



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.

[Music]

Ben: Hello there IELTS students. In this tutorial, we are looking at some recent questions seen by students in the exam and we're also going to answer some questions that we found online posted around the internet by students, but most of these were sent in by our students who recently completed the test and then they send them in and we can pull together a big report like this and give you sample answers and ideas to help you move forward and pass the exam.

Now, this is one way of improving; of listening to authentic native English speakers give professional pretty much band 9 answers. Another way to improve is to send in your work and we can give you feedback on it. That's a fast way. And just remember to clearly define when



you're sitting down and you're working what are you doing now. Are you actively working or are you passively learning?

At the moment, you're passively learning. You're probably doing the washing or sat down or you're commuting and you're passively learning. If you're taking notes, you've transformed it into an active lesson. Don't worry. You don't always have to be actively learning English or improving your IELTS score.

However, there comes a time where you need to maybe stop doing the active learning and move over to passive and vice versa. You might have to stop doing the passive learning move over to the active. One way of doing this to move over to active learning is to start writing out essays and start transcribing and getting feedback. And it's a lovely experience actually seeing your essays improve.



Let's jump straight into it. As you know, my name is Ben Worthington. I'm from England and I've been teaching students how to pass IELTS for a very long time and this is how we help our students. I got into this by interviewing-- well, first of all, I decided to choose IELTS as a kind of like sector in that I wanted to specialize in because we all know unless you specialize, you don't get results.

If you're a generalist, then you're going to get average results as a teacher. A teacher who can teach adults, can teach kids, can teach IELTS, can teach business English, can teach English conversation; they're going to get mediocre results for each of the bunch of students and probably be very burnt out in the process.

This is what I realized. So, this is why I quickly decided to specialize in the IELTS exam. And I did this by asking a lot of tutors how they got the scores they did for their students and if they were smart tutors, I would invite them on to the podcast. I would interview them. I would test out



their knowledge. I would test their knowledge on my students. If it worked, I put it into the online course. If it didn't work, I just threw it out.

And this is why we've got the course up to such a good level. It's so tuned. It's so perfect. We still continue improving it, but we've been doing this for a long time and this is why we got it up to the level where we can now offer a band 7 or it's free. We can get you to band 7 or it's free. That's the guarantee. We're so confident in our experience, in our methods. Have a look at that. Go to ieltspodcast.com/onlineieltscourse and you will see there the full guarantee and I strongly encourage you to join us and hopefully, you will end up on this podcast as a success story. That's the goal.

Right then. Oh. It's probably not your goal. I understand your goal is probably to get to university in Canada, to emigrate to Canada or to study in Australia or to work in the UK, all of those. We can help you get there. We can help you because we'll help you get IELTS.



Let's have a look. We're going to do speaking cue cards and these are my answers. Describe an interesting animal you have seen. You should say what animal it was, when and where you saw it, and explain how you feel about this animal.

Right. Hopefully, you've got an animal in your mind right now. Okay. I'm going to-- actually, I'll just jump straight into my talk and I might break off just to explain certain points, but I'll just jump straight into it.

I would like to talk about an animal I found very interesting. It was a kangaroo and kangaroos themselves are quite interesting, but what made this stick in my mind was is the first time I'd ever seen a kangaroo in real life, but also it was dead and this was why it was even more interesting and this is why it probably stuck in my mind so much so that I can still clearly see it. I see it vividly.



So, I saw this kangaroo and I saw it when it was my first time in Australia and I had been living in Melbourne and I got a job in agriculture and yeah, we jumped into the farmer's ute it's called. It's like a utility truck and we were just driving along quite slow and he said oh, look there's a kangaroo and I turned around and I saw this big red kangaroo. It was a big red one, but also it's kind of the side of his body was all just brown and there was lots of flies over it and it was not a pretty sight. And I was like wow! That's my first kangaroo I've ever seen in real life and unfortunately it's dead.

Anyway, how do I feel about this animal? Well, in the end, my feelings about kangaroos in general obviously changed when I saw them because I never saw them as a problem and I never saw them as a hazard on roadsides, but now I feel that they are beautiful animals. And the more I stayed in agriculture, I eventually started seeing them in the wild. I eventually started seeing



them alive as well which was always good and they really are majestic beautiful animals. And it's such a shame that the first one I saw was a dead one.

There we go. So, I followed the cue cards. Obviously, the grammar was perfect. I'm a native English speaker, but I just followed the cue cards. I tried to use less common vocabulary like vividly and I used sometimes phrases such as if I remember correctly. I did paraphrase the question and I'm going to explain to you how I feel about this or how do I feel about it? Well, that's fine. I'm just giving myself pointers and giving myself a structure. I only paraphrased once. I wasn't paraphrasing every single point. The occasional paraphrase is fine.

I didn't want the talk to end on a bad note about me feeling depressed about seeing a dead kangaroo, so that's why I kind of just changed gears and I said but later I saw them alive bouncing around the fields and they're such majestic animals. That would have picked up points



there. Beautiful little less common adjective there. Honestly, I think this would be a quite easier one maybe the difficulty had come with the follow-on questions.

Let's have a look at the next one. Describe a person who is often in the news and who you would like to meet. You should say who this person is, how you know him or her, why he or she is often in the news, and explain why would you like to meet him.

Okay I would like to talk about the previous US president. This person is called Donald Trump and as we all know, he was pretty much in the news every single day during his presidency and obviously, this is how I came to know him or know of him because I don't know him personally. And he always seems to attract media attention and outrage and I think this is the secret of his success and definitely how he became a president and how he won the election in the United States.



Now, I think he is often in the news as I said before because of what I said about him causing outrage, but also I think one of his tactics was to attack the news and call them fake news. This enraged the news media outlets and they started to cover him more. And then the more publicity he got, the more easier I think it was for the electorate or the public-- the Americans to vote for him.

I would like to meet this person because I feel that the media often portrays him as quite an outrageous authoritarian figure. Maybe he is. Maybe he isn't. I don't know personally. This is exactly the reason why I would like to meet this person. Also, although personally I'm not a big supporter and nor do I hate him, I'm quite neutral, but I am interested in getting to know this person on a personal level and I have quite a few questions I would like to ask him. And that's my small talk about a person who's often in the news and why I'd like to meet them. I hope you liked it.



There we go. Again, just working through the bullet points. This one again was a little bit tricky. It said how do I know him or her. I don't know them, but I know of them. So, I just made that correction. And again, just working through the points giving explanations.

I think I did make one mistake there which is probably going into too much detail about the media and the fake news. So, I quickly changed tracks because I thought it was going to get a little bit too complex. This is a test of language, not about the American political scene. So, this is why I wasn't going to go down that road about talking about the electorate. Initially, I was going to talk about Biden, but I don't know that much about Biden especially compared to Donald Trump. When Trump was president, it was in the news 24/7 every single day. Biden has kept a lower profile and makes it more difficult to talk about him,

Anyway, it's probably helpful for yourself to follow the same rules like choose something controversial with a lot of information around it just makes it easier for yourself. And again, I'm



not getting tested on my knowledge of the US elections. I'm getting tested on my ability to communicate. If I'm communicating about something that is possibly in everybody's head, everybody is familiar with this guy then it's quite straightforward I find.

Last question: Describe a time when you tried to do something, but were not very successful. You should say when and what you tried to do, why you failed to do it, and how you felt about it. Now, this is quite straightforward for me. I've tried to do a lot of things and I've failed at quite a lot of things as well. I'm just joking, but let me just jump straight into it.

So, I'm going to describe a time when I decided I wanted to learn salsa. Now, this was when I lived in Spain and I had quite a few Spanish friends and Latin American friends who were encouraging me to join them in the clubs where they played the salsa music.

However, the first time I went there a few women said that I was made of stone. That I was like a brick or that I was made of wood. I just did not have the flexibility. I don't know why I didn't



have the flexibility. I think it was maybe because of the beat. I'm used to a more western beat which is quite straightforward whereas the salsa one I found a little bit complicated.

Anyway after this, I went to a salsa school. Again, I tried, but I think I failed because my body was just too rigid and I could only marginally do this when I was counting and that's not a very Latino way to dance counting out the steps.

How did I feel about it? I got really angry and I remember going to salsa night and I wouldn't even dance because I was so angry in my head about how poor a level I had. I would maybe do one or two dances for the entire night and that would be it.

Also, I decided to go for even more lessons and even did intensive courses because I was really determined to learn, but it just built up more anger and eventually, I decided that salsa is not for me and I decided to focus on other sports and activities where I had a more natural ability. And



that's my talk about when I tried to learn how to dance salsa and failed miserably. I hope you liked it.

Okay. So, there we go. Quite a few adjectives in there. It was quite open. It was an honest experience. This really did happen to me and it was quite humiliating and miserable and yeah. It was just quite straightforward; just working through the bullet points. Again, I paraphrased. I didn't paraphrase through the entire talk. That would get a little bit boring. I cannot pick up points, but I shared my emotions in there.

I shared lots of adjectives, lots of topic-specific vocabulary such as the rhythm, the beat and also probably very important, I worked methodically through the bullet points. So, I set the scene about why I wanted to do salsa, how I got into it, and then I explained very clearly why I failed and how I felt about it.



And for me, it was quite straightforward to talk about how I felt because it was a very strong emotion. And I think if you choose something that's kind of strong just like we did before, that's kind of strong, there's lots of information about it, it's relatively recent, it just makes it easier for yourself.

So, that's it for today. If you want to carry on improving with your IELTS score, a great way to do this is to get some feedback. You can get feedback on your speaking or even on your writing. We've got a lot of students on our jump to band 7 course at the moment so much so that I'm even jumping in and doing some of the corrections.

And we're getting some great results and we've got quite a lot of success stories in the pipeline waiting to be published and ideally, maybe one day you'll be on this podcast too and I'll be talking to you about how you passed.



Good luck with your IELTS preparation. Keep moving forward. You can do this. You've attained lots of other things in your life. It's just a case of carrying on, pushing forward with your IELTS and you will get there. And if you want to speed that process up, then you know where to hit us up at ieltspodcast.com. Sign up to the newsletter and once you sign up, you'll get all those discounts, the coupon codes, and invitations to work with us. So, good luck and all the best.

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