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**Female Voice:** You are now listening to the IELTS Podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

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**Ben:** Recent IELTS Speaking questions. In this tutorial, we are going to look at some recent questions and then a few sample answers. And during the tutorial, I will break down some of my answers and I will explain some useful components or techniques that you can use. That I used in my own system that you can use in your answers.

So, hello there. My name is Ben Worthington and I've been doing these IELTS podcasts for about five years now more or less and as you probably know, I'm from England, but I left England to do my Erasmus which is like a student exchange and I did it in Spain which was amazing. Spain is a fantastic place. I love that country.

And I started teaching English there-- well, once I finished and first I was teaching kids and I was teaching adults and then I was teaching students and then I stumbled across IELTS and I was like oh, this is interesting and what made it interesting for me was that it's all results based.

That I could teach certain techniques and the students would improve their score. However, if I taught a different way, sometimes the students wouldn't improve.

So, having this feedback loop of what worked and what didn't work I could really start improving because as you know with IELTS, you get your grade and if my students weren't taking tests, I couldn't tell if they were improving or not. So, this is why I decided to specialize in the IELTS, but how did I get good at teaching IELTS?

Well, I basically set up IELTS Podcast to interview experts and then I took what they taught or what they shared, I tested it on my students and if it worked, I put it into my online course. If it didn't work, I left it and that's why I was able to build the course **Jump to Band 7 or It's Free**. So, have a look at that if you are struggling with the IELTS exam.

Let's have a look at some recent Part 1 questions. Now, we all know in the IELTS test it's three parts. Part 1 is the warm-up session, Part 2 the cue card session, and Part 3 is when it gets juicy we could say. Is when it starts to get a little bit more challenging. However, we're going to just focus on Part 1 and if you think Part 1 is too easy, fine. No worries. However, I would recommend you stay listening and you can use some useful techniques.

So, let's jump into it. These are recent Speaking Part 1 questions seen by our students and sent in to us and seen around the web as well. And just before we jump into this, remember Part 1 questions are to set the tone; are to get you relaxed. This is your time. This is your test. You've paid for this and the idea of Part 1 is to get you settled in because when you're settled in and relaxed that's when you're going to speak your best English.

If it was just a quick three-minute questions back and forth and that determined your IELTS Speaking, it wouldn't be that fair because you'd probably be nervous and you wouldn't give the most accurate or the most-- you wouldn't give an accurate show of your language abilities. So, this is why we have Part 1 to make the student a little bit more relaxed so that we can get a more truthful and accurate and fair idea of your speaking ability.

So, let's jump into it. Questions about accommodation. Do you live in a house or an apartment? Now immediately, I picture where I live and then this gives me a whole paragraph after paragraph after paragraph. It gives me a whole story to tell. I'm picturing the street entrance. I'm picturing the steps past the letterboxes then the lift. I'm picturing some of the people there and I can just start there.

So, here is the technique. Picture where you live and then even picture the journey if you can and you'll just have so much to speak about. Now, if your mind goes blank then again, use this technique and if you're still struggling, just start off slowly and then you can slowly pick up afterwards. So, an example of starting slowly would just be to repeat the question back in the answer form like a parrot, but don't worry. It's the first words of the test.

So, do you live in a house or an apartment? I live in a flat and there. I've got started. I've got rolling and from there, I can build on that. So, here would be my answer. I live in a flat. It's actually in the city center, so it can be a little bit noisy. I've lived there for about a year and I don't think it's that bad. We're probably going to stay there a little bit longer.

So, I've added my opinion. I've added the location. I mean as I said before, my mind was exploding with different ideas that I could say, but I just gave about three sentences. This is not Part 3 and I'm just going to develop-- I'm not even going to develop it. Just the shortest of answers and moving on to the next one.

What do you like about living there? Well, to be honest, it's pretty central and during the lockdown period, it was really quiet which I enjoyed, but now lockdown restrictions have been

relaxed and it's back to being noisy. However, I think what I like about it the most is that it's near the shops and the supermarkets.

There we go. I could feel myself answering the wrong question there talking about what I disliked. I gave a little anecdote. Also, I used a little filler which is well, to be honest... and that's perfectly okay. I just needed to collect my thoughts.

Next question. Which is your favorite room in your home and why? Well, I think now my favorite room in the house is probably the living room because I've made a little stoop-- I've made a little nook where I can put my bean bag in front of the heater, sit down with my book and read and it's really cozy.

There we go. Straightforward. I told a little story. Don't over complicate this. Just try and answer the question and then develop it a little bit. We are not robots. We're not going to say my favorite room is the bathroom because-- my favorite room is the bathroom. That's it. No. That's not the best answer. My favorite room in the home is probably-- and we can introduce an adverb there-- is probably the bathroom because I can take long hot showers which are great after a full day of playing football or running.

Again, just a straight answer and they're probably going to get a little bit more difficult-- not a little bit more difficult, but a little bit deeper as we go along. So, we start off with do you live in a house or in an apartment and then by the end, we have what sort of accommodation would you most like to live in. So, we're getting easier and then-- Sorry. We start off easy and it gets slightly more difficult.

Next ones. Questions about fashion or clothing. So, are clothes important to you? Well, to be honest, I've never really thought about it. However, I guess I'd say they are semi-important. I have a few favorite items of clothing, but I wouldn't say it's incredibly important.

There we go. Honest answer. Again, using the same filler and building on it a little bit. Well, to be honest, I've never really thought about it. To be honest, it was a little bit of a tricky question. I don't really think about clothes that much.

Next question. What kind of clothes do you usually wear? Nowadays, where I live we are in lockdown quite a lot, so I guess I'm wearing casual clothes like my sports clothes because it's loose and it's easy to wear and plus when I sit down, I don't have to adjust it at all because it's all elastic.

There we go. That might sound as though I'm quite fat. It doesn't really matter, but I just gave a reason. I just developed it. I said it's comfortable. I wasn't going to go into-- about jeans, about jeans not being that comfy. This is Part 1. A few sentences will suffice.

What kind of clothes do you never wear? Well, I cannot say I have a specific type of clothing that I really dislike. However, because we're in winter at the moment, it's been a long time since I've worn any shorts or since I've used my flip-flops. So, I guess it depends on the seasons.

There we go and quite honestly, I could not think of any clothes that I never wear or that I dislike. So, I just turned it into a logical answer about the seasons and about summer clothes and shorts and flip-flops and that's fine. That's fine. This is not a test of my intelligence. I'm not going to be interviewed by Giorgio Armani. I just need to talk. That's it. Confidently and clearly.

This is another good piece of advice, actually. If you do find you have an explosion of ideas, then slow down and drip out each idea slowly and carefully and you'll probably find that as you share one idea that the other ideas suddenly seem not that important and you can just carry on with your original idea as well.

But the key to getting started is to start off slow and simple and then get momentum. Like imagine we are pushing a massive boulder. It's going to take a lot of effort to get started. So, let's get started with the small step and then once we get moving, we can elaborate.

Next question. Do you ever wear the traditional clothes of your country? I am struggling to think what the traditional clothes of my country are. I guess being English, we could say it's the Morris dancers. I know that in some countries they have this folklore dress especially in Eastern Europe and possibly in Spain. It could be some flamenco clothing, but to be honest, I'm not so sure what the traditional clothing of England is. So, I can't really answer that question.

There we go. That's an honest answer. I cannot honestly think off the top of my head what the traditional clothes of England are. Maybe it's a suit and a bowler's hat, but that's the recent past. So, it's a bit of a tricky one there. So, I just kind of dive-- I told the examiner I don't really know what the traditional clothes of England are. However, I know that in some countries it's maybe folklorish and in other countries it's maybe flamenco as I said. I don't know if that's true either. However, as I said a few minutes ago, this is not a test on clothing. This is a test on communication and language.

Right. Moving on. Questions about career or education. Again, this is really easy. This is one of the most common questions you're going to be asked. Do you work or are you a student? Now, really we cannot be struggling on these easy questions and how do we ensure 100% that we are not going to struggle? Well, we get familiar with where we are from and how to explain it.

For example, even though I'm from Huddersfield which is a small town abroad outside of England, I'll say I'm from near Manchester because everybody knows Manchester and also, when I was teaching English in the class, I would tell my students I was from Manchester and now, we can talk about Manchester. I can say it's an industrial city or it was an industrial city. I could say that the weather there is horrendous. It's just grey. I can say there's a few famous football clubs.

Anyway, I'm going a bit off topic. So, the point I want to make is that if I get the question do you work or are you a student, I'm going to say well, I work in education. I've worked for the last 10 years as an English tutor and I really enjoy it because I like to see progress and I like results. You see? If I was a student, I'd say okay. Well, I'm a student at the moment. I'm studying geography and history. These are my favorite subjects and we have some amazing lecturers at the moment.

What I'm saying is do some research. Research your line of work. Ask yourself why you enjoy it. Ask yourself why you enjoy being a student. Ask why you became a student. What are you studying? Learn how to talk about yourself, your interests, your work, your studies. Learn how to talk about yourself in English. Write out your answers. This way, it's much easier to find out if you are losing points or to find out which areas you need to develop.

For example, if I ask you about do you want to be famous, you've probably never thought about that before, but if you've written about it before, you've really kind of started to warm up your thinking mind and you'll have an answer much readily available. You can just recall what you wrote about a few weeks ago rather than just starting from zero.

Next one. Why did you choose this kind of work? Well, I chose to be an English tutor because I was initially struggling finding work in Valencia in Spain. However, there was a lot of demand for English tutors and being a native English person from England, work was readily available. Fortunately, I grew to love it.

There we go. It's probably a little bit too long, but I extended it for this podcast because it drives me mad when a lot of students ask me are you a native English speaker. Anyway, next question.

What was your dream job when you were a child? If I remember correctly... If I remember

correctly... Did you hear that beautiful collocation? If I remember correctly, I used to want to be a cartoonist. I think I went through a phase where I was obsessed with drawing caricatures. However, that kind of drifted away as I got older.

Have you changed your mind since then? Well, I think what happened was I was really interested in drawing and cartoons then that kind of developed into design, but then I went traveling and I kind of changed my mind and I went into a different line of work.

There we go. I mean I'm just giving an honest answer. Fortunately, I have kind of reviewed my career decisions in the past, so like as I was saying before, it is information readily available. Moving on.

As I said before, if you can write out your answers for these, it becomes so much easier when you're in the test because you've written out your answers. Ideally, you've gone back and you've looked at maybe certain words that you've repeated and you've upgraded them. Ideally, you've gotten feedback. Ideally, you've recorded yourself and you've figured out okay, I'm speaking too fast or I say mm and ah too often or I need to work on my pronunciation. There's lots of different ways we can improve.

Moving on. Questions about celebrities or being famous. Do you want to be a star? Absolutely not. I think becoming world famous would be a nightmare for me. I'm rather private and I would hate all that attention. Have you ever met celebrities or pop stars in person? If I remember correctly... If I remember correctly, I saw Prince Charles once. We were in the same room because at university I worked as a waiter and I was waiting at an official event in the city center in Manchester and Prince Charles turned up. So, yes. I have.

What pop stars do you like? This is kind of difficult, to be honest because I don't really follow that much the pop culture, but the old pop stars I like possibly the Beatles, Freddie Mercury; more along the lines of the classic ones rather than the Justin Biebers and Nicki Minaj and all of that.

Who is your favorite celebrity? I guess I don't really have a favorite, but I do admire Ronaldo a lot because when I was younger, he used to get a lot of hate especially during some of the tournaments. However, he just keeps on moving forward. And also, I remember one clip where a young Japanese or Korean footballer asked him a question in English and all the reporters laughed and then Ronaldo defended the Japanese kid saying hey, he's trying. Don't laugh at him. That moment instantly changed my opinion of Ronaldo. So, yes. I guess I could say-- I wouldn't

say he's my favorite, but I do admire him. There we go. Just a little anecdote. Maybe a little bit too long, but it's probably better to be speaking more than speaking less.

Last question. How do celebrities influence their fans in your country? As I said, I don't really follow that many celebrities, so it's a difficult question for me to answer. However, I did read an article about Elon Musk just talking about bitcoin and then I think all his fans went out and bought bitcoin. However, I'm not entirely sure about that. I think he talked about it on Twitter, so maybe via social media.

There we go. So, as I said before, you do not need to talk at length. Here, a couple of sentences. Talk as naturally as possible. I know it's easier said than done, but you can find quite a few fillers out there. If I remember correctly... or to be honest... Well, I've never really thought about it. However... And these are copy-paste. They can get you started and once you get started, it's easier to carry on.

So, as I said, I think in my mind from working with lots of students over time, there are some students that have an explosion of ideas. Some students really struggle and their mind goes blank. In both cases, slowing down, adding pauses to what you're saying, thinking in images, and some solid preparation as we said like writing out your answers, researching yourself-- finding



out how to talk about yourself and your dislikes and your likes and possibly anecdotes and obviously recording yourself and getting some feedback, all of these little techniques will help you on the day of the exam.

Now, if you're still wanting to improve and if you're still struggling with this, then I recommend you try our feedback service and all you have to do is go to [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com) and you'll see there we have some special speaking packs available.

What happens is we give you some questions. You record your answers. You send them in and we give you some feedback. We say okay, you need to work on your pronunciation. Here's what you need to do. Or you need to work on your grammatical accuracy. Try answer these questions using these tenses. And we've been getting some great results from that. So, if you're interested in that, go over to [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com). You can sign up there and we have a special offer.

That's it from me. Have a great day. Keep moving forward. And if you are in lockdown, try and make the most of it. We are in lockdown where I am at the moment. It's not a bundle of fun I can admit, but what are we going to do?

Well, the first lockdown I was a little bit down, but this one I've really taken to it. I've upped my standards. I'm going running most days and I'm learning a new language and I think that's the



best we can do. So, we're almost out of it. Let's just keep moving forward. Have a great day and thank you for listening and good luck with your IELTS preparation.

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