour

Harness (v): to control and use the force or strength of something to produce power or to achieve something

Practice makes perfect: a way of encouraging people by telling them that if you do an activity regularly and try to improve your skill, you will become very good at it

38.3. Can you suggest any methods that would help reduce nervousness?

Each of us will surely experience at least once in our lifetime the feeling of anxiety. It can be before our job interview or big presentation, when meeting your family-in-law for the first time and so on. **Nervousness** could be a good sign since it shows that we care. However, to better perform at such **life-changing** events, you should control your feelings. Firstly, take a deep breath. You can't be at your best without breathing easily. Second, don't try convince yourself that you're not anxious. Accept it just like any other feelings then you don't have to keep reminding yourself to ignore it. Lastly, use positive self-talk. Encourage yourself and remember that you are in this place for a reason.

Nervousness (n): the feeling of being anxious about something or afraid of something

Life-changing (a): having an effect that is strong enough to change someone's life

38.4. Is it good for people to visit schools and give a talk to children about different things?

As far as I'm concerned, it would be a **valuable** experience for children to hear real-life stories and personal insights from their **predecessors** who have been through **ups and downs** for useful lessons and advice. Nowadays, many schools have already invited some guests that could be their **alumni** or **influential** local figures to talk to students. A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves a mark. Therefore, the sooner we sow a good seed and inspire them, the better they will grow.

Valuable (a): very useful or important

Predecessor (n): a person who did a job before somebody else

Ups and downs: the mixture of good and bad things in life or in a particular situation or relationship

Alumni (n): the former male and female students of a school, college or university

Influential (a) having a lot of influence on somebody/something

38.5. What type of person is best suited to give a talk to a group of students?

Well, I see no special talents are needed to be able to deliver a highly **motivating** and **inspiring** speech to students as long as their experiences and messages are **relevant** and meaningful. Hence, people who could **grab students' attention** and make them question their goals and purposes are those leading an eventful life. And by this, I mean someone who has related experiences and been through ups and downs during his career to reach success. This is because I believe that if one has never tasted failures and disappointments, he can't realize his inner strength to overcome **setbacks** and truly appreciate his success, which is what students should think about when they're still in school.

Motivate (v): to be the reason why somebody does something or behaves in a particular way

Inspiring (a): exciting and encouraging you to do or feel something

Relevant (a): having ideas that are valuable and useful to people in their lives and work

Setback (n): a difficulty or problem that delays or prevents something, or makes a situation worse

Grab someone's attention: to draw or attract someone's attention

38.6. When you give your speech, you encounter any problems? Do you think some adults feel tension when they are giving a speech?

If you ask me, I would have to say that I often **come up against** some obstacles when preparing my speech as well as when the speech is in progress of being delivered to others. In the process of preparation, I often have a hard time picking the topic that is relevant and can capture the interest of the

audience. If you don't, they might get fed up with the speech and you end up conveying no messages at all to others. As for while I'm giving a talk, I usually stammer and feel **at a loss** for words at times, which is a weakness that I'm trying to **get over**.

38.7. What are the benefits of public speaking?

When a person successfully **delivers a good speech**, it gives a **sense of self-worthiness**. A positive response from the audience can help a person feel more confident. Thus, it can bring about a lot of improvement in one's overall personality. Last but not least, the art of public speaking improves relationships. Once a person develops good public speaking skills, a marked improvement can be seen in his interpersonal skills **which in turn**, will help him **maintain a healthy relationship** with his friends and family. Even in one's professional life, an effective interaction with one's [boss, clients or subordinates can help a person Enhance the possibility of advancement in his chosen profession.

38.8. Do you think college or high school should ask some celebrities to communicate with the students?

If you ask me, I would frankly say that there should be times when public figures are invited to speak in front of students in the schools. What I'm trying to say is that via their **inspirational speeches**, the youths can **change their frame of mind** for the simple reason that they are pretty impressionable by their idols. I recall a time when Mr.X, a celebrated top figure in my country, volunteered to **give a brief lecture** at my university. Hundreds of students **turned out** to see him and moved by the stories that he shared.

39. Describe a big company you are interested in

In the vicinity of where I'm living, there are **a whole lot of large-sized companies**, both **private-owned or state-owned** ones, but the only one that **popped into my mind** now is the enterprise called X.

The company's premises are **within walking distance from** my house, so I pass it by pretty frequently when **I pay a visit to** my uncle every Sunday. **When it comes to** its activities, the company **manufactures garment for export** so it employs thousands of workers in the neighborhood. Anything **ranging from** cloth, underwear or jackets is the **main product lines** of the company.

What strikes me is when I was told that my uncle had been working there for some years before his retirement. So, he is quite knowledgeable about it and always **takes great pride in** his time working there. "The work environment is **second to none**, every month I do get some free underwear", he **said jokingly**. And the final interesting point is I am planning to apply for some positions in that company next year.

QUESTION PART 3

39.1. What are the differences between big companies and small companies?

There are many noteworthy things to notice between large and small companies. First thing first, the scale and structure can be considerably distinct. While large corporates operate with various departments and hundreds of employees, small companies don't have that scale and **hierarchy**, which can be seen clearly in startups' structure. In startups and small companies, one person can take on various positions and their work arrangements can be fairly flexible. For instance, you can be a founder as well as finance director and sometimes when the company is running low on **manpower**, you can also jump in to help with designing.

Hierarchy (noun) a series of things arranged according to their importance

Manpower (noun) all the people who are available to do a particular job or to work in a particular place

39.2. Are there many big companies in your country?

Absolutely. Some of them are **state-owned**, some are incorporated between the state and foreign companies, and others are multinational companies. These corporates are doing business in various sectors including FMCG, real estates, and electronics **and so on**. Prominent brands that are widely known to customers and users are Unilever, P&G, Sam Sung and many more.

State-owned (adj) belonging to, funded by, and controlled by the government.

And so on (phrase) etc; continuing in the same way

39.3. What are the good things about working for a big company?

One of the biggest advantages when working for those **recognized brand names** is if you apply for another job at a different company, it will probably a plus point when a big name is written on your employee record. Recruiters would regard you with certain interest and respect if you've already proven your ability at some **high-profile** corporate. Furthermore, high reputation comes with high demand in employees as well as **reputable** training processes. Therefore, once you are an employee, there will be so much things to learn and many opportunities to develop yourself, both professionally and personally.

High profile (noun) a position attracting much attention and publicity

Reputable (noun) generally considered to be honest and reliable

39.4. How can a small company grow big?

I guess it would have to go through various stages as any big corporate does before reaching that level. There are many ways to **scale up** a company and depending on what industries of the business, people prefer different **tactics**. Traditionally, it could be a **merger and acquisition** in which a company can expand their scale, and market shares. Today, a small company could **go public** on stock markets to sell it shares. Take many startups for instance. This digital era can be seen as a breeding ground for startups to **proliferate**, especially in technology and innovation. The usual road many startups take to grow bigger is to attract investors via many funding rounds or attending **pitch competition** to get money and reputation. Then, after they reach a certain

level, they are ready to exit, which is where entrepreneurs become rich when startups going public or being **acquired** by some big company.

Scale up (phrasal verb) to make something larger in size, amount etc than it used to be

Tactic (noun) A plan or action for achieving a goal; a maneuver

Go public (phrase) the act or process of a company selling stock in itself when it moves from private ownership to public trade.

Proliferate (verb) to increase or spread at a rapid rate

Merger and acquisition (phrase) the buying, selling, dividing and combining of different companies and similar entities that can help an enterprise grow rapidly in its sector or location of origin

Pitch competition (phrase) seminars created for entrepreneurs with new business ideas who are in need of seed money

39.5. Should big companies donate more to charities?

Undoubtedly. As a part of **corporate social responsibilities**, **profitable** companies should be encouraged to **contribute** more to social development as well as human well-beings. Such activities not only greatly benefit the community but also **enhance** the company's image and values. Some common ways to join hands in **charitable** acts that big companies can consider are sponsoring for several events about social and environmental issues, raising awareness of gender equality or the importance of education and so on. Additionally, these **humanitarian aids** might also help bonding employees through meaningful charity trips.

Corporate social responsibilities (phrase) the belief that a company should consider the social and environmental effects of its activities on its employees and the community around it

39.6. Should big companies be punished more seriously if they break the law?

Since large corporates have larger budgets and a whole legal department, they should know better than **contravening** the law. As a result, should any **illegitimate** act be conducted, such companies need to receive strict

punishments, either financially or with business-related fines. There might be possibilities that employees of these companies will be badly affected by the fines imposed, therefore, it's worth carrying out in-depth investigations to **hold the right people accountable for the misconducts.**

Contravene (verb) to do something that is not allowed by a rule, law, or agreement

Illegitimate (adj) not allowed by the rules or laws; illegal

40. Describe a kind of weather you like

- *What kind of weather it is*
- *What you usually do during this weather*
- *How this weather affects your mood*
- *Why you like this type of weather*

Sample 1

My favorite pattern of weather is a warm day full of sunlight, which is **typical of** the summer, and I can't wait till it starts. Yes, it sometimes gets **scorching hot and sultry**. But I don't care. At least I don't have to fight with **bulky overcoats** or **down jackets**.

Summery days mean blue sky, gentle **breeze**, white beaches, and green trees. I love the warmth, the plenty of sunshine it brings and the sun tanned people. On those days, girls wear cute skirts and lovely **sun bonnets**. All the beautiful colors **go around, capturing our attention** and being so **eye-pleasing**. And you can **feel the longing** to go outdoors and experience an adventure.

It is the ice cream time as well as of a variety of fruits, such as peaches, strawberries and watermelons. I love those after going swimming or hiking. Plus, it is also a time of great relaxation. You'll always **marvel at** how much fun and entertainment can be **squeezed into** sunny days. There is the time of rest, swimming, surfing, picnics, fishing and boating. There is always

something going on and there are always people enjoying nature. I love this type of weather because it is linked to most of my best memories and it never fails to **trigger my passion** in life.

Vocabulary

Typical of (phrase) like most people or things of the same type

Schorching hot (phrase) extremely hot

Sultry (adj) sultry weather is unpleasant because the air is hot and slightly wet

Bulky (adj) big and thick

Overcoat (noun) a long warm coat that you wear in cold weather

Down jacket (noun) a warm jacket filled with the soft feathers of a duck or a goose

Breeze (adj) a light wind

Sun bonnet (noun) a cotton hat for babies that protects the baby's head and face from the sun

Eye-pleasing (adj) pleasing to the eye (visually)

Longing (noun) a strong feeling of wanting someone or something

Marvel at (verb) to show or feel surprise or admiration

Squeeze in/into (phrasal verb) to be able to do something, even though you do not have much time

Trigger (verb) to cause someone to have a particular feeling or memory

Sample 2

Oh, this is also my favorite topic, too. Well, I enjoy cold weather which is always such a rare event in my city, you know since our city is near the **equator**, so it's hot and **humid** during a year. Therefore, I always **look forward to** December when the weather is cool and a little bit cold with wind. It's my time; then during this weather, I usually prefer lying on the bench in my garden, watching the sky and **sipping** my hot coffee with **joy** and pleasure. As I can do what I can't in the dry season, so I'm always like **on cloud nine** whenever this cold comes. I enjoy doing all the things under this kind of weather, especially with my mother, such as planting the trees, looking

at the sky and going out without having to wear any jackets. I think I never **get bored with** the cold weather due to the fact that it's very comfortable to work and study. Besides, when this type of weather **turns up**, it means that an interesting **series** of holidays may **come around** soon like Christmas and New Year, which are the time for family and for you.

Vocabulary

- **equator** [n] an imaginary line drawn around the middle of the Earth an equal distance from the North Pole and the South Pole
- **humid** [a] (of air and weather conditions) containing extremely small drops of water in the air
- **look forward to** [phrasal verb] to feel pleased and excited about something that is going to happen
- **sip** [v] to drink, taking only a very small amount at a time
- **on cloud nine** [idiom] to be extremely happy and excited
- **be/get bored with** [phrase] feel tired and unhappy because something is not interesting or because you have nothing to do
- **turn up** (somewhere) [phrasal verb] to arrive or appear somewhere, usually unexpectedly or in a way that was not planned
- **series** [n] a number of similar or related events or things, one following another
- **come around** [phrasal verb] If an event that happens regularly comes round/around, it happens at its usual time

SPEAKING PART 3

40.1. What's the difference between 'season' and 'weather'?

Well the difference is basically that seasons are a time of the year, whereas weather refers **to atmospheric conditions** such as wind, rain, snow and sun. So it's a pretty big difference.

40.2. In general, do you think people prefer to live in very hot places or very cold places?

That's a good question, and I'm not all that sure, but I suppose most people probably prefer to live in very hot places, because for example, if you compare the number of people living in the far north of the country, where it gets extremely cold, to the southernmost part of the country, where it gets **blazing hot**, a lot more people live down south, at least **as far as I know** anyway. So I think this **kind of** shows that most people would rather choose a very hot place to live in **as opposed to** a cold place.

Blazing hot (phrase) very hot

Kind of (informal) rather, to some extent (often expressing vagueness or used as a meaningless filter)

As opposed to (phrase) in comparison with; instead of

40.3. In the future, what do you think will be some of the effects of global warming?

Well, from what I've seen and read, I think one of the likely effects will be a rise in sea-levels, due to **the melting of the polar ice caps**. Although I have no idea of how much they will actually rise - hopefully not a lot! So that's one thing, and as well as this, I think what will also happen is that more rivers and lakes will dry up as a result of global warming, and this has already started happening in many parts of the world. So unfortunately, it looks like the effects will all be pretty adverse.

40.4. What do people do on rainy days and sunny days?

Actually it depends greatly on people's interests. However, generally speaking, people would choose to stay at home and enjoy a good movie if it's **raining cats and dogs** outside. **On the contrary**, they tend to ask their friends and organize a small camping trip or go out and participate in some outdoor activities if there is plenty of sunshine out there.

Rain cats and dogs (idiom) rain heavily

On the contrary (phrase) used for emphasizing that something is true, even though it is the opposite of something that has been said

40.5. Has climate change affected your country?

Yes, it has. Recently people have been going through **erratic weather patterns** over the last few decades. There are **infrequent heatwaves** and **unpredictable floods**, which have caused a great deal of damage to people in the central areas of the country. Besides, **global warming** is **having a detrimental influence on** my country as well. The temperature is getting higher thus decreasing the **quality of lives** of many people, especially those living in the South as it's sometimes **scorching hot** that all people want to do is to stay home and **turn on the air-conditioner**.

Erratic (adj) not even or regular, unpredictable

Cause/Do damage to something (phrase) have a detrimental effect on

Scorching hot (phrase) very hot

41. Describe a polite person you met

You should say:

- *who this person is*
- *how you know this person*
- *why you think this person is polite*

Sample 1

Courtesy seems to be one of the most basic **social etiquettes** that anyone should master and fully apply in their daily **interaction** with others. If you ask me who I am most impressed by their manners, I reckon that it would be my supervisor – Mrs. White – who I have been working with for the last 4 months.

Mrs. White is my team leader and the one I directly report to. And whoever has worked with her appreciates her **can-do attitude**, leadership, kindness as well as polite behavior which is shown in even the smallest deeds. For example, although I was just an intern when starting working on a project led by Mrs. White, she had never ignored me but always encouraged me to speak up and share my ideas, which made me feel more involved and

acknowledged. When she spends time with you, she's actually with you. By this I mean you have her **undivided** attention. Unlike those who fake enthusiasm when talking to people, Mrs. White is really concerned about what's happening not only in the office but things that trouble her colleagues if they're willing to share, a **virtue** which is hard to find in this **materialistic** life. Plus, you would never be offended by her since no matter how bad the situation might get, she always chooses her words carefully rather than attacking her **subordinates** with inappropriate languages. A quintessentially lady in blood.

Vocabulary

Courtesy (n): polite behaviour that shows respect for other people

Etiquette (n): the customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession or group

Interaction (n): the act of communicating with somebody, especially while you work, play or spend time with them

Can-do (a): having a willingness to tackle a job and get it done

Acknowledged (a): recognized as being good or important

Undivided (a): total; complete; not divided

Virtue (n): behaviour or attitudes that show high moral standards

Materialistic (a): caring more about money and possessions than anything else

Subordinate (n): a person who has a position with less authority and power than somebody else in an organization

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

41.1. Are people more polite with non-family members than they are with their parents?

I cannot tell for sure but that's usually the case, especially with some of the youngsters nowadays, they even show more respect to others than their own parents, which seems like an act of **hypocrisy** to me. Fortunately, those are just minority in the society full of **decent** people. Sometimes, you may have a

feeling that people behave to strangers in more polite manners than their own people, which can be because they don't want to be **misunderstood** or **cast judgement on** easily if they act carelessly during their short interaction.

Hypocrisy (n): behaviour in which somebody pretends to have moral standards or opinions that they do not actually have

Decent (a): honest and fair; treating people with respect

Misunderstand (v): to fail to understand somebody/something correctly

Cast judgement on: to judge

41.2. Are people today as polite as people were in the past?

Compared to the old times, I believe our **ancestors** were far more **considerate** in terms of social **etiquettes** and customs. Although we still have our set of rules and taboos about how to interact and behave in proper manners, the sophistication of such behaviors has been **drastically simplified**. For instance, in the past, when greeting someone, particularly the other gender, people used to bend their knees and bow their heads, which has been replaced by a friendly handshake or swift greeting kisses on both cheeks in modern culture.

Ancestor (n): a person related to you who lived a long time ago

Considerate (a): always thinking of other people's wishes and feelings; careful not to hurt or upset others

Sophistication (n): the quality of being sophisticated; complication

Drastically (adv): in an extreme way that has a sudden, serious or violent effect on something

Simplify (v): to make something easier to do or understand

Do you think politeness is different in different countries and parts of the world?

I suppose there's little doubt about that. Every part of the world has its own culture and unique way to **express** their respect and politeness towards others. I've recently run through an article about how people in Japan treat their **senior citizens**. The picture of an old lady standing in a subway while other young men sitting nearby **caught me by surprise**. It was only after

reading the article did I understand that Japanese elders would get **offended** if the youngsters give them their seats because it makes them feel older and useless. However, if any **adolescence** in my country do the same, he will be considered **disrespectful** or **uneducated**.

Express (v): to show or make known a feeling, an opinion, etc. by words, looks or actions

Senior citizen (n) an elderly person, especially one who is retired and living on a pension

Catch someone by surprise: to surprise someone with something unexpected

Offend (v): to make somebody feel upset because of something you say or do that is rude or embarrassing

Adolescence (n): the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult

Disrespectful (a): showing a lack of respect for somebody/something

Uneducated (a): having had little or no formal education at a school; showing a lack of education

41.3. Why is it important to show respect to others?

Being acknowledged and respected is one of the most basic needs of **human nature**. People want to feel that they matter and so do their opinions, which is why to build and maintain a healthy relationship, you have to show them respect. Respect can be understood simply as politeness. Acknowledge their presence by saying “hello”, express your **gratitude** by saying “thank you” are some of the smallest deeds anybody can do to **communicate** their **appreciation**.

Human nature (n): the general psychological characteristics, feelings, and behavioral traits of humankind, regarded as shared by all humans.

Gratitude (n): the feeling of being grateful and wanting to express your thanks

Communicate (v): to make your ideas, feelings, thoughts, etc. known to other people so that they understand them

Appreciation (n): the feeling of being grateful for something

41.4. How do people show politeness in your country?

Just like other parts of the world, we practice some standard manners to show **courtesy**. When first **encounter** someone, we do proper introduction as well as handshake to catch each other's name and go on with our conversation. During our exchange, we try to maintain **eye-contact** and **pay undivided attention** to the other person to let them know they're being heard. And most importantly, we keep a genuine smile **lingering** on our faces to make people feel welcomed and relaxed, otherwise, things might get awkward.

Courtesy (n): polite behaviour that shows respect for other people

Encounter (v): to meet somebody, or discover or experience something, especially somebody/something new, unusual or unexpected

Eye-contact (n): the act of looking directly into one another's eyes

Linger (v): to continue to exist for longer than expected

41.5. Are there any differences between urban and rural people concerning politeness?

People living in different parts of the country usually act **accordingly** to their local customs and their concept of politeness, as a result, varies, too. Those who live in rural areas tend to be more friendly, **outspoken** and **straightforward**, which is why they often find themselves in awkward situations when **conversing** with city people. If anyone who isn't familiar with their relatively **explicit** style of talking, he will probably think they're impolite but they just do it **out of good will**. In contrast, urban residents always weigh their words before speaking to avoid **conflicts** and misunderstandings.

Accordingly (adv): in a way that is appropriate to what has been done or said in a particular situation

Outspoken (a): saying exactly what you think, even if this shocks or offends people

Straightforward (a): honest and open; not trying to trick somebody or hide something

Converse (v): to have a conversation with somebody

Explicit (a): saying something clearly, exactly and openly

Goodwill (n): friendly, helpful, or cooperative feelings or attitude

Conflict (n): a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument

41.5. How do you deal with impolite people?

To my mind, when someone is acting impolitely, it's best that we should remind them of their misbehavior so that they have time to modify it in a timely manner. If they refuse to listen to our **constructive advice**, we can **raise our voice** to show our disagreement or even teach them some moral lessons at that moment. Having said this, it would be a nightmare if adults misbehave, in which cases, I guess it would be most reasonable to stay away from them, or (ask the favor of the elderly so as to help them rectify their bad **code of conduct**).

41.6. What kinds of behavior are not polite?

I'm of the opinion that it depends on the age groups. As for children or teenagers, disobeying their parents or not listening to **constructive advice** from surrounding people can be seen as a misbehavior. All I'm saying is that their ego is too big and so reluctant to correct their way of behaving in public places. One instance is that a teenager refuses to **refrain from** smoking in parks, even if told by adults or older people around. As for the adults, some tend to lack education, and this is hard to expect any polite acts from them. Such people can **resort to swearwords**, spit in the streets recklessly which often **causes a big nuisance** to others.

42. Describe a time you were not allowed to use your mobile phone

You should say:

- *what you did*

- *when it was*
- *where it was*
- *why you were not allowed to use a mobile phone*

One of the most **controversial** issues in my high school when I was a senior was the “No-cellphone-allowed” rule under any circumstances. It has been five years when the rule first **came into force** and until now, the majority of students have still been **demonstrating against** it and personally, I believe the board of the school should reconsider their decision.

During my time, cellphone was not as popular as they are today mainly because of their **exorbitant** prices; therefore, only those with money were able to afford them. I, on the other hand, still managed to get one since my house was extremely far from my school and my parents wanted me to be able to contact them in case of emergency. However, considering its negative impacts on students’ performance in school, our principal decided to have it banned on our campus. She was convinced that such device continuously **distracted** students during class, making them lose their focus and accordingly, **discouraging** their learning spirit. Unfortunately, reality wasn’t far from her **assumption**. Take my class for instance, a few classmates of mine who owned a mobile phone could hardly **pay full attention** as they were constantly checking their phones for messages and the like. As a result, our teachers found it **worrisome** and **disturbing** when students using phones in their class and we ended up not being able to bring cellphones to school at all. If anyone needed to call their parents, they were allowed to use the telephone in a supervisor’s room anytime.

Vocabulary

Controversial (a): causing a lot of angry public discussion and disagreement

Come into force: to become valid, effective, or operable

Demonstrate (+against): to take part in a public meeting or march, usually as a protest or to show support for something

Exorbitant (a): (of a price) much too high

Distract (v): to take somebody's attention away from what they are trying to do

Discourage (v): to make somebody feel less confident or enthusiastic about doing something

Assumption (n): a belief or feeling that something is true or that something will happen, although there is no proof

Worrisome (a): that makes you worry

Disturbing (a): making you feel anxious and upset or shocked

QUESTION FOR PART 3

42.1. Do young and old people use phones in the same way?

There's a **distinct discrepancy** about how youngsters and the elders use their cellphones in term of purposes and **frequency**. It is obvious that mobile phones are **indispensable** hi-tech **gadgets** for the majority of young generation. They attach to their phones every second for not only calling and texting but other usages. This is because smartphones nowadays are extremely helpful in one's personal life: taking photos, setting up meeting, recording and so on. However, the old generation don't find cellphones that necessary as they often use them for calling anyway.

Distinct (a): easily or clearly heard, seen, felt, etc.

Discrepancy (n): a difference between two or more things

Frequency (n): the rate at which something happens or is repeated

Indispensable (a): too important to be without

Gadget (n): a small tool or device that does something useful

42.2. What are the differences between writing a letter and writing a text message on a cell phone?

Well, those are two completely different concepts, I believe. Producing a formal or semi-formal piece of writing like letter **requires** certain amount of time and effort. You have to consider the language as well as **punctuation** to make your message clear and decent enough for receivers to read. People often assess a person through official papers like letters. Text messages, on the other

hand, are usually exchanged among **well-acquainted** people or for **swift** response, therefore, people don't **place emphasis on** grammar or vocab errors as long as they can understand the main point.

Require (v): to need something; to depend on somebody/something

Punctuation (n): the marks used in writing that divide sentences and phrases; the system of using these marks

Well-acquainted (a): having a good knowledge or understanding of someone or something

Swift (a): happening or done quickly and immediately; doing something quickly

Place/ put emphasis on: emphasize

42.3. Many people think mobile phones can be annoying at times.

Can you give any examples of that?

Honestly, I am one of those people who find mobile phones **irritating** sometimes. I have been in many situations where I didn't **appreciate** the presence of this hi-tech device. One of the things I hate most is people keep checking their phones during their conversation with others and many of my clients have done the same. I felt a little **offended** since that person didn't give me his full attention and sometimes got lost for a few minutes to answer his calls. Another example you may have experienced is somebody's phone rings off in the middle of the meeting, which is unprofessional and **disturbing** at the same time.

Irritating (a): annoying, especially because of something somebody continuously does or something that continuously happens

Appreciate (v): to be grateful for something that somebody has done; to welcome something

Offend (v): to make somebody feel upset because of something you say or do that is rude or embarrassing

Disturbing (a): making you feel anxious and upset or shocked

42.4. Do you prefer face-to-face conversations or conversations by phone?

I prefer **face-to-face conversations** because I think it's more personal when I talk in this way. Nowadays, the telephone is getting more and more popular. Sometimes, people would spend hours on their phones but neglect the people who live with them. I think it's not a good phenomenon. We should treasure face-to-face talking opportunities and spend more time with our family members.

42.5. Do you think cell phones ever cause problems for people?

Yes, of course. Some children bring cell phones to school and it really distracts them from studies. Now I know a lot of schools have strict rules to forbid students to bring cell phones to school. We also know the radiation problems of cell phone. Although we don't know exactly how serious it might be, it still makes us feel uncomfortable if we're on the phone for a long time.

42.5. Do you think people should turn their cell phones off (or turn them to "silent ringing") when they are in a cinema or similar places?

Absolutely. It is absolutely one of the rudest things for people to talk on their cell phones near others because every word out of their mouth goes right into our ears. If this happens in the cinema, it'll almost be impossible for us to appreciate the films and we have to be forced to listen to a conversation that we're not interested in. I think the cinemas and movie production companies really should spend some time putting together the announcements about turning the cell phone ringer off so that we can enjoy the films better.

42.6. What's the disadvantage of communicating through the phone?

There're some disadvantages of talking on the phone. When we use the phone, we usually can't see each other's facial expressions, so we might have misunderstandings in phone conversations. Also, cell phones have radiation problems and it's not good for our health if we talk on the phone for a very long time. One more thing is that when we talk on the phone, we're not

actually facing other people, so if there are other distractions, we might be distracted easily compared to face to face conversations.

42.7. What're the advantages and disadvantages of the cell phone?

The cell phone is one of the biggest inventions in this modern world. Because of the cell phone, we can communicate with others when we don't have the opportunities to talk to them face to face. We can chat with friends and family members who live far away from us and when we have emergencies, we can always press the buttons to call for help. However, there're also some disadvantages. As we all know, radiation problem of the cell phone is serious. Also, when we use cell phones, we literally don't have any privacy because people can find us no matter where we are.

43. Describe a family member who you are proud of/ Describe an influential family member

Well the family member that first **comes to my mind** is my mom. I'm not sure about others' but for me, I become closer to my mom as I grow up.

The first thing of my mom that I'm proud of is her beautiful appearance. I was quite surprised when I took a look at the photos when she was at her 20s. Her beauty is traditional and Asian with **straight-edged** nose, round brown eyes, thin lips and **straight long black** hair. She's not very tall yet she is slim and white. In addition, she has a soft-but-firm voice, which reminds me of the news reporters on TV. Although she's getting older and **aging** can be seen clearly, I must say her beauty remains the first thing that not only me but the whole family can be proud of.

The next thing I must highlight is her personalities. My mom is a strict and thoughtful person when it comes to educating her children. She tries her best to become a good role model that me and my younger brother could **look up to**. We learned cooking, doing household chores and **taking care of** ourselves, which not only would us be able to live independently in the future,

but we also can help her after her long day at work. What makes me **adore** my mom more is that she is also a knowledgeable person. Her general knowledge amazes us all the time. Besides, how she manages her work and her daily life is such a value of maturation that I desire.

During the time I studied abroad, the one I shared a lot of ups and downs with is her. I hope that as I grow up, I could become as mature as her.

Vocabulary

To adore SO (v): to give SO a lot of love and respect

To admire/look up to SO (v): to respect and approve SO's behaviors

To take care of [SO/Sth]/look after SO (v): to protect someone or something and provide the things that that person or thing needs

Aging (n): visual signs of getting older

Grammar

***Order of adjectives**

Adjectives usually come in this order:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
General opinion (describing all kinds of nouns) Ex: good, bad, lovely, beautiful, awful,...)	Specific opinion (describing a particular kind of noun) Ex: Food- tasty/delicious Furniture, buildings- comfortable/uncomfortable	Size	Shape	Age	Colour	Nationality	Material

(Source: British Council [online])

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

43.1. In a typical family, who plays the leading role?

Well, the stereotype is that the father is the **breadwinner!** Of the family, the person who makes the decisions and **takes responsibility for** the whole family. This can be understandable because the father tends to occupy high positions in society while the mother tends to be housewife or only gets involved in some [trivial work like cleaning or babysitting. However, this is not really the case in modern society where freedom and equality is being **put a higher emphasis on.** Women are as successful as men and are no longer in charge of the **monotonous household chores** like they were in the past

43.2. In your country, what kinds of family members usually live together?

Well, **to the best of my knowledge,** despite the increasing popularity of **nuclear families,** extended ones still exist in our society. Usually both parents and one, two or three kids would **live** together **under the same roof.** In other cases, a grandmother or grandmother joins them to take care of the small kids while the parents are away for work, for example. Other less common situations are many generations reside in the same house, usually a multi-story house. Families like these often consist of an uncle, aunt, and their families and so on. Typically, many problems occur when a great many members are in a similar place

43.3. Do young and middle-age people live with old people?

Frankly speaking, unlike in Western countries where it is common to send older grandparents to nursing homes, most people are bound by their duty, which means that they should or, in another sense, have to **pay back** what their parents have given them. As a consequence, the young generations and **middle-aged** people tend to share the same house with older people. This can be beneficial since small children can receive special care from their grandparents, obtain invaluable hands-on experience and tend to develop a good code of conduct later on.

43.4. What would children do to make their parents proud?

I guess kids can have good performances at school and behave well to their teachers and the elders. Parents usually take a great pride in their kids if their children get a good score at school, or when others tell them that their kids are nice people. As well as this, I deem it a necessity if children help their parents out with mundane tasks ground the house like sweeping the floor, or washing the dishes.

44. Describe a favorite sports you watched/ a sport you like to watch.

You should say:

- *What it is*
- *When you watched it*
- *How you watch it*
- *And explain why you like watching it*

I'm a **live wire** and fond of various sporting activities, and **off the top of** my head, tennis would be amongst my most favorite ones, and it is also the sports I love watching most.

When I am **up to ears in** study, revising and reviewing for the exams, I often turn on the TV, **flick through** some channels and look for some tennis matches. They help me **let my hair down** a bit after a **nerve-racking** period of time at school. Usually, I am keen on watching how skillful the movements of the players are as this sport requires **agility** and **hand-eye coordination**. I often **hold my breath** watching the players exchanging the tennis ball and predict who the winner is.

I often watch with my **intimate** buddies, who have the same interest as me, and we often bet on the winner. I simply like watching this game for its

entertaining value. And as well as this, in real life, I often practice this sport, so watching it **hones my skills** in matches with my friends at school.

What are the most popular outdoor sports in your country?

There are a number of popular sporting activities which are held outside the house in my country, like volleyball, tennis and basketball. However, the kind of sports that attracts people of almost all ages is football. People from the young to the old not only watch football matches on TV, but also participate in this game actively and enthusiastically. It is no exaggerating but people will gather at a football field and enjoy a good match together whenever they find time.

Do people like to play indoor sports or outdoor sports?

It depends greatly on how old a person is really. To support my claim, small kids are likely to be into indoor games like indoor football or swimming whereas adults tend to derive more pleasure from outdoor sports activities such as football or volleyball. This is due to the fact that today parents are more protective of their children so they encourage them to take part in indoor sports to protect their children from bad injuries or serious accidents. On the other hand, adults would love the social interaction and team spirit from sports matches played outside the house, particularly after a stressful week of hard work.

What are the benefits for children to play outdoor games?

There's a number of benefits a child can obtain from taking part in games played outside the house. The first one is that playing games outdoors is a form of exercise that helps children to increase their physical fitness. By running around and kicking a ball in a match of football, for instance, the small kids can develop their muscle strength and flexibility. The second plus point is that small players can hone many skills and qualities through their participation in outdoor games. By interacting and socializing with their

teammates, they can be more active and have a chance to get to know not only their peers but also the surrounding environment. As a result, they have more coordination and cooperation skills. wanting to protect someone from criticism, hurt, danger, etc. because you like them very much:

45. Describe a time you need to arrive early

You should say:

- *When it was*
- *What time you arrived*
- *Why you need to arrive early*
- *How you felt*

I'm **by nature** not an **early bird**, but one occasion that I had to arrive early was the time I took my Japanese proficiency test.

The test was supposed to take place in the city center, which is 40 kilometers away from my home, and I **had no choice but** get up early to make it in time for the test. My house is in the suburb and unfortunately there was only one venue for the exam. As the exam mattered to me tremendously, I **hit the sack** early and woke up early the next morning, to breathe the fresh morning air and listening to the birds chirping on the trees. After having a proper breakfast, I took the earliest bus to the city, and it dropped me right before the school gate, where the test was to take place.

I **turned up** at the spot 30 minutes early, which gave me plenty of time reviewing and revising some questions I was unsure of. Also arriving early **boosted my confidence** that I would be able to pass the test **with flying colours**. After 2 months, I got my result, which was a pass and it was **well worth** the effort making earlier preparations for such an important test.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

What occasions should people arrive early?

Truth be told, on most informal occasions, it is acceptable to turn up later than usual for some minutes, for example, when you arrange for a drink with some of your intimate friends. Having said that, for formal occasions, including weddings, birthday parties or other important events like exams or medical check-ups, it is absolutely essential that you arrive at least some minutes before the event takes place. This is to show respect to the host, or helps you make sure that you won't miss certain opportunities.

Do you think it's women's privilege to be late in your country?

I can see why women are often tolerated when they show up at a venue later than the agreed time. The first reason is that women need to look gorgeous in others' eyes, and time is needed for doing make-up or picking the best dresses for a formal party. Secondly, it seems that no men can tell women off for their being late, as it's considered rude to complain to the opposite sex when you're trying to be a gentleman.

46. Describe a wedding that you have attended.

I am at the age when each of my friends started to **tie the knot** with their beloved ones, which reminds me how **grown up** we all are but at the same time is a true **blessing**. Weddings have always made me dreamy because you can feel that love is **in the air**. One of the most beautiful and **intimate** weddings I've ever attended was Anna's, my classmate in high school.

The Anna I knew from high school was a true **embodiment** of traditional women: **feminine**, **delicate**, caring and **wholeheartedly devoted** and I had no doubt her wedding would be the same the minute I received the invitation. It **came as no surprise** that the reception hall **was completed covered with** the pastel pink color, from many **bouquets** of roses, balloons, table cloths and other decorations. It should have looked like a 6-year-old

birthday party, **on the contrary**, that light and feminine color surprisingly created a delightful and **congenial** atmosphere for the wedding. There were not too many people at the wedding because the groom and bride wanted to **keep it simple**, yet intimate and meaningful, which I **couldn't agree more**. The ceremony was so emotional when the couple **took an oath** and exchanged wedding rings that I could have sworn I saw **tears shined in their eyes**. The whole ballroom **erupted in endless applause** and whistles when the groom **landed a passionate kiss on** his woman's lips as the pastor announced them as husband and wife – one of the most magnificent moments I've ever witnessed and Anna could easily be the most beautiful and happiest bride I've ever seen in a **glamorous baby pink gown** and **bohemian hairstyle**. I also met a couple of friends in high school which made me feel like we were **having a reunion** and it was great to know after all those years, we could still talk and share this special moment together.

Tie the knot (idiom) get married

Blessing (noun) something good that you feel very grateful or lucky to have

In the air (idiom) noticeable all around; becoming prevalent

Bouquet (noun) a collection of flowers, cut and tied together in an attractive way

Congenial (adj) pleasant, friendly, and enjoyable

Erupt (verb) suddenly explode with a lot of noise as people start laughing/shouting

QUESTION FOR PART 3

46.1. Do you often attend weddings?

Not really at the moment since I've recently graduated and most of my friends are at the same age as me. However, some has already married and I was also invited once or twice. As a romantic person, weddings always make me nervous and exciting at the same time since you can feel love is in the air.

46.2. How do you think of the perfect age for marriage?

I have had countless **debates** with my friends and we have different ideas regarding when is the ideal age to **get settled**. I, together with some girls,

agree that it should be above 30 for both men and women while others flatly contradict us by saying people should get married as soon as possible even though they have nothing. Some may find it too late to **tie a knot** at the age of 30 but I cannot see the point of living together with more bills to pay and more mouths to feed without having a career and stable income, which is one of the most common reason for separation among married couples.

Settled (adj) if you have a settled way of life, you stay permanently in one place or job or with one person

46.3. Do women prefer to be single or to be married?

Women nowadays have a more advanced mindset than they used to a few decades ago, which is why not so many left still bother about being single anymore. Instead, they enjoy their single lives and **pamper** themselves with great food and fine clothes. Modern women don't need a man to be her anchor anymore since they are independent and confident enough to take on the world herself. They go out and make money instead of staying at home knowing nothing but taking care of their kids and depending on their husband.

Pamper (verb) to look after someone very well, especially by making them feel very comfortable or by giving them nice things

46.8. Why has the divorce rate increased over time in modern life?

It's noteworthy that that divorce rate in modern life is far higher than they used to, which is not a positive trend to look forward for. Reasons for such separations vary depending on **irreconcilable** families' issues which could be financial problem, disagreement on how to raise their children or worse, infidelity.

Irreconcilable (adj) can't find a way to become friendly again after disagreement.

47. Describe a shop just opened in your hometown

You should say

- *where the shop is*
- *what items it sells*
- *how often you go there*
- *why you go there*

Sample 1

Well, I'm not a **shopaholic**, so there's no particular shop that has **made a special impression on** me. There's only one exception – that's a shop called ABC which was opened in my hometown 2 months ago.

The shop is located at one of the **prime** spots for **retailing**. It is located right beside my previous primary school, which is only 1km away from my house. I have to say that this shop **makes its mission to satisfy all customers' needs** anytime, anywhere. As well as **meeting the customers' demand** for necessary **daily goods** like other shops, it also supplies **fresh vegetables, fruit and meat of a high quality at reasonable prices**. These products have **clearly-marked sources of origin** and are **strictly controlled** under the general process of the entire system.

This shop is in a chain of retail shops under XYZ, which is recognized as one of the most dynamic and successful companies in my country, **well-positioned for international integration** and comparable to the best regional and global competitors. Therefore, I suppose there's no doubt about its quality. Actually, **quality assurance** is the most important benefit of shopping here. And the quality of service is excellent as well. To the best of my recollection, 2 weeks ago, when I came to buy some snacks, I met a **middle-aged** woman with her son there. She said to the staff that she only went **window shopping to pamper** her son, who always liked visiting supermarkets and shops to see things. The staff were very **welcoming** and gave her son a candy as a gift. I could see that her son was **over the moon**. That left me with a **lasting and positive impression about ABC**.

Vocabulary

- ✓ Shopaholic [noun]: a person who enjoys shopping very much and does it a lot
 - Eg: A self-confessed **shopaholic**, Diane loved looking for new clothes with her two daughters.
- ✓ Prime [adj]: main or most important
 - Eg: Though I'd like to know more about Spanish culture, this was not my **prime** motivation for doing the course.
- ✓ Retailing [noun]: the business of selling goods to the public
 - Eg: There are good career opportunities in **retailing** if you enjoy dealing with customers.
- ✓ Integration [noun]: the process of combining two or more things into one
 - Eg: One of the company's weaknesses is poor **integration** of business processes with information systems.
- ✓ Competitor [noun]: an organization that competes against another, especially in business.
 - Eg: The business is successful because it sells better-quality goods than its **competitors**.
- ✓ Window shopping [expression]: the activity of spending time looking at the goods on sale in shop windows without intending to buy any of them
 - Eg: The office workers go **window-shopping** in their lunch hour, looking for things to buy when they get paid.
- ✓ Pamper [verb]: to give someone special treatment, making that person as comfortable as possible and giving them whatever they want
 - Eg: Why not **pamper** yourself after a hard day with a hot bath scented with oils?
- ✓ Welcoming [adjective]: friendly to someone who is visiting or arriving
 - Eg: The hotel has a good reputation for being very **welcoming** to guests.
- ✓ Over the moon [idiom]: extremely happy

- Eg: Sarah was **over the moon** when she found out she'd got the job.
- ✓ Lasting [adjective]: continuing to exist or have an effect for a long time.
 - Eg: I formed many **lasting** friendships at university and I often visit many of these old friends.

Sample 2

Well, a new shop in my city? I think I would choose "ABC", which was just opened 2 months ago near my house. Though it's still new to the **citizens** in the area, a lot of people visit it all the weekends. This shop mainly focuses on a **variety** of **household appliances** which are a **necessity** for everyone. Therefore, it usually sells TV, washing machine, refrigerators and other cooking machine like ovens, cookers or stoves. Since the day it was opened, life in my **neighborhood** has been very joyful. People don't have to travel for a long way to buy TV or cookers anymore since there is a very big shop which offers them a lot of good electronic devices. Besides, this shop, which can **seat** up to 1000 people, is very spacious and modern with **well-trained** staff and good service. Hence, these are also some reasons why I enjoy this new shop a lot as there is no need to wasting time on travelling to a faraway place.

Vocabulary

- **citizen** [n] a person who is a member of a particular country and who has rights because of being born there or because of being given rights, or a person who lives in a particular town or city
- **variety** [n] many different types of things or people
- **household appliance** [phrase] a machine that is designed to do a particular thing in the home, such as preparing food, heating or cleaning
- **necessity** [n] something that you need, especially in order to live
- **neighborhood** [n] the area of a town that surrounds someone's home, or the people who live in this area
- **seat** [v] (of a building, room, table or vehicle) to have enough seats for

- **well-trained** [a] having the qualities that you connect with trained and skilled people, such as effectiveness, skill, organization and seriousness of manner

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

47.1. What type(s) of shop would you recommend a visitor to your country should go to? (Why?)

If travelers ever want to have an **authentic** and unforgettable experience during their journey, I would highly recommend they **pay a visit to** traditional markets or food stands on the street to have a taste of true street foods, which are **diverse** in types and flavors. Street vendors will also offer visitors a wide range of delicious dishes and true dining experience.

Vocabulary:

Authentic (adj) genuine

47.2. Do you ever buy anything on the internet?

I reckon that most of clothing items I have ever bought are from ABC, an online fashion shop where you can find basically everything you need to become a stylish lady. From sexy little black dresses for partying to formal blouses for day life at office, ABC won't **let you down**. Since **e-commerce** and online shopping has become a trend thanks to its convenience and **optimal** user experience, I no longer spend 30 minutes driving to any clothing shops and another 2 hours choosing and trying on everything. In fact, with only my laptop and a cup of coffee, I can easily **shop from home** with even more choices. Internet really works magic.

Vocabulary:

Let you down (phrasal verb) disappoint somebody

E-commerce (noun) the buying and selling of goods and services via the internet

Optimal (adj) best or most favorable

47.3. What do you think are the advantages of buying things on the internet?

Online shopping has been **prevalent** in a past few years for reasons. **First and foremost**, buying online is incredibly **time-saving**. Well, obviously, time is considered the most precious **asset** that everyone has but many have **taken it for granted**. Instead of spending hours driving to your favorite malls to get some new clothes of the latest collection, your problem can be solved with only Internet connections and, of course, your fine taste **in fashion**. No energy is needed, either. Secondly, you always have best deals when subscribing to any online stores, which can save you tons of money that you even notice. Some shops even offer exclusive promotions for loyal customers, therefore, get ready for special treats. Lastly, you can easily switch **from site to site** to have even more choices without moving anything but your fingers. How awesome is that.

Vocabulary:

Prevalent (adj) Predominant; powerful

First and foremost (phrase) most importantly

Taken it for granted (idiom) Fail to properly appreciate (someone or something)

47.4. Are there any disadvantages (or dangers) of buying on the internet? (What?)

Every cloud has a silver lightning. Online shopping, in particular and e-commerce in general are true advancement in modern world, however, their drawbacks couldn't be overlooked. It is widely known that there is no such thing as 100% nowadays, **cyber security** included. No less than once or twice have I heard about users' information has been leaked, which can cause a serious threat to customers who are using that company's products or services. Another concern should also be **taken into account** is overspending due to constant exposure to products of preference. By this I mean technology has advanced to the point that any shopping sites, especially social media, all have **algorithm** that can **track your shopping habits** and keep reminding you not to miss their latest items that might attract you. What a clever, yet annoying tool at the same time.

Vocabulary:

Every cloud has a silver lightning (idiom)

something good even in an unpleasant situation

Cyber security (phrase) the body of technologies, processes and practices designed to protect networks, computers, programs and data from attack, damage or unauthorized access

Take something into account (phrase) to consider something to be an important factor in some decision

Algorithm (noun) a process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations

47.5. Do you like window shopping? (Why?/Why not?)

I must say I am not **a big fan of window shopping** no matter how **shopaholic** I am. Window shopping can only **worsen my financial status** rather than helping. Admittedly, it **pleases your eyes** when looking at gorgeous clothing and fancy handbags, yet, it's too much a temptation that not anyone can resist. As a result, you **end up** being **drown in debt** just because the urge to become a trendy lady **gets a better hold of** you than your modest budget. Hence, as I know myself well enough to understand that would be my reaction towards anything that is pretty, I would rather stay home than window shopping.

Vocabulary:

A (big) fan of (phrase) an enthusiastic devotee or admirer of something or somebody

Window shopping (phrase) the activity of going to a store or website to look at goods rather than to buy anything

Shopaholic (noun) a person considered to be addicted to shopping

Get hold of (phrase) To gain control of

End up (phrasal verb) finish, result in

47.6. In your country, how has shopping changed in the past few decades?

Just like any other parts of the world, Singapore has experienced dramatic changes in customers' behavior **when it comes to** shopping. One of the striking features of shopping habits these days is people tend to buy things online and get them delivered to their houses, **regardless of** what kinds of items. It could be pizzas, clothing or kitchen appliances. Besides, international trade has afforded customers easy access to a wider range of products and services which are not only from domestic suppliers but foreign ones as well. Lots of items have been imported to meet the demand of users within the country, ranging from food and beverage, cosmetics, cars **and so on**.

Vocabulary:

When it comes to Ving (expression) as for something; speaking about something

Regardless of (conjunction) without considering something

And so on (phrase) et cetera (etc)

47.7. Do you think people spend too much time (or money) on shopping? (Why?/Why not?)

I can't tell **for sure** because the amount of time spent on shopping varies among different people. Nevertheless, thanks to the advent of Internet and online shopping, that amount might be relatively less than it used to be. Besides, people seem to be busier and their schedules get tighter with much more important tasks other than shopping itself. Therefore, I don't think shopping is people's priority or anything more than a necessary deed to **get on with** life.

Vocabulary:

Get on with (phrasal verb) to give your time to something and make progress with it

47.8. What kinds of people spend an excessive amount of time or money on shopping?

There is no doubt that people who spend an excessive amount of time or money on shopping are those with purchasing power and time to spare. In other words, they are of **high-income class** and love to **pamper**

themselves with qualified products and premium services. They, regardless of gender, are people with fine taste and know what they want. They can sacrifice hours just to choose a dress or suit, which can **cost a fortune** just to attend an opening party.

Vocabulary:

Pamper with (verb) to treat somebody/something with extreme or excessive care and attention

Cost a fortune (idiom) to cost a lot of money

48. Describe an interesting conversation you had with a stranger

You should say:

- *Who the person is*
- *What you talked about*
- *What kind of person he/she is*
- *Why the conversation was interesting*

I'm going to share with you the occasion on which I had a talk in Japanese with a stranger. It was on the street when I accidentally **bumped into** a complete stranger from Japan.

At first, there was nobody around except me and he **made an attempt** to approach me and said: "Can you show me what bus number to take to get to X street?" Well, you see, at the time I was a small guy and only could speak few words, **let alone** keep the conversation going. I was confused **as to** what he was **aiming at** but I didn't want to **let him down** so I asked him to repeat the question again. After twice, I seemed to guess his ideas but it was still **vague**. Fortunately, as we were standing at the bus station and I did hear the word "number" and "street's name" in his question, I hesitated **for a while** and finally gave my answer "Number 5". He thanked me for my directions,

without knowing that I was **not sure one hundred percent** myself. Anyway, I think he went the right way.

After the incident, I **made an arduous effort to brush up on** my Japanese speaking skills and now I'm convinced to say that I have little difficulty in **putting across my messages**.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

How do friends communicate with each other?

Thanks to the development of technology and the internet, buddies nowadays have a variety of ways to communicate and keep in touch with each other. For teenagers and young adults, they communicate mostly via social networking websites or online chatting programs like Yahoo or Skype. For the elderly, they prefer meeting and talking with each other in person. However, for both groups, cellphone; or to put it more precisely, smartphone seems to be the most commonplace communication method.

Do you think women like to chat more than men?

No, I don't think so. A research has shown that the number of words spoken by men and women daily is about the same. In fact, when you enter a bar or a night club, you can find groups of gentlemen gathering and gossiping for hours, and some are even wordier than their female peers. The key point that makes us believe that women are talkative is that they usually have a gossip at daytime and in front of the public, while men tend to gather in a private place and release their stresses by lengthy stories.

49. Describe a time when you received something free

You should say:

- *What it was*
- *When and where you got it*
- *Why you got it*
- *And explain how you felt about it*

I'm a fair person and would always like to **chip in** some money when a group of my friends go to somewhere to have a drink or something like that. Yet there was a time I was treated a special meal by my closest friend who had **secured a well-paid job**.

My friend X has been **job-hopping** for some time since he graduated from universities. So far he has worked in five different companies, and only last week did I hear from him that he finally **landed a dream job of his own**. To celebrate that occasion, he **asked me out for a sumptuous** meal in a restaurant near my house.

The meal consisted of 6 dishes and we **made up our mind** to enter a Korean restaurant coz it had been **quite a while** since we last ate Korean food. We had fried chicken, kimchi, tofu, mixed salads and the list goes on and on. After eating **to our heart's content**, we asked the waiter for the bill which amounted to USD 200. It was quite a big sum of money, but my friend refused to let me share the bill and **ended up** paying the bill himself.

I was a little embarrassed when he had to **run up** such a big bill, but he reassured me that it was nothing compared with the salary he would get monthly. I told him that I would repay this favor sometime in the future and rearrange to meet on a specified day.

50. Describe a person who solved a problem in a clever way

You should say:

- *who the person is*
- *when you meet the person*
- *where do you and explain*
- *why do you think the person is clever*

I'm often **poor at sorting out tricky problems** and often **ask a favor of others** when it comes to a **dilemma** I can't solve. Off the top of my head, one of the times, Adam - a close buddy of mine - is a very helpful person at school, and he recently **helped me out with my mathematic problem** that I had long been **struggling against for days**.

It was part of the assignment from my teacher who **has a tendency to challenge her students** in every aspect. She usually gives **tricky homework** and **expects her students to finish them off** when coming to class. I'm **no expert at Maths** and often **rely on others for help**. The Maths question is about **an equation**, a **lengthy** one that could **bewilder anyone at their first glance**.

I was so **desperate for the answer** to the question that I **burnt the midnight oil for two straight nights**, but fortunately **the answer was still out of my reach**. Not knowing what to do, I **gave Adam a ring** and **asked him out for a coffee to muse over the question**, and he agreed.

Eventually, we **had an encounter at a local coffee shop** and I **showed him the question**. Without much thought, he **kicked off offering detailed explanations** which reminded me of the fact that I had forgotten a very **important clue to solve the mystery**. I was **quickly on the ball**, and thanks to his **straightforward explanation**, it took me just minutes to **work out the correct answer** to that **seemingly tough maths question**.

I have to say that Adam **is a genius** and he grasps what it takes to **enlighten** others, especially with his **easy but effective approach** to any problems, not just in his studies but also real life.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Why some children are clever than others? Nature or nurture?

It is understandable **as to** why some kids are more gifted than others right from when they were born. They may **inherit good genes** from their parents who are often distinguished and intelligent ones, and science has proven this

fact already. Even so, the environment where the children are **brought up plays a significant role in** shaping the personality as well as the degree of intelligence of the kids. If their parents give their kids plenty of smart games to play from early on like solving puzzles or playing chess, the chances are that their kids will grow up being smart teenagers. **In a nutshell**, nature or nurture both **has its effect on** how clever a child is.

Do you think children are influenced by their parents?

Yes absolutely, parents are those **closest to** their kids and parents' words often **carry big weight on** their children. Besides, at this stage, children's **cognitive power** is being developed at a rapid rate and parents often know how to help their children by providing them with invaluable lessons for the kids, and giving them a whole lot of entertainment and educational games so that the kids can play and **cultivate their creativity** from an early age.

51. Describe an English lesson you have taken

You should say:

- *When it was*
- *What it was about*
- *What happen-ed*
- *And explain why you liked it*

Currently I'm taking a class in English about IELTS writing so as to prepare better for my upcoming exam. Last week my teacher lectured a lesson about the different types of essays we were going to encounter in the real IELTS exam, which **gave me an overall picture of** how the real tests look like. According to what I have been taught, there are no correct formats for every single IELTS topic, and the **crux** of the matter is the candidate has to answer all parts of the question and develop a full response to get the top score.

During the lesson, my teachers took certain examples of essays that followed certain memorized formats and achieved a very bad score because the candidate failed to understand what the question was about.

The lesson has taught me one thing, which is that if we just learn to deal with the exam in a forceful way, our efforts are less likely to **pay off**. Instead of memorizing all the magical tools to trick the examiners, it would be more well-advised to explore the language **for its own sake**. To be a good writer, the first necessary quality is reading extensively, about different domains to acquire vocabularies and imitate the natural style of native speakers. The lecture has **enlightened** me a lot, and I hope my writing skill will improve immensely.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

Do you like learn foreign language? Why?

If you ask me, I wouldn't hesitate but say that foreign languages are my big passion in life. So far I have learnt 3 languages which are Korean, Japanese and English. With knowledge and proficiency of a certain language, you won't have a hard time communicating with foreigners and instead can **get to know** much about their cultures and lifestyles. Another advantage worth mentioning is that **a grasp** of foreign languages helps you not to **get lost in** somewhere **off the beaten track** when travelling abroad.

Do you want to become a foreign language teacher in the future? Why?

Although I'm a **bookworm when it comes to** language acquisition, it would be virtually impossible for me to **get across** my ideas or instruct others something. This is simply due to the fact that you are supposed to be pretty keen on the teaching process and a truly competent teacher needs to be patient and meticulous. And unfortunately, such qualities are missing in me. Having said that, I can teach others but simply for pleasure, as I believe helping others out can be a good stuff to do.

52. Describe one of your favorite clothing.

You should say:

- *What is it looks like*
- *How did you get it*
- *Do you often dress it*
- *And explain why it is your favorite clothing,*

I'm **not a slave to** fashion and unfortunately, my wardrobe is not **packed with** clothes, **yet** if I have to talk about my favorite piece of clothing, I would be my leather jacket, which my intimate buddy gave me on my twenty-first birthday.

To give you a better **account** of the jacket. It's a fairly normal or regular leather jacket. The one unusual feature I suppose is that it has white stripes down the sleeves. It's also quite **well-worn** by now because I've had it sometime and I tend to wear at some formal occasions like weddings or ceremonies. In fact it's got quite a few little tears where it's caught on sharp objects. I still love it though and I don't mind at all that it looks rather second-hand.

I was given by my bestie, whom I have known for more than 10 years. The reason this jacket is so special for me is that he definitely knew my **taste** of clothes and gave me exactly what I needed. I still recalled that I was unsure about what to put on at my sister's wedding and there he came, gave me such a wonderful present.

I **took great delight** when receiving that item of clothing and used it immediately. At my sister's wedding, I got many **compliments** from my relatives and friends **on** how well the jacket suited me. Well, in a word, I'm so proud of my friends and deeply thanked him for such a piece of garment.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

What clothes or jewelry do you wear on special occasion?

I **pay much attention to** what to wear on special occasions. On formal occasions, I will wear formal clothes matched with a pearl necklace, because formal clothes can **show respect to** others. If there is need to be elegant , I will **get dressed up to the nines**. If I am going out for a birthday party, I like to wear some colorful clothes, because it can improve others' moods, or I may choose something special to wear to show my special taste, such as a pair of earrings in a different style. In a word, clothes should be selected according to different occasions. And it has to be appropriate and for the right reasons. And jewelry should match well with the dressing.

Where do people in your country buy clothes?

Actually, there is quite an array of places people can purchase their clothes. The most typical one is at the supermarket where clothes of all price ranges are **on display**. I reckon it absolutely **caters for** consumers' interest as they are able to pick whatever item of garment they like and try it on, ask their buddies' opinion **and so on**. Another place is at the market or alongside the streets. Clothes sold at these points are often of lower quality but at more reasonable prices, which is quite a popular choice among less **well-off** folks.