



## Test Format | Part 3 (*The Discussion*)

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- between 4 to 5 minutes
- the examiner will ask further questions which are connected to the topics in part 2
- this part is the opportunity to talk about more abstract issues and ideas

## Criteria

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Each of the four criteria counts equally. Around the beginning of Part 1, the examiner will write down a band score for each of the four criteria (*it means that the examiner already has an idea of what your band score more or less is*).

Then those numbers will be marked up or down during the test.

All the criteria count EQUALLY and are judged throughout all 3 parts of the speaking test.

The examiner then uses well defined criteria to assess your ability in the following areas:

Fluency and Coherence	Lexical Resource ( <i>Vocabulary</i> )
Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Pronunciation

At the end of the test, the interviewer calculates the average of the four scores and that number will represent your final speaking band score.

*example:*

Grammatical Range and Accuracy	7	
Lexical Resource ( <i>Vocabulary</i> )	7	
Pronunciation	6	= 24, which divided by 4 equals 6
Fluency and Coherence	4	Band Score 6

## Improving Band Score

### Fluency and Coherence

Mark Up for...	Mark Down for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ speaking naturally <i>(try copying the speed of your examiner)</i> but <b>ONLY</b> if the pronunciation is good</li> <li>+ expanding answers with relevant information/details and using correct tenses and connectors</li> <li>+ answering the questions directly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- long, awkward pauses</li> <li>- not answering the question completely/correctly</li> </ul>

### Lexical Resource (Vocabulary)

Mark Up for...	Mark Down for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ using a wide range of vocabulary</li> <li>+ using appropriate words</li> <li>+ correct usage of collocations and phrasal verbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using unfamiliar vocabulary words or using words incorrectly</li> <li>- always using common and simple vocabulary</li> </ul>

### Grammar

Mark Up for...	Mark Down for...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ knowing how to use the basic verb tenses well</li> <li>+ making complex sentences, using <u>conjunctions</u> and <u>connectors</u></li> <li>+ making complex structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inconsistent tenses</li> <li>- always using simple sentences</li> <li>- constructing complex sentences incorrectly</li> </ul>

**Pronunciation**

Mark Up for...

- + easy to understand pronunciation
- + speaking CLEARLY so that every word can be understood
- + proper intonation to emphasize a certain meaning or idea
- + basic word pronunciation
- + linked sounds and connected speech  
*(not pronounced sound for sound)*

Mark Down for...

- repeatedly mispronounced words
- very fast or very long answers  
*(poor pronunciation or no coherence)*

**NO NEED FOR "American" OR "British" ACCENT**

## REMINDERS

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- There are no 'right' answers to the questions asked; concentrate on how you give your answer.
- Practice answering the questions, but do not learn or memorize the answers.  
Examiners can tell if you have memorized your answers.
- Always try to explain what you mean, even if you can't find the specific word. Paraphrase.
- Always give Reasons, Effects, Comparisons, Supporting Examples, Experiences.
- Avoid always giving personal information and examples, this should be an abstract discussion.
- If the examiner asks a question that you don't understand, take control of the situation.  
Responding like this will show evidence of your communication skills.
  - ▶ If the examiner uses a word or phrase that you don't understand:  
*"Sorry but could you explain what you mean by ..."*  
*"I'm not familiar with that word/expression. Could you please explain what you mean?"*
  - ▶ If you didn't hear a part of the question:  
*"Excuse me, I didn't quite catch that. Could you say that again?"*  
*"I'm sorry, but would you mind repeating that?"*
  - ▶ If you want to clarify what the examiner asked:  
*"Do you mean ....."*  
*"When you say ....., do you mean/are you asking ....."?*
- Make sure you elaborate and give the necessary details.  
for example:  
*"One of my many hobbies is taking pictures. (Don't stop here! Add more details/information!)  
I find taking pictures fun and challenging. It is also a great way of keeping precious memories."*
- ALWAYS offer examples to help your explain a statement.  
for example:  
*"I need it for my studies. (Don't stop here! Add more details/information!) I've been offered  
a place at a university in New York to continue my studies on Business Management, but I need to prove my  
level of English is good enough."*

## Questions

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### Topic: HELPING OTHERS

1.) Why do you think some people like to help other people?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

2.) What are some of the ways people can help others in the community? Which is the most important?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

3.) Some people say that people help others in the community more now than they did in the past.  
Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**Topic: BENEFITS OF TRAVEL**

1.) What do you think people can learn from travelling to other countries? Why?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

2.) Can travel make a positive difference to the economy of a country? How?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

3.) Do you think a society can benefit if its members have experience of travelling to other countries?  
In what ways?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

Answers

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Topic: HELPING OTHERS

1.) Why do you think some people like to help other people?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences.*

**EXAMPLE:**

(REASON / EXAMPLE) *"Maybe because being able to help someone else it makes them feel good. It might be because they were once helped by somebody in the past and they would like to return the favor.*

(EFFECT / REASON) *People help other people for many different reasons. It's almost impossible to generalize, but I think that if a person can see that another person needs help it is almost a natural instinct to offer help if the person is able to. It's one of the foundations of many societies; those that can help, help those that can't fend for themselves."*

WORDS and PHRASES

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- |                          |  |                            |                         |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>almost</i>            | <i>instinct</i>                                  | <i>favor</i>               | <i>generalize</i>       |
| <i>maybe because...</i>  | <i>being able to...</i>                          | <i>might be because...</i> | <i>in their past</i>    |
| <i>would like to...</i>  | <i>different reasons almost impossible to...</i> |                            | <i>can see that...</i>  |
| <i>offer help</i>        | <i>many societies</i>                            | <i>makes them feel...</i>  | <i>someone else</i>     |
| <i>once helped by...</i> | <i>return the favor</i>                          | <i>I think that if...</i>  | <i>natural instinct</i> |
| <i>one of the...</i>     | <i>foundation</i>                                |                            |                         |

2.) What are some of the ways people can help others in the community? Which is the most important?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

(EXAMPLE) "One example might be when an adult or several adults form or take charge of a community group for young people. Maybe a sports team, club or other youth orientated organization.

(EXAMPLE) Neighbors can also help other people in their community by taking care of elderly people or maybe volunteering at centers which help other members of the community. Some people help out at food banks, charity shops and other places which provide services for those in need.

(EXAMPLE) Then there are community groups which protect the rights and interests of local communities, where people discuss issues which might affect their community and what could be done to encourage or discourage certain developments.

(OPINION / REASON) Personally, I think they are all important because they all affect many people, but in different ways. In general, they all have the same purpose, which is to make the community in question a better place to live in, which is always a good thing.."

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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<i>neighbors</i>	<i>adult</i>	<i>form</i>	<i>organization</i>	<i>centers</i>
<i>discuss</i>	<i>issue</i>	<i>personally</i>	<i>important</i>	<i>affect</i>
<i>one example</i>	<i>might be</i>	<i>several adults</i>	<i>take charge</i>	<i>community group</i>
<i>young people</i>	<i>by taking care of..</i>	<i>other members</i>	<i>help out</i>	<i>provide services for..</i>
<i>community group</i>	<i>might affect</i>	<i>same purpose</i>	<i>better place</i>	<i>good thing</i>
<i>youth orientated</i>	<i>elderly people</i>	<i>food bank</i>	<i>charity shop</i>	<i>in need</i>
<i>protect the rights</i>	<i>local community</i>	<i>certain development</i>	<i>different way</i>	<i>in general</i>
<i>in question</i>	<i>sports team club interest</i>	<i>encourage/discourage</i>	<i>volunteering</i>	

3.) Some people say that people help others in the community more now than they did in the past. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

(OPINION / REASON) *I don't know if that is true or not. It might be the case that there is more help available nowadays for more people who need it, but it is not always provided by individuals in the community.*

(OPINION / REASON) *Sometimes it is provided by government agencies, organizations or even charities. So I guess there might be more help given but it's not simply people in the community helping other people among themselves; it's a more structured help system than in the past.*

(OPINION / REASON) *In many places, the sense of community is less evolved than it was in the past due to the mobility of the workforce, and people in general. Often, once children have grown up and found work, they don't live in the same place as their parents and indeed their parents may even choose to move elsewhere when they retire. Social mobility has increased and this has affected the fabric of communities."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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- available*      *provide*      *sometimes*      *mobility*      *workforce*
- elsewhere*      *retire*      *increase*      *affect*      *organization*
- true or not*      *charity organization*      *not simply*      *than in the past*      *not always*
- less than*      *due to...*      *people in general grown up*      *may even*
- provided by government agency*      *might be more*      *more structured*      *help system*
- in many places*      *have grown up*      *choose to...*      *indeed*      *social mobility*
- sense of community often*      *fabric of community*      *might be the case*

Topic: BENEFITS OF TRAVEL

1.) What do you think people can learn from travelling to other countries? Why?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

(EXAMPLE / OPINION) *"The best thing is the experience of dealing with everything, from the planning, the actual travel and then dealing with people in a different country.*

(EXAMPLE / OPINION) *It's a life experience and an educational one to see how people do things in other parts of the world. The more varied your experience is, the better it is for you as an individual. That's why language skills have become so important nowadays.*

(EXAMPLE / OPINION) *Traveling to other countries teaches you to plan, prepare, adapt and think on your feet as well as solve problems on your own. It makes you more independent and resourceful. But most importantly, it gives you a better understanding of the world you live in."*

WORDS and PHRASES

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- appreciating today's*                      *individual*                      *plan*                      *prepare*
- best thing*                      *dealing with...*                      *from the ...*                      *and then...*                      *life experience*
- educational*                      *language skills*                      *solve problem*                      *on ... own*                      *experience of...*
- actual travel dealing with...*                      *in other parts of...*                      *global marketplace*                      *think on your feet*
- more independent*                      *but most importantly...*                      *better understanding*                      *live in*                      *teach*
- more varied*                      *adapt*

2.) Can travel make a positive difference to the economy of a country? How?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences.*

**EXAMPLE:**

**(OPINION / EFFECT)** *“Absolutely, there are many countries which rely on travel for tourism or business. In fact, in some countries, tourism is the main industry so without international travel their economies would probably be in trouble.”*

**(REASON / EXAMPLE)** *It's not just the travel, it's the whole range of services and jobs which support travel such as transport, accommodation, restaurants and so on.”*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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<i>absolutely</i>	<i>tourism</i>	<i>business</i>	<i>service</i>	<i>job</i>
<i>transport</i>	<i>travel</i>	<i>restaurant</i>	<i>support</i>	<i>accommodation</i>
<i>many/some countries</i>	<i>in fact</i>	<i>main industry</i>	<i>probably be</i>	<i>trouble</i>
<i>whole range of...</i>	<i>rely on...</i>	<i>international travel</i>	<i>it's not just...</i>	<i>and so on...</i>

3.) Do you think a society can benefit if its members have experience of travelling to other countries?  
In what ways?

Give your *opinion*: add *reasons, supporting examples, effects, comparisons, experiences*.

**EXAMPLE:**

**(EXAMPLE / EFFECT)** *"Yes, because when people travel they see other things which maybe are out of the norm in their own country and they will perhaps try to improve it by introducing the new ideas or ways of doing things which they have seen in other places.*

**(OPINION / REASON)** *All it takes is for someone to see something they like and then copy the idea in their own country. It might be as simple as a style of a cafe or a bar, or as complex as a transport system; but without having travelled and seen something different, progress would never be possible."*

**WORDS and PHRASES**

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<i>café</i>	<i>out of the norm</i>	<i>appreciate</i>	<i>perhaps</i>
<i>introducing</i>	<i>bar</i>	<i>improve</i>	<i>copy the...</i>
<i>try to...</i>	<i>new idea</i>	<i>way of doing things</i>	<i>all it takes...</i>
<i>as simple/complex as...</i>	<i>style of...</i>	<i>transport system</i>	<i>without having...</i>