



Ben: Hello there IELTS students. In this tutorial, we are looking at recent speaking cue card questions seen by students on our online course who are in contact with us, who are working with us to improve their band scores either through feedback, through specific exam knowledge, through tutorials. They're working with us, they're in contact and they do the exam, more often than not they're successful and then they send in the questions that they see.

Some of the questions as well have also been seen around on the internet and we collect them at the beginning of each quarter to show you some sample answers. Now, if you are struggling with your speaking, then this tutorial will help you because not only will you hear some model answers, but you'll also get a lot of tips and advice.

And I know quick tips and tricks and all of this I know these are not the answer, but a little bit of help and a little bit of advice can definitely help you if you couple it together with a strong course, for example or regular frequent feedback and even just solid practice as well. So



hopefully, you can implement what I am sharing today and hopefully you will get that band 7 and you'll be on your way to Australia, to England, to Canada, wherever it is you want to go. I'm pretty certain you can get there. It's just a matter of putting in the time, the effort, and the work.

Now, just before we get started, let me tell you who I am. My name is Ben Worthington. Now, I've lived outside of the UK for over 20 years. That makes me pretty much an immigrant, all right, and I don't think there's anything wrong with that.

I'm proud actually because when you live abroad and when you face the challenges in living in a new country, you gain new skills. You've got to fight the bureaucracy. You've got to fight the local regulations. You got to fight local prejudices and ideas about you and it can be quite frustrating, but I think that's what probably makes us a little bit stronger and a little bit more determined.



And that's why we're going to get you the IELTS exam. That's why with that determination-- I've been there and I know that you need determination to succeed in a foreign country. So anyway, I lived in Spain for a while then I lived abroad in Thailand, in Georgia near Russia. Now, I live in Hungary. Soon, I'll be going back to England, but what I'm saying is that I started off teaching English then I specialized in IELTS.

In order to teach effectively, I started interviewing all the experts. That gave rise to IELTS Podcast. I started interviewing linguistic experts, ex-IELTS examiners, language pronunciation experts, a whole range of professionals. And I took their advice, tested it on my private students at the time. If it worked, it went into my online course. If it didn't, I just threw it out because there's a lot of garbage out there online and you need to realize which is the best.

And we try and we test new I ideas and now we've got it perfected and we know what works. And that's why we offer the guarantee of jump to band 7 or it's free. And there's not much to lose



IELTS SPEAKING

Latest cue cards
questions & answers
(January to March 2022)

there, is there? If it doesn't work, you get the refund and you want to pass, don't you? And you're prepared to put in the work, so I think it's relatively straightforward.

Let's jump into today's questions. We're going to do as many as possible in the time limit. I would guess around probably about five. Let's just get through these. Describe a toy you got in your childhood. Please tell me when you got the toy, who gave it to you. Explain how you felt about receiving the toy.

Right. Okay. So, I'm just going to do these off the cuff. What does that mean? I'm just going to do them on the fly. So, let's go. I'd like to tell you about a red gun I got. I think I was about seven years old maybe. I can't remember exactly to be honest, but it was a bright red gun and it used to fire like sucker darts I think they're called. And I can't tell you who gave it to me to be honest. It was too long ago, but I do remember receiving it.



I can't remember who gave it to me, but I just unwrapped it and I was amazed about it. It just felt heavy. It felt durable and I was just going around firing it. It had this automatic firing sort of like sequence or function and I could just fire it at anything and anybody. The darts just stuck and it didn't cause any harm, but I think I remember this one because I lost it.

Well, I didn't lose it. I'm convinced I didn't lose it. Now, I'm pretty certain that my parents hid it because they weren't keen on me having the gun, but when I used it, I really did feel like a lone ranger or a cowboy in the Wild West and it was probably one of my favorite toys ever.

There we go. So, when I got the toy when I was around 7 who gave it to me? I don't know. It doesn't matter if I don't remember exactly. I said maybe it was an uncle. I don't know. How did I feel? I said I felt amazing. I felt like a cowboy.

And also there was a few phrases in there which you could definitely copy-paste into your own speaking example such as I don't remember exactly, I think I was around seven, just these rough



approximations. Some of them are collocations. You can use them. Don't memorize entire speeches. That's not going to get you the band score. It's not going to get you over a band 7. That's for sure. Let's jump into it.

Talk about a city you think is interesting. Please tell me where it is, what it's famous for, how you know about this city. Well, I would love to tell you about one of my favorite cities in the world. It's Valencia in Spain. It's in the community of Valencia or la comunidad de Valencia as the locals would say and it's on the Mediterranean. So, you've got the Mediterranean beaches and I'm guessing it's an hour or a couple of hours away from Morocco and Algeria on the ferry, maybe a few hours' drive away from France over the Pyrenees.

Now, Valencia is probably famous I can't say it's football club because it's not that good anymore, but it's definitely famous for paella and it's this famous rice dish and whenever my parents came to visit me they would always ask for paella and I eventually learned how to cook it although I would never have the courage to call what I create paella, but it's this amazing rice



dish with chicken, with seafood. It depends which one you're going for. Actually, the best way to cook it is outdoors using wood from the orange groves.

Now, I know about this city because I was exploring Europe actually when I was around 20 years old maybe. I can't remember exactly. I was just exploring with a few friends and we'd been inter-railing around. We started in the eastern part of Europe and eventually got to Spain. The money ran out when we hit Valencia and we just stayed there and it was such an eye-opening experience and I just love it. I love the culture. I love the food. I love the people. Eventually, we'll be going back there for holidays.

There we go. That was quite straightforward. All of the bullet points were answered. Again, you may have heard some of those if I remember correctly. There's a slightly humorous joke there. I mean it wasn't a disaster. I wasn't upsetting anybody, but I did mention the football club and it has sunk.



If the examiner is a football fanatic, then I definitely struck gold. If he's not, it doesn't matter or if she's not, it does not matter. A little bit of being a human is not going to cost you points. I'm not telling a rude joke and it's nothing controversial. It's just showing a little bit of character. How do I know about this city? A little anecdote there about what actually happened.

Now, as a side note, here's a very useful tip you can use. How do I know about that city? That opened the door to share this little anecdote. Now, I didn't go on about how we were three people at the beginning of the trip. By the time we got to Spain, we were two of us, blah, blah, blah. I did not do that. They didn't talk about the arguments along the way because that would be going off topic.

A tiny small anecdote; by the time we started here, we ended there and it's totally true. We started here in Eastern Europe and then we went over there to Spain. By that time, the money had ran out, so we stayed there. And also just little anecdotes about my parents coming over. I can use the past tense. It's all there. It's all flowing. It's all natural. Let's have a look.



Describe a resolution you made in the New Year. You should say what is the resolution, how will you complete it, how you feel about it, why you made this resolution. Very interesting. Now, I'd like to tell you about a resolution that I made regarding my fitness. Actually, there's two and they're kind of connected.

Now, the first one was to do my morning stretches every single morning and then the second one was to get down to 75 kilos. During the lockdowns my peak I reached 90. Now, I'm at 85. It's okay.

Anyway, how will I complete it? Well, I plan on breaking it down into small components and just doing literally like a minute in the first week and then once I got that habit established, I'll extend it to two minutes and slowly but surely I will start building it up until I reach my goal of doing about 30 minutes of stretches every single morning.



To be honest, I feel quite excited about it because I'm completing it and nothing rewards you more than success and I feel I've got momentum with it. A few weeks ago I had COVID. That slowed me down, but other than that, I definitely feel more flexible. I feel as though I'm succeeding. That's it. Nothing succeeds like success.

Now, I made this resolution not only to lose weight, but because a friend of mine has had horrific back problems and nerve problems due to his sedentary lifestyle. I also have a pretty sedentary lifestyle and I wanted to definitely avoid his predicament of horrendous back pain. So that's my resolution.

There we go. So, some useful adjectives there: horrendous back pain, that's quite graphic. Definitely going to understand that. I think probably I went slightly off topic talking about my weight, but anyway it was related. I wasn't telling you about a car I bought which would be completely unrelated.



How did I feel about it? I wanted to say a little phrase in there. Nothing succeeds like success. Eventually, it came to me. The first time I stumbled. How did I complete it? Well, I broke it down into small components.

Now, that's important. I'm just going to go definitely off topic here from the cue card, but we're still on IELTS, so don't worry. All the successful students I know, all the ones that have come through our course, one of the things that they definitely said was by breaking it down into small components it becomes much more manageable.

Now, when you're starting something new, it's very easy to be overwhelmed. We've got a whole raft of new projects starting at IELTS Podcast and so many times-- like we're launching this new mini course and I just sat down. I'm like wow! This is going to be incredible. It's too much and you get this overwhelming sort of like sense of frustration and you feel lost and you don't know the next step to make because the task in front of you is just so incredibly big.



And I imagine a lot of you feel the same with IELTS. Now, the way to tackle this is just to break it down. So, first of all you might break it down to just focusing on the speaking and then what are you going to do in the speaking? Are you going to focus on Task 1, Task 2 or Part 3, sorry. I'm going to focus on Part 2 because that's where I got the weaknesses, for example.

Then how are you going to do it? Well, I might just focus on my openings. I might just focus on my fluency. I might just focus on my accuracy. So you see? Just by breaking it down into the smallest components and making it manageable, making it easy-- in my case, I'm not going to start off with doing two hours of stretches every morning. That's just vastly unrealistic. I'm going to start off with doing a minute. Make it impossible to fail.

And I want you to do the same with your IELTS preparation. Break it down. And if you are struggling with your writing, we are launching the mini writing course very soon. So email us if you want to be on the first run of that or at least in the second run by the time this is published. Get in contact. ben@ieltspodcast.com.



Let's move on to the second one. Talk about something which is produced in your country such as a type of food or handicraft. Please tell me what it is, what it is used for, how it is made or produced. Okay. I'd like to tell you about a special type of honey that's produced in England. Now, for the honey experts or the honey connoisseurs they might not think that much of it, but to me it's quite special.

I'm from a part of England called Yorkshire and whenever I go back, I make a point to buy a big jar of Yorkshire honey and I do this because one, I want to support the bees, I want to support local wildlife, and I want to support local producers and the local economy. It tastes pretty decent I must admit and I use this product for cooking and for my tea and also occasionally, I might put it on a wound if I've been cut.

Now, this local honey is produced in a certain way because I know that with commercial producers of honey what they can sometimes do is heat up the honey in order to put it into the jars and it makes it more liquid, but the problem is that some vitamins are lost in this process



whereas with this company, I know for a fact that when it's collected, it's pushed into the jars rather than heated up and poured and this helps it maintain its nutritional and vitamin content which makes it extremely special.

Yes, this is something that's produced in my country from England obviously and more specifically from Yorkshire.

There we go. That was completely made up, but I got away with it. I mean it wasn't completely made up. I know there is a company called Yorkshire Honey. I do remember seeing the jar in my dad's pantry whenever I go back and over here where I am living at the moment in Hungary, I do eat a lot of honey and I do use it for those purposes: for cooking, for my teas. I don't actually use it for wounds, but I know it can be done.

Anyway, I worked through the bullet points in a methodical way. I didn't hit the nail on the head so to speak. I couldn't think of a specific handicraft, but the type of food I got there. The



examiner is not asking me about my food knowledge really or my handicraft knowledge. They just wanted to hear something clear that follows the bullet points and I did that.

I could have talked about Yorkshire puddings, but those are produced everywhere. So, I just tried to limit it to even though honey is produced everywhere, this one is definitely produced in Yorkshire obviously because it's called Yorkshire honey.

So, there we go. Now again, let me just mention one thing. If you are working on improving your task or your Part 2 cue cards, have a timer ready. You want to be aware on how long you're taking. Two, decide in advance what you're going to be working on. Is it going to be accuracy? Is it going to be fluency? And three, if you can record it, listen to it, review it, check for repetition.

Repetition isn't the end of the world, but you're going to score-- sometimes it is inevitable, but you are going to score higher if you can vary your phrases, maybe your ideas when you



inevitably have to be repeated. There's only one word for honey. I'm not going to scratch my head looking for synonyms and all of that. So obviously, use your head.

Now then, if you can take away one thing from this tutorial it's that IELTS is relatively straightforward when you break it down. It can seem as complex and overwhelming and frustrating when you sit down and say okay, I'm going to prepare myself for IELTS in this session. No. Break it down into smaller parts then break it down again until it's in manageable pieces and then set about working on those exact pieces.

And that's exactly what we're doing in this online course that we're launching soon. So, if you're interested in the IELTS online mini course, email us at ben@ieltspodcast.com. It's completely free. It's my gift from me to you and you will get feedback in there. We're starting off with the writing course. Eventually, we will possibly develop mini courses for the speaking, for the reading, and all of that.



So, get in contact ben@ieltspodcast.com. You're not alone with your IELTS. We can help you and that's why we set up ieltspodcast.com. Have a great day and good luck with your IELTS exam.

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Female Speaker: Thanks for listening to ieltspodcast.com