



Speaking part 1 question types and responses.

Speaking practice document.

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Dumaguete IELTS
Trevor Gordon

There are several types of questions in part 1 which you should learn to recognize.

- 1. List questions**
- 2. Past experience**
- 3. Comparisons**
- 4. Opinions**
- 5. Past and present comparisons.**
- 6. Like/dislike.**
- 7. Hypothetical questions**
- 8. Description questions.**
- 9. Frequency.**
- 10 Preference.**
- 11. Choice**
- 12. Quantity.**
- 13. Method.**

All of these questions are structured to get the answers the examiners are looking for. When the examiner asks you a question, they will be listening for your use of certain aspects of English.

1. List questions.

What are the most/least/best.....?

What are your favourite.....?

What do you like most about.....?

What types/kinds of....?

In what ways do you.....?

How many ways.....?

What clothes/sports/drinks/books/magazines....?

The examiner is looking for you to make a list. Not a long list, but a list of a few items, and explain one or two of them.

2. Past experience.

Did you....?

Have you ever.....?

When did you last...?

When was the last time you...?

Did your....?

When did you begin/start/first....?

Were (object) important to you when you were young/as a child...?

The examiner is looking for you to talk about a past experience, and to use the past tense correctly.

3. Past & Present comparisons.

Has (topic) changed much over the years?

Do you feel that (object) is more important now than when...?

Are (topic) better or worse than before...?

The examiner is looking for use of both the past tense, the present tense, and the use of comparative language.

4. Opinions.

Do you think...?

Should.....?

In your opinion..?

How do you feel about....?

How do you think you could...?

What suggestions would you make to....?

What would you say is/are.....?

All of these types of questions are asking for your opinion. Be versatile when answering. Do not say "I think..."

5. Comparisons in general.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of/to/in...?

What do older people do for (topic) compared to young people....?

What are the good and bad points of.....?

Do you wear/eat/play/listen to the same (topic) at different times of the day (morning/evening)?

"What are the advantages and disadvantages to owning a car?"

"There are equal numbers on both sides. On the plus side, there is the convenience of being to go wherever you want, whenever you want. In cold weather you can travel in warmth and comfort. On the minus side, there is the cost of running a car, and the depreciation".

"What do older people do in their leisure time compared to young people?"

"Young people and older people do completely different things. For a start young people are more active, so do more physical things, but older people like to do more mentally challenging activities like crosswords".

"What do you eat at different times of the day?"

"It depends on what I am doing. If I am working I eat a light breakfast of fruit, and in the evening I will have meat and vegetables. When I am in training, I eat more rice and potatoes throughout the day, for energy"

All of these questions are asking for you to use comparison language and present tense.

6. Like/Dislike

Do you like....? What do you like about....? Is there anything you dislike about...?

"Did you like school?"

I loved school. It was where all my friend were, and I looked forward to seeing them every day. I also was enthusiastic about studying, as I found most subjects really interesting"

"I loathed school. For me it was extremely boring and I could not wait to get home each day, and do the things I, wanted to do".

These are asking you to talk about what you like and dislike. For these types of questions the key is to expand the answers with information and examples. This also gives you the opportunity to use vocabulary well, by using adjective and adverbs to strengthen your answers.

7. Hypothetical questions.

If you could...? If you had the chance to....? What would you do if....?

These types of questions ask you to use a conditional tense. Because the situation is not real, we use 2nd conditional (grammar awareness course).

"If you could travel back in time, what time period would you go to?"

(This is impossible to do, so we use 'imaginary' language).

"That is a difficult question because I would like to go forward in time, but If I had to go back in time I would choose to go back to the Roman era, because I am a big fan of the movie 'Gladiator' I would want to see what it was really like back then"

(Examiner: "Do you have children?" Student: "No I don't)

"If you had a child, what places would you take him or her to?"

"I would definitely take him or her to different countries to experience new cultures and I would also take them to places with outdoor activities to ensure they have an appreciation of nature"

The examiner is looking use of the 2nd conditional tense and good use of tenses related to the situation (past/present).

8. Descriptions.

Describe.....? Can you describe....? How would you describe...?

Asking you to describe an object, experience, place, or similar thing.

"Describe your hometown"

"I haven't lived in my hometown for many years, as I now live in Manila. My hometown is small, quaint, peaceful, and historic. It has a lot of history, mixed with modern things such as malls, restaurants, all the well-known clothes stores and food chains. It is not too busy because it has a small population, and the traffic isn't a problem yet"

Learn adjectives for towns and cities, as this is a popular question in the test. When talking be generic and specific.(more on that later in the lesson). Good use of adjectives is important here.

9. Frequency.

How often do you.....? When do you usually...? Do you often....?

Asking for you to express how often something occurs.

"How often do you go to the cinema?"

"Because of my job, I rarely get a chance to go to the cinema. At most I go about once every 2 months".

"I go 2 to 3 times a month. I am a real movie buff"

For this, use adverbs of frequency or frequency expressions.

This is one of the things the examiner will be listening for.

10. Preference.

Which do you prefer.....or.....? What is your preference.....?

Do you prefer..... or.....? In which.....do you prefer...?

"Do you prefer public transportation or private?"

"I am a huge supporter of public transport, because it is effective in reducing traffic levels, and reducing pollution"

"Which do you prefer, to make a phone call or write an e-mail?"

"My preference is always to make a phone call. I think they are more personal than an e-mail".

Use ways to express preference, even without using the word 'prefer'

Use statements of support, or adverbs, or prefer in various forms (verb, noun, adjective).

11. Choice.

Which (topic).....? Which would you choose out of.....?

Which..... do you prefer?

"Which time of the day do you like the most?"

"I like early morning the most. It is so quiet and there aren't many people about".

"I am really into the evenings. I love people watching and I enjoy the noise and sounds all around me".

This often is used in tandem with 'prefer' so if you use 'prefer' in your answer this is good. Often this is also used with a 'superlative' (the most). Try to express your answer using a form which expresses most or least.

12. Quantity.

"How long have you lived in your house?"(time)

"I have been living in my house for 3 years".

"How many people are there in your family?"

"There are 3 people / there are 3 of us.... in my family. My parents and me"

How has other variations to it, but if it is followed by any of the words below, then the response will be to provide a quantity or unit.

How - many- much - ways- days- people - long - big - small - old etc., there are many varieties to this question but the answer is always quantity or units.

13. Method.

This is one of the other 'how' questions.

How do you ... How can we....? How did you....? How does the....?

How do you spend...?

"how do you get to school/work?"(method)

"We have a bus which stops right outside my school/office, so I use this. It is the most convenient"

"How did you meet your best friend/girlfriend/boyfriend?"(circumstances)

"By accident. She was waiting for her friends, and I was waiting for mine. We were in a shopping mall sitting next to each other and we just got talking".

"How do you feel when you listen to music?"(feelings/emotions)

"I feel many things depending on what type of music I am listening to. I love jazz which relaxes me. rock music energizes me, while blues makes me think".

When answering these types of questions try to explore you experience and knowledge about your life, and the things you know.

Using the Part 1 conversation PDF, practice identifying the types of questions. Also watch the video which deals with 'WH- questions, and how to answer them.

Enjoy practicing. Don't make it a chore!!