



Ben: Band 9 speaking samples for recent questions. Hello there. My name is Ben Worthington and in this tutorial, we're going to look at some sample answers. All of these are band 9; perfect grammar, some of them have like idiomatic phrases in, a lot of them have topic-specific vocabulary in. This is the level that you want to aim for when you're going for the exam.

And what I'm going to do is like the previous episode, I'm going to give you the features before the answer and this way while you're listening, hopefully you can recognize what is going on. You can recognize like oh, okay. That's the useful phrase or that's the list of details Ben mentioned, okay?

Now, in this first answer-- by the way, these are from the exam booklet which is set for September, October, November, December; for the four months. We may have gotten hold of this



booklet. Anyway, these are the topics. The three topics we're going to cover today are technology, personal growth (ambition), and people.

Now, just before we get started, I want to say a big thanks to our sponsor that's elsaspeak.com and this is an app that will help you improve your pronunciation. It's available on iPhone and android. And with this app, you can get instant feedback, you can get tips about your pronunciation, you can speak into the app and it will tell you which words you are pronouncing correctly and which ones you're pronouncing incorrectly.

And I'll give you a little tip on how you can use this app alongside or to help you with your IELTS speaking preparation at the end of this episode and I'll also share a URL where you can get a massive 40% discount.



Now, the first question is describe an important text message that you recently received. Now, if you're serious about passing IELTS which I assume you are, perhaps you could pause the recording and just brainstorm a few ideas. And if you've got even more time, perhaps pause, write out your answer, even say your answer if you're alone or if you're in the kitchen cooking. Pause it, say your answer because what will happen is that you'll probably start off strong and then you'll quickly realize oh, this is probably a little bit more difficult than I had anticipated.

If that's the case, don't be disheartened. Write out your answer. Write down a few bullet points. Give it a minute or two of preparation and then have another go. And doing this you'll just strengthen your idea creation muscle.



Anyway, let's jump into it. Describe an important text message that you recently received. Now, in this answer, it's got a different structure just to make it slightly more interesting. We've got a standard story structure which is a start, a middle, and an end. That's a standard boring structure.

An interesting story structure has a start, a middle, and a twist then the end. A twist; something new is happening, something you didn't expect is happening. And that's the basis of this answer and it's probably something to keep in mind if you are going to tell a story. An interesting story should have a twist in it.

Now, there are some useful phrases in there such as you see and this was one that I've mentioned before in a previous podcast I think. As you've probably heard me say before, repetition is the mother of all learning. So, I'm just building on top of that you see just to pull the reader in or pull the listener in.



I've also mentioned a list here and in this case, it wasn't really for vocabulary. This list was for emphasis. It goes like this. No email, no phone call, no text. Nothing. And it's just one of those little features that if you can incorporate into your speaking, not only will it make it more interesting, but it'll also help you sound more like a native speaker. These are all features that native speakers use.

There's another useful phrase if I remember correctly and I've said this one a million times on the podcast and I try to include it even when I'm talking about a writing tutorial. If I remember correctly-- I'm dramatizing my intonation there, just demonstrating. If I remember correctly it was 2012, for example.

Next is a list of details. This just makes it easier, it makes it slightly more interesting, it makes it easier to find words and find kind of like content for your answer. If you're a speaker who struggles to fill up these spaces when you're talking, a list of details will definitely help you. In



this case, I used food and it's very straightforward. Yorkshire puddings, roast potatoes and some thick thick gravy. I just added a little bit of some adjectives there, a bit of repetition just to emphasize the points.

Also, it was parallel, almost anyway. Yorkshire puddings, roast potatoes, and thick gravy. That would have been parallel, but I wanted to say thick thick gravy to really paint this tasty picture in your mind hopefully make you hungry. Anyway, let's do the answer.

Describe an important text message that you recently received. I'd like to tell you about a message I got from my mum few weeks ago. You see we were traveling to the UK and had to do some quarantine for the first few days. Part of the quarantine involved getting PCR tests sent to where we were staying in England. We sent them to my mum's airbnb and put her number on the box just in case.



Anyway, we did the tests, sent off the results, but never heard anything from the testing center. This was really strange. No email, no phone call, no text. Nothing. So, I was in the airbnb we had rented and my mum just messaged me about dropping some dinner off for us. If I remember correctly, it was a Tupperware box full of Yorkshire puddings, roast potatoes, and some thick thick gravy and at the end of the message, she said something like oh, great news with the tests. And it turned out that the test center had sent the message to my mum's phone. So, that's an important text message that I recently received.

I just thought I would add the summary on there at the end just as an indicator to the examiner I'd finished. It makes it more comfortable for both of us. We're not just sat there in silence.

Next one: personal growth (ambition). There were a few questions about this. One of them was describe a plan you have for the future, but not related to work or studies. Another in this booklet



describe an ideal job that you want to do in the future. Another one: describe a time when you received some important information.

Now, if I were you, I would do exactly what I said before; probably pause, try and answer them, try and incorporate some useful phrases you just heard a minute ago, try and incorporate a detailed list, try and upgrade your vocabulary. This is exactly what I'm going to be doing in this one.

So, describe a plan you have for the future, but not related to work or studies. In this one, I am going to upgrade my vocabulary. Initially, I started off with I have a big important plan to execute. Sorry. I started off with I have a big plan to execute next year. Just like I would do with the writing, I upgraded it from big to important. I upgraded it because I'm a higher level student, okay? I'm not, but I'm just kind of I want to talk as if I were you.



So, when you're reviewing any of your written work look for those simple words; the first words you learn when you learn the English language: big, small, do, have; the basic words and upgrade them with your new higher level lexical resource that you've learned with us at IELTS Podcast.

Now, the next one a useful phrase: to be honest, you see, I guess. To be honest, I think he's about 5'4. You see we were in England. Just buy myself a few seconds there to organize the rest of my thoughts. And I guess. I guess it cost £20. I can't remember to be totally honest. Stack those phrases.

Now, in this one, I used another feature which probably native English speakers are most likely entirely unaware that they use this feature, but it's varying the sentence length. So, what we do is we just mix it up with long sentences and short sentences and this makes it easier to-- it makes it more interesting to listen to rather than continuously short sentences which start to sound



staccato like a drum. They always sound like this. Or long sentences that just go on forever and ever and you just switch off halfway through which is what I do a lot when someone's giving me long, long, long sentences.

Now, the other thing with this answer is that it's quite short and I did this on purpose. I could have gone back and started embellishing it, but I was like I kind of answered it and it's not a continuous thing that I do. Most of my answers are reasonable and on the longer side. However, with this, I couldn't really extend it. I didn't want to extend it because I wanted you to know that sometimes if you've got a short answer it's fine, but if you're continuously producing short answers, then you might want to look at some of the features we've mentioned such as the adjective stacking, the details and some of the other features that you can use and incorporate into your speaking repertoire in order to lengthen your answers.



Let's jump into it. Describe a plan you have for the future, but not related to work or studies. I have an important plan to execute next year. To be honest, I'm really excited about it. You see, for the last 20 years, I have lived outside of my home country England. Next year, I'll be returning. I left as a young adult and will return as a father with a family. The plan involves renting or buying a van to take us over. I guess there will be a ton of paperwork and legal fees.

To be honest, I think it's going to be quite expensive, but in the long run, I know it will be worthwhile. So, if everything goes smoothly, this time next year, I will be back in the UK with my brother, my sister, my mum, and my dad. I see it as a new chapter in my life and I think my family are quite excited too. So, that is a plan I have for the future.

There we go. You probably heard a few more useful phrases in there. And again, like I said, it's a short answer. Don't be worried if you're producing a short answer. Sometimes it's just inevitable.



I didn't really want to extend that because I couldn't really think of much else to say. I could do if I really pushed it, but I don't want to force it.

Anyway, moving on. Third one: describe an energetic person that you know. This is a medium-length answer. When you listen to it, you'll hear some adjective stacking. I've pushed a lot of adjectives into it. It just enriches it. It shows the examiner my large lexical resource. I put that truly wonderful kind natured and humorous lady.

Again, it's almost parallel, but these lists hopefully you will have noticed they usually come in threes and I try to make them parallel. I don't say she's a wonderful blonde kind natured and humorous, but stocky lady. No. It doesn't really flow that, does it? Compare that with a truly wonderful kind natured and humorous lady. You see? We've got that rhythm. That's the parallelism. These are the higher level features we teach in the writing course.



And this is just as a side note. When you learn it in your writing, it's much easier-- it's much easier to transfer it over, to carry it over and incorporate it into your speaking skills. This is why we often see students on the writing course they'll often say yeah, because I've got clarity in my writing, now I've got good control of it, my communication has also improved.

Again, in this answer, I upgraded it. I upgraded it from do, from she doesn't do much to she doesn't accomplish much. Accomplished just seemed richer. It was more appropriate. It was more specific and it's slightly more higher level than do. Do again, is in that list of basic words; among the very first words we learn when we start with the beautiful English language.

Also, in this answer, we've got a list. I did go a bit extreme here because when I was a young lad-- when I was a young boy, I did work in the shop, so I know the vocabulary. So, stacking the shelves, checking someone out at the till. The till is just another word for cash register and checking them out is basically just taking their products, scanning it-- or punching in the



numbers back in my day-- punching in the numbers and then totaling it up, asking for the money, getting the change, giving them the change, being polite and then doing it again and maybe if you knew them, having a quick chat about the weather like we love to do in English small talk.

Anyway, you will also find in this answer expressions: I guess, so to speak. Another useful phrase: in all honesty. So, what does so to speak mean? So to speak is a useful expression. It's a phrase also, but it's used to highlight the fact that one is describing something in an unusual or metaphorical way, okay? So, as Oxford dictionary says delving into the body secrets, I looked death in the face so to speak. It's rather abstract, isn't it? It's rather grim.

Anyway, moving on. Here is the answer and you'll hear so to speak in a slightly more positive way. So, let's go. Describe an energetic person that you know. Well, I'd like to tell you about an employee in my dad's shop. Her name is Susan and she's a truly wonderful, kind-natured, and humorous lady. When I went into the shop to steal some food or see my father, I noted she was



all over the place doing three jobs at once. She would be stacking the shelves in the pet food department then checking someone out at the tills then immediately after, sweeping the warehouse. Later, I asked my dad about her. He said she's great at appearing busy, but actually doesn't accomplish much. I was surprised, but I guess at least she was inspiring the other staff and contributing to the team morale so to speak. I very much doubt it was on purpose. I guess some people just work differently to others. So, that's an energetic person that I know.

There we go. So, as you heard, we had the adjective stacking, we had the upgrade, we had the useful expressions and phrases and it all tied in together. It was clear. It was full. It was all grammatically accurate and if you can produce answers like that in your exam-- I know I'm a native English speaker, so I have it slightly easier, but that's the level we want to be aiming for.



And a good way to practice this is just to write out your answers, speak your answers first. If you struggle, write them out, go back, look at ways to upgrade them then save them again. And when you're upgrading, try to incorporate some of these features that we mentioned today.

If you are struggling, remember we've got the Speaking Confidence course, the online course getting great results with that. We've also got the writing course Jump to Band 7 or It's Free. That course is absolutely full at the moment and we're getting some great results. And as I said, a lot of students find that once they improve their writing, it carries over into their speaking and they become much more eloquent and clear communicators.

Now, as you know with the Elsa Speak app, you can get some instant feedback on your speaking skills and I used it myself and I got 98% native English speaker which isn't bad actually considering, but I did enter at the beginning that I was a Spaniard, so it might have affected it



somehow, but anyway, those are the kind of like-- that's one example of the feedback you can get.

Now, if you're preparing for the exam and you know you've got your exam coming up in 30 days, then you could use the app to get an idea of what level you're at at the moment and then test periodically every couple of days or every five or six days and see if you're improving. And then this way, you're not going to be going into the exam blind. Also, it's encouraging to see yourself progressing and improving.

So, to find out more, I would recommend you go to elsaspeak.com/inf/ieltspodcast. If you follow that link, you will get a 40% discount on the annual usage of Elsa pro and with a 40% discount it's at \$27. It's usually at \$45. So, go to elsaspeak.com/inf/ieltspodcast and there you'll also see the 85% discount for the pro pack and that will give you access to all the pro features for life.



That's it from me. I hope you have a fantastic day and that you continue to study hard, keep moving, keep working towards it. Every hour that you put in, you are getting closer to your target band score. So, stack them hours. Stack that work. And if you need guidance and encouragement and motivation and help to take you to the next level to get that band 7 or above, then get in contact. We'd love to help you.

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