



IELTS SPEAKING AND ACTUAL TESTS SUGGESTED ANSWERS (FEBRUARY - MAY 2017)

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IELTS Speaking Actual Tests and Suggested Answers

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Preface

Most candidates like to read model answers as a very powerful way to get the best possible Band score when they are preparing for the IELTS speaking module. This ebook provides model answers for IELTS Speaking Actual Tests that appears in the IELTS speaking module. Even if your English is not perfect, you can transform your IELTS Band score by using this book.

The model answers are intended as a guide and candidates should modify the answers to suit their own circumstances and add to them wherever appropriate. In other words, candidates should consider using the vocabulary and grammatical structures in this book to help them to create their own answers.

Don't just trust to luck in your IELTS exam – the key is practice!

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Part 1

1. Celebrity

1.1. Who is your favorite celebrity in your country?

I guess not only me, a number of young people have been highly impressed by her for the past months- Deshauna Barber. She is our 2016 Miss USA and the **representative** of USA in Miss Universe taken place in Las Vegas in the same year. After the beauty contests, she became well-known for her **outstanding** beauty, her amazing characteristics and also her **professionalism**.

Vocabulary

Representative (n) A person chosen or appointed to act or speak for another or others, in particular.

Professionalism (n) The competence or skill expected of a professional (in terms of personalities, lifestyle, social relationships)

Outstanding (adj) exceptionally good

1.2. Do you like any foreign celebrities?

Absolutely. The person I'm gonna talk about is my bias ever since I was a teenage girl- Miley Cyrus. I guess most people at the same age as me grew up with Disney Channel and among its successful series, Hannah Montanah starring Miley Cyrus would always be **on top of my list**. Although now she's grown up, I'm still **a big fan of** her amazing voice and highly inspiring songs.

Vocabulary

Bias (n) A concentration on or interest in one particular area or subject.

To be on top of the list (expression) to be the highest priority

To be a (big/huge/avid) fan of (expression) to admire SO

1.3. Would you want to be a celebrity in the future?

Well though I've never thought about it, I'm pretty sure that **rising to stardom** would never be one of my life goals. I appreciate all the efforts that the celebrities, no matter

which field they're working on, are making every single day. However, I find myself not belong to that world, I mean, you never know **what's going on when the curtains close**, right? So yeah, I don't think I want to become a **public figure**, to be honest.

Vocabulary

No matter (adv): without much worries

To appreciate (v): Recognize the full worth of/To be grateful of Sth

What's going on when the curtains close (phrase): the secrets lie behind showbiz

To rise to stardom (expression): to become famous

Public figure (np): a well-known and notable person

1.4. Do you think we should protect famous people's privacy?

Indeed. As you probably can tell, these days fans, anti-fans and even non-fans are so curious about what their **bias** are doing. Some are aggressive that they mentally attack their bias by leaving bad comments online. Some even approach them in person on the street, especially the **so-called paparazzi**. Thus I strongly agree that there should be some regulations to protect the celebrities' privacy.

Vocabulary

Bias (n): prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another

So-called (adj) used to introduce a new word or phrase that is not yet known by many people

Paparazzi (n) a freelance photographer, especially one who takes candid pictures of celebrities for publication.

1.5. How do celebrities influence their fans in your country?

I think the influence of celebrities on fans is extensive. It's somehow natural to follow our bias and try to be like them. At the first place it could probably be just **physical changes** like clothing, hairstyle or makeup. However thanks to social network, fans and idols are much closer now, sometimes it's just a status away. However this mental connection is a **two-edged sword**, meaning the idols actually need to be more careful about their lifestyle or their manners.

Vocabulary

physical changes (n) changes in appearance

two-edged sword (idiom) pros and cons

2. Watches/Time

2.1. Why do people like expensive watches?

Just like any other accessories, the more luxurious a **timepiece** looks, the higher **social status** the owner may hold. Watches are widely used by either gender and ones of the visual **indicators** presenting how professional, smart and attractive a person is. Therefore, if one wants to be **acknowledged** and taken seriously, he prefers a **high-end** watch rather than a collection of **low-end** ones.

Vocabulary

Timepiece (n): a clock or watch

Social status (n): a person's standing or importance in relation to other people within a society

Indicator (n): a sign that shows you what something is like or how a situation is changing

Acknowledge (n): to accept that somebody/something has a particular authority or status

High-end (a): expensive and of high quality

Low-end (a): at the cheaper end of a range of similar products

2.2. Do you like to wear watches?

Well, I am more a cosmetics girl than clothing and accessories, hence, there are not many watches and jewelries **in my possession**. However, I **have nothing against** wearing a beautiful piece of art on my wrist and do own a few exclusive timepieces which suit perfectly with my clothing **on some special occasions**, giving me a **sense of identity** and uniqueness.

Vocabulary

In someone's possession: if something is in someone's possession, they have it

Have nothing against: to dislike or not approve of someone or something for a particular reason

On (special) occasions: from time to time; now and then

2.3. Have you ever received a watch as a gift?

Let me see. More than half of the watches in my little jewelry box are presents from my family and friends. And by that I mean 3 pieces since I only own 4 in total. They all know I am not extremely **fond of** collecting these types of accessories but make-up kits and the likes. Therefore, it would **soothe their souls** to see me in watches because according to them, time is so precious that I need to be reminded every second.

Vocabulary

Be fond of = be interested in = be keen on

Soothe someone's soul: To bring comfort, composure, or relief

3. Gifts

3.1. How often do you buy others gifts?

Since I'm one of those **idealists** when it comes to buying presents, not often do I buy others gifts, but it doesn't have to be a special **occasion** that I send them presents. Especially to my friends, just a small gift like a **handmade** bracelet or a simple drawing could **make their day**.

Vocabulary

Idealist (n) a person who is guided more by ideals than by practical considerations

Make someone's day (idiom) make an otherwise ordinary or dull day pleasingly memorable for someone.

3.2. Do you like to send expensive gifts?

Well sending pricey presents is a **no-no** for me. First of all, expensive gifts may **cost me an arm and a leg**. And second of all I don't think my friends, who are my most frequent

receivers of my presents, would be actually happy if they know the price. And they also don't need expensive stuff either. So I would say for me sending expensive gifts is unpreferable and unnecessary.

Vocabulary

To be a no- no for somebody (expression) to be impossible or inadvisable for someone

To cost SO an arm and a leg (phrase) to be very expensive

3.3. What kinds of gifts are popular in your country?

I think gifts are becoming more **diverse** these days. **Stuffed animals**, accessories, jewelries and flowers are too traditional for the young. Probably handmade stuff is currently on top of the list because of their **spiritual value**. And sometimes it doesn't have to be a physical gift. Probably a delicious homemade meal is enough to **make their day**.

Vocabulary

Diverse (adj) many and different

Stuffed animals (expression) a toy animal made from cloth and filled with a soft material so that it is pleasant to hold

Spiritual value (n) Sth that is especially meaningful and memorable

Make one's day (phrase) to make an otherwise ordinary or dull day pleasingly memorable for someone

3.4. Why do people send gifts?

For so many reasons I suppose. The first reason I could think of is to celebrate a big day in the receiver's life. It could be his or her birthday, graduation or wedding. Another possible reason is to cheer the receiver up, especially when they are overcoming life obstacles.

Vocabulary

SO's big day (idiom) a very important or significant day.

To cheer SO up (idiom) to make or become less miserable

To overcome an obstacle (phrase) to succeed in dealing with (a problem or difficulty)

4. Transportation

4.1. What's the most popular means of transportation in your hometown?

Without any doubt I would say motorbikes. Almost everyone travels by motorbike. The reason why motorbike is so popular I think is due to their reasonable price and convenience. They also extremely varied in terms of size, color and quality, thus **a wide variety of** choices is available for everyone.

Vocabulary

Without any doubt/There is no doubt that (expression) a phrase expressing certainty or agreement; yes

A wide variety of (collocation) a number or range of things of the same general class that is distinct in character or quality.

4.2. How often do you take buses?

Almost every day. Since my house is so far away from my university, it's impossible for me to travel by motorbike. In addition, the air is heavily polluted by **exhaust fumes** and **traffic jams** always take place, especially during **peak hours**. Thus, I'd prefer to take the bus, to save time, save gasoline and causing less pollution.

Vocabulary

Exhaust fumes (n) waste gasses or air expelled from an engine, turbine, or another machine in the course of its operation.

Traffic jam (n) a line or lines of stationary or very slow-moving traffic, caused by roadworks, an accident, or heavy congestion.

Peak hours/Rush hours (n) the busiest hours

4.3. Can you compare the advantages of planes and trains?

Planes and trains regularly depart and arrive on time. Plus, there are many convenient facilities **catering** particularly to certain groups of passengers. However, traveling by plane is clearly time-saving and enjoyable in terms of **on-board services** like meals or comfortable seats, while traveling by train offers you a chance **to see the world outside, admire the views** from their seats. It's totally a great experience for most train-travelers.

Vocabulary

On-board services (n) provided on or within a vehicle

Cater (v) provide with what is needed or required

4.4. Is driving to work popular in your country?

Although cars themselves and gasoline are expensive, a lot of people prefer driving, possibly because driving is more comfortable in such weather, with such polluted and noisy surroundings.

4.5. Do you think people will drive more in the future?

If you're talking about India, no, I don't think it's possible, even in the future. Cars and gasoline are becoming unaffordable for many people these days. Plus, the **transport infrastructure** in various regions in India is not appropriate for cars.

Vocabulary

Transport infrastructure (n) the framework that supports our transport system

4.6. Would you ride bikes to work in the future?

Definitely not. Riding a bike means you're exposing yourself to the **unpredictable weather** and to air pollution. What is worse, I'm afraid the main streets or the highway are too dangerous for cyclists, as cars, motorbikes and buses will travel at a very high speed. Thus I'd rather ride a motorbike or take the bus instead.

Vocabulary

Unpredictable weather (n) to not able to be predicted; changeable

4.7. What will become the most popular means of transport in your country?

I think buses will **take the lead**. You can **travel the distance** without much worries about ticket price or rainy weather outside. Also new buses now offer better services like comfortable seats for the elderly or good air conditioning systems.

Vocabulary

To take the lead (v) to start winning a race or competition

4.10. Do you prefer public transport or private transport ?

I think I'd prefer public transport. It's much more inexpensive and because it can contain a large number of people, it helps ease the **intensity** of traffic jams during peak hours

and reduce the **greenhouse gas emissions** caused by vehicles. Private transportation is more costly in terms of fees, taxes and gasoline.

Vocabulary

Intensity (n) of extreme force, degree, or strength

Greenhouse gas emissions (np) the emission into the earth's atmosphere of any of various gases, esp carbon dioxide, that contribute to the greenhouse effect

5. Colors

5.1. What colors do you like?

Since my **taste** always changes, my favorite color at the moment is black. Although I have just bought some black items recently, black surprisingly suits me. It feels like I become more mature and more mysterious when wearing **a black dress**. And because it's one of the basic colors, it's easy to **mix and match** with other items of different colors and styles.

Vocabulary

taste (n) a preference or liking for something; inclination

To mix and match (v) select and combine different but complementary items, such as clothing or pieces of equipment, to form a coordinated set

5.2. What's the most popular color in your country?

To be honest, it's hard to tell, as it totally depends on people's taste. But I guess it's my favorite color-black. Black fashion items can be found at clothing shops, since it's said to be simple yet classy. Moreover, **electronic devices** and **household supplies** are mostly in black-colored, probably because the trace of dirt and dust are more visible in black, thus it's easier for cleaning.

5.3. Do you like to wear dark or bright colors?

I'm actually flexible between dark and bright colors. But colors somehow do **reflect** my mood. Bright colors gives me a younger, positive and cheerful look. They also match my skin tone better than dark colors. So I guess I prefer wearing bright colors.

Vocabulary

To reflect (v) to show an image of

5.4. What's the different between men and women's preference on colors?

The difference in color taste can be seen so clearly that most menswear is more basic-colored while women clothes are varied vastly from **monotone** to color-mixed. In terms of fashion, the color theme for women is absolutely overweight.

Vocabulary

Monotone (n) without colour or variety, dull

5.5. Do colors affect your mood?

Actually, the converse effect is more suitable for me, especially when it comes to shopping. I don't think I'd feel happier when I look at a pink-colored shirt or feel pulled-down when I wear a gray cardigan. So no, I don't think color is related to my feelings inside.

6. Flowers

6.1. Do you like flowers? (Why?)

Yes, I do like flowers. As an **introvert**, sometimes, I find myself feeling peaceful and relaxed while enjoying nice flowers in my garden. I have a habit of taking pictures of flowers after the rain. I feel most at peace spending **chunks of good-time** on my own, in relative silence, **contemplating** the beauty of flowers with raindrops through my camera lens.

Vocabulary

Introvert (n) a shy, reticent person.

(a) **chunk of (n)** a significant amount of something

Good-time (n) (of a person) having the pursuit of pleasure as one's chief aim

To **contemplate (v)** to look thoughtfully for a long time at

6.2. Which/What is your favorite flower?

White roses are truly my favorite flower. They are traditionally associated with marriages and new beginnings. However, their beauty has also made them a **gesture** of remembrance. Therefore, a **bouquet of** white rose is a perfect way to say “I’m thinking of you”.

Vocabulary

Gesture (n) a movement of part of the body, especially a hand or the head, to express an idea or meaning

(a) Bouquet of (flowers) (phrase) an attractively arranged bunch of flowers, especially one presented as a gift or carried at a ceremony

6.3. Do you think flowers are important?

For an introvert like me, enjoying the **harmonization** of various types of flowers with different **gorgeous** colors in the garden or in florist shops could **brighten up** my days and **lift my spirits**.

Vocabulary

Harmonization (n) a good combination

Gorgeous (adj) beautiful, very attractive

Brighten up (phrasal verb) make something more pleasant and happy

Lift our spirits (expression) make us feel happier

6.4. Are flowers important in your culture? (Give examples)

Definitely. With beautiful meanings, some flowers are chosen to show people’s **key virtues**. Lotus flowers, for example, have been **regarded as the** national flower. The lotus plants grow from the marsh but their leaves and flowers grow toward the direction of the sunlight, which **symbolizes** the purity and faithfulness of people’s spirits.

Vocabulary

Virtue (n) good qualities or characteristics

To regard as (v) to consider or think of in a specified way

To symbolize (v) to be a symbol of

6.5. Do people in your country ever use flowers for special occasions?

Flowers are widely used in many occasions and festivals in our country to represent for a blessing, happiness and good luck. Most families have **at least** one kind of plants or flowers at home.

6.6. What are the occasions when people give or receive flowers?

A **bunch of** flowers is considered as a gift for a wide range of occasions for both people to send and receive flowers. For example, in a birthday party, Women's day, or Valentine's day, colorful flowers are arranged nicely in a small vase and given to each other.

Vocabulary

A **bunch of flowers (phrase)** a number of things, typically of the same kind, growing or fastened together.

6.7. In your country, do people (ever) give flowers as a gift?

Yes, they do. As mention above, flowers **play an essential role** in different occasions as a special gift for people to show love to one another. People, especially girls, are happy and pleased when they receive their favorite flowers from beloved ones on their birthday.

7. Bus and taxi

7.1. How often do you take the bus?

Even though I don't really like public transport, I have to take bus to go to my university **on a daily basis** because it is quite far to bike from home to my university and it is the safest choice for me.

On a daily basis (adv) everyday

7.2. When was the first time you took a taxi?

My very first time taking a taxi was around 10 or 11 years ago. It was raining heavily after my class finished. The streets **were** seriously **flooded** so my dad could not come to **pick me up**. He asked me to take a taxi to go home. It was one of my very first experience travelling alone without my parents.

Vocabulary

To be flooded (v) to become covered or submerged by a flood

To pick SO up (n) to go somewhere to collect someone, typically in one's car

7.3. What are the advantages of taking a taxi compared with buses?

Their 24/7 **tailored** service has been improved and become better recently which is much more flexible and save us a great deal of time and energy, especially when we **rush for any appointment**. Moreover, by taking a taxi, we don't need to walk to the station or destination.

Vocabulary

Tailored (adj) to design or alter (something) to suit specific needs

To rush for Sth/doing Sth (v) to deal with (something) hurriedly

7.4. Is it convenient to take the bus/taxi in your city?

I would say, it's easy to book or take a taxi in my city. Nowadays, there are Uber and Grab besides other taxi companies which allow us to use an app on our smartphone to book a taxi. They also estimate the price and inform the route which make us feel safe and trustable.

8. Mirror

8.1. Do you often look at yourself in the mirror?

Frankly speaking, I suppose it has to be at least once every two hours, which is quite often. I don't think that's a big issue since I am a woman and every woman **makes great effort** to maintain her best look, especially in public. Furthermore, mirrors are placed almost everywhere such as in the restrooms, in a working place as decorations, which is too **tempting** for me to ignore.

Vocabulary:

Make great effort to do something: try hard to do something

Tempting (a): something that is tempting is attractive, and makes people want to have it, do it, etc.

Or:

Well, to be honest, I often spend hours in front of mirrors in my private room. This is an essential part of my daily life because I'm really **concerned with** my look.

Vocabulary:

Concern with (phrase) to worry someone with thoughts of someone or something

8.2. Have you ever bought a mirror?

A girl couldn't survive without a decent pocket mirror which is **portable** and convenient bring along anywhere. Collecting these small pieces of art is one of my hobbies, too. Whenever I am **in good mood**, I usually wander around some **flea markets** to pick up some of these vintage, yet tasteful accessories for myself or as gifts for friends and family. There are at least ten pocket mirrors **in my possession** which are beautifully designed with different unique patterns.

Vocabulary:

Portable (a): that is easy to carry or to move

Flea market (n): a market, typically outdoors, selling secondhand goods

In someone's possession: if something is in someone's possession, they have it

Or:

Frankly speaking, I have never bought a mirror in my entire life. This is because I live with my parents in a **fully-furnished** house. And, you know, there is a large mirror which has been hung in the living room for ages.

Vocabulary:

Fully-furnished (adj) luxurious, well-equipped

8.3. Do you think mirrors are necessary /good ornaments?

The answer will be a big yes. They could make a place appear more **spacious** and they could be perfect for those that live in a **cramped** apartment, just like me.

Vocabulary:

Spacious (adj) Having enough or abundant space or room

Cramped (adj) Uncomfortably small or restricted

Or:

It's safe to say architects and interior designers are **making full use of** mirrors in house building and decorating thanks to their **inherent** characteristics and wide **application**. Hence, **there's no doubt that** mirrors are **indispensable** decorations in any constructions. For example, they can be installed in bathrooms or dressing rooms for personal use or sometimes, small pieces of mirrors are placed randomly in someone's house or stores as a mere artwork.

Vocabulary:

Make full use of: to use something well

Inherent (a): that is a basic or permanent part of somebody/something and that cannot be removed

Application (n): the practical use of something, especially a theory, discovery, etc.

There's no doubt that: used for emphasizing that something is definitely true

Indispensable (a): too important to be without

8.4. Do you use a mirror before buying a clothing?

Well, there's an **unspoken** rule every girl should know when going shopping: trying everything on before buying it because **images are for illustration purpose** only, which is particularly true with online shopping. Seeing your reflection in a mirror is an absolute must-do to ensure that piece of clothing actually suits you so that your money and time is **well-spent**.

Vocabulary:

Unspoken (a): not stated; not said in words but understood or agreed between people

Well-spent (a): (of money or time) usefully or profitably expended

8.5. What functions does a mirror have?

First of all, mirrors are commonly used for **personal grooming**, regardless male or female. Hardly can women apply make-up or style their hair without a mirror. Same

goes for men. Besides, in case you haven't noticed, mirrors are architects' and designers' best friends, especially in modern design. Mirror in different shapes and sizes can be placed in a house as decorations or with certain purposes.

Vocabulary:

Grooming (n): the things that you do to keep your clothes and hair clean and neat

9. Dream

9.1. Do you like your dreams at night?

For me, the answer is obviously no. This is mainly because I often dream about the bad experiences in the past, which makes me **have a sinking feeling** when waking up and **put me in such a bad mood all day long**.

Vocabulary:

Have a sinking feeling (idiom) a feeling that something bad is going to happen

Put somebody in a bad mood (idiom) sad; depressed; grouchy; with low spirits

9.2. Do you remember your dream when you wake up?

Well, honestly, I completely forget most dreams I **have been through**. However, sometimes I had **vivid dreams** which regularly haunted me. **Every now and then**, I had really pleasant and meaningful dreams which I could remember well after awakening and I love to **take a trip down memory lane for a while**.

Vocabulary:

To be through (phrase) To have finished something

Vivid dream (phrase) any dream or nightmare which one remembers after awakening

Every now and then (idiom) sometimes

Take a trip down memory lane (idiom) to reminisce over memories of past events, especially happy ones.

Or:

You spend nearly one-third of your life asleep, so remembering your dream is such a challenge. Honestly, I hardly **recall** any of my dreams after waking up. Sometimes, I manage to **visualize** a dream **in graphic detail** just because that dream does bring some strong emotions after I wake up.

Vocabulary:

Recall (v): to remember something

Visualize (v): to form a picture of somebody/something in your mind

9.3. Do you like hearing other's dreams?

By all means. I suppose that dreams represent their current **psychological stress** or struggles that they express themselves in an environment considered safe. Therefore, when I listen to them speaking about their dreams, I can **get an insight into** their body, mind and spirit.

Vocabulary:

By all means (phrase) Of course, certainly

Psychological stress (phrase) under mental, physical, or emotional pressure

Get/gain an insight into (phrase) have the clear understanding of something

Or:

Surprisingly, there are those whose dreams can be **a fortune teller**. Therefore, I prefer listening to mysterious dreams of people surrounding me. They can predict what will happen in the future, which makes me very excited. Hearing other's dreams really **catches my attention**.

Vocabulary:

Fortune teller (n): a person who claims to have magic powers and who tells people what will happen to them in the future

Catch someone's attention: to make someone interested in or excited about something

9.4. Why are dreams so important? /Do you think dreams will affect life?

Well, this is an interesting question. I think we are all aware of how important dream is. **Dreams** motivate us to **move forward**, **overcome obstacles** to fulfill ourselves.

Dream is something **out of reach** only when do people have no passion and patience, as well as **life purposes**. Honestly, I feel pity for whoever lives without dream as they'll never know what they can do and how dreams can shape them.

Vocabulary:

Move forward (phrase verb) make progress

Out of reach (phrase) unobtainable

Life purpose (phrase)

Or:

In fact, a dream is a wish your heart makes. Hence, you usually dream about what you are hoping, so with someone who is **superstitious**, it's good when their dreams turn into a good **precursor**, which makes them feel relieved about the future. Then, **there's no denying that** dreams will affect life **in all ways**.

Superstitious (a): belief that is not based on human reason or scientific knowledge, but is connected with old ideas about magic, etc.

Precursor (n): a person or thing that comes before somebody/something similar and that leads to or influences its development

9.5. What is your dream?

I'm **living the dream** to become a successful businessman who can run a **chain store**.

I'm trying to **fulfill my dream** and hopefully one day it'll **come true**.

Vocabulary:

Living the dream (idiom) do what you really want to do/achieve

Chain store (phrase) a store that is part of a chain of similar stores selling the same type of product, and that are all owned and controlled by the same organization

Fulfill one's dream (phrase) realize one's dream

Come true (phrase) to materialize as expected or hoped

9.6. Do you want to learn more about dreams?

To me, dreams always **beg a question**. I often wonder why we dreams, how dreams occur in our life and how they can predict what will happen in the future. Therefore, I would like to **look into** them more carefully to **figure out** the mysteries lying **beneath** my dreams.

beg a question: if a statement or situation begs the question, it causes you to ask a particular question

look into: to examine the facts about a problem or situation

figure out: to discover

9.7. Do you think dreams will affect life?

In fact, a dream is a wish your heart makes. Hence, you usually dream about what you are hoping, so with someone who is **superstitious**, it's good when their dreams turn into a good **precursor**, which makes them feel relieved about the future. Then, **there's no denying that** dreams will affect life **in all ways**.

Superstitious (a): belief that is not based on human reason or scientific knowledge, but is connected with old ideas about magic, etc.

Precursor (n): a person or thing that comes before somebody/something similar and that leads to or influences its development

10. Houses/Accommodation

10.1. What kind of housing/accommodation do you live in?

For the past 21 years I have lived in a house with my family. And I think if I can move out and start **making a living** on my own, I would try my best to have an independent place where I can plan and design a house layout to **suit myself** since sharing a room or a flat with strangers sounds so **troublesome** to me.

Vocabulary

To afford (v) to be able to financially support/have enough money to pay for Sth

Suit myself (v) to do exactly what you like/want

Troublesome (adj) causing difficulty or annoyance

To make a living (v) to earn enough to support one's self

10.2. What do you usually do in your house/flat/room?

Well definitely I'll spend some **me-time** there. I study, I **chill out** by reading, drawing and dancing **all by myself**. Sometimes I also invite one or two friends to spend time with. We'll watch some movies together and tell each other endless stories.

Chill out (phrasal verb) relax

Me-time (phrase) time for one's self alone

To do Sth all by one's self (phrase) to do Sth alone

10.3. Who do you live with?

I live with my family. There are 5 of us and we all have our own room, which is way more comfortable as the older we grow, the more privacy we need for ourselves. I think our house is big enough for us yet still a **warm and cozy** place that I call home.

10.4. How long have you lived there?

Although during my childhood my family had to move a lot, I've lived in the most recent house for almost ten years. Comparing to the old houses, I think this house has been the best so far.

10.5. Do you plan to live there for a long time?

The answer would be yes if the respondent is my parents, since moving in and out is too time-consuming and exhausting. Cleaning and arranging everything **all over again** would be like **torture** to them. For me, on the other hand, as I'm thinking of moving out to start my adult life, hopefully soon I'll be able to afford to live in a flat or an apartment.

Vocabulary

All over again (idiom) used for saying that you do the whole of something again starting from the beginning, or that the whole of a long process happens again

Torture (n) great physical or mental suffering

10.6. What's the difference between where you are living now and where you have lived in the past?

As I've already mentioned my family moved several times when I was younger. And the most current house where we've been living for about ten years is the best house so far. All of us have separate rooms for our **need of privacy** yet a big dining room where we can spend the whole evenings together watching TV or having dinner.

Vocabulary

Need of Sth/doing Sth (phrase) circumstances in which something is necessary; necessity

10.7. Can you describe the place where you live?/ Please describe the room you live in

Briefly, my **humble** house locates in a small and quite street, so coming home to me is like all the craziness happened outside is left behind. Just beside my house stands a big old tree. I have my own room with walls painted violet, which is kinda a peaceful color. The air outside is fresh. I usually open the window to enjoy the wind and sunshine, which will help cool down my room without an air conditioner. Since I spend most of my time staying at home, my room means the whole world to me. It's like a friend who is always there to **share ups and downs** with me. So yeah, I would always miss my house, my room whenever **I'm away**.

Vocabulary

Humble (adj) having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance

To help (SO) do Sth (v) to make it easier or possible for (someone) to do something by offering them one's services or resources.

To share ups and downs (v) together being through good and bad times

To be away (adj) to or at a distance from a particular place, person, or thing

10.8. Which part of your home do you like the most?

It's the dining room where my family spends our time together. Not only lunch or dinner but all our **family reunions** take place in the dining room where we can enjoy a **harmonious** atmosphere. We always try to keep the family dinner as something we **cannot go a day without**, since for us it's the family bonding that lies behind.

Vocabulary

Family reunions

Harmonious

To go a day without Sth/doing Sth (v) to feel not necessary to do Sth on a day

11. Visitors

11.1. Do you often invite friends to visit your home

I do but only when we have known each other well **for quite a long time**. As most of my friends also enjoy staying inside like me, normally I just invite one friend then we buy some snacks home and exchange some **chitchat** for hours. I sometimes invite 3 to 4 friends so we can have a **girl-night-in** with movies or a small **pyjama party**.

Vocabulary

Chitchat (noun) gossip, casual conversation

pyjama party (n) a social occasion when a group of friends, usually children or young people, stay for the night at one person's house

girl-night-in (n) an evening spent outside of the home by a group of women

11.2. Do you like visitors coming to your home?

Only if I'm informed about the visit. I typically don't like sudden visits that they pay when I have to open the door in my pyjamas. That kind of visitors to me is so impolite. Oh, and I also don't like a big crowd visiting my place. They're too noisy and most of the time I'm afraid of my property secretly being stolen.

11.3. When do visitors come to your home?

Most of my parents' guests or our relatives would pay a visit during daytime, whereas my friends' visits usually end at night like 9 or 10 pm since we may have classes during the day. However I know them well enough so my parents have never complained about it.

11.4. Do you prefer to have friends visit you, or relatives?

Both friends' and relatives' visits are meaningful to me. Since our relatives live miles away, we really appreciate their efforts and time to visit us. My friends actually only come when they're invited, so we don't have much problem with time.

11.5. When someone visits you, how do you usually show hospitality (or, entertain them)?

Well first I would offer them some drinks like cool water or coke. If it's my parents' guest, I may politely answer some questions if they ask, otherwise I'll just **head back to my room** as my presence actually would make them feel more inconvenient to start the talk.

Vocabulary

To head back SwH (v) to return to the place from which you recently came

12. Television

12.1. Do you often watch TV?

I actually prefer watching TV to surfing the Internet due to its selectivity and accessibility. Because the audience can be children, teenagers and families, the content of TV programs is examined carefully and suitable time frame is arranged in order to avoid having negative impacts on them.

12.2. What's your favourite TV programme?

Definitely music channels such as MTV or V-channel. These channels offer a wide variety of music everyday. In addition, they also interact with their audience by allowing them to vote for the Top 20 songs of each week or to play the songs they requested.

12.3. What types of TV programme are popular in your country?

In my country these days reality shows and comedy shows are among the most popular TV programs. I guess it's because its content is suitable for audience of any age from children to the elderly. The fans of reality shows feel interactive and familiar with the

competitors while that of comedy shows generally want to be entertained with jokes and laughters.

12.4. Do you ever watch foreign programs or films?

I definitely did enjoy quite a lot of shows and programs, from music, movies, fashion, news and scientific documentaries since the foreign are so good at visual editings and content management. Most of them are in English because I'm more familiar with this language compare to French or Japanese.

12.5. What (types of) programmes did you watch when you were a child?

Like other children, I watched a number of cartoons and music programs for children when I was a child. Tom and Jerry, Barbie, Disney series are my favorite which still get me excited whenever I see them on TV now. My mom said I also was kinda attracted to music programs for children that I focused on them completely while eating.

12.6. Do you think television has changed in the past few decades?/ (Possibly) Do you think television has changed since you were a child?

Televisions indeed have been changing remarkably for the past few years. The technology has become so innovative and competitive to meet the customers' high demand on entertainment. The variety of TV programs is no longer limited to national level but has reached to a number of foreign countries; and is significantly diversifying in content for audience preference.

Vocabulary

To be innovative (adj): to be developed in technology

To meet one's demand on Sth (v): to provide SO with Sth/to provide Sth for SO

To diversify (v): to vary, to have many choices available

12.7. Has television changed your life in any way?

I think watching TV has become a habit that I would hardly change. My family always watch news while having dinner together. Personally, I'd love watching TV for relaxing after studying as well as keeping myself updated on showbiz, music, movies, landscape discoveries and fields of science. Thus as long as I do not become a couch potato, TV

has always played an important role in my life, making my life more colorful and opening in front of my eyes the places I've never been to.

Vocabulary

Couch potato (phrase): a person who is addicted to watching TV

To play an important/key/crucial role in Sth (phrase): to be essential

13. Outdoor activity

13.1. What do you do in your spare time?

Because I'd prefer staying at home, I spend a lot of my spare time on my hobbies. Usually I'll start by turning on some music. If I have **plenty of** time, I'll **get straight to** dancing or drawing. Otherwise, if it's just a **quick break**, social network would definitely a good choice.

Vocabulary

To **get straight to (v)** to immediately proceed Sth

Plenty of something (expression) lots of something, enough of something

13.2. Do you like outdoor activities?

Sadly I must say no. Since getting outdoor involves choosing clothes, meeting people and sometimes standing the weather, so most of the time I'd prefer staying inside. If I'm free I can invite some friends to **come over**. We can still have fun without **going out**.

Vocabulary

To **come over (phrasal verb)** to pay a visit

To **go out ((phrasal verb)** to have fun outside

13.3. What outdoor activities do you (most) like to do?

The outdoor activity I like to do best is my photography tour, especially when the weather is perfectly fine. I would walk around campus to find inspiration. It could be a flower, the sunshine or the road I walk everyday.

13.4. How often do you do that?

For the past few weeks I'm so busy that I hardly have time to go on my photography tours. Previously I get outside three times a week and depending on the **weather condition**, I could go out more or less often than that.

13.5. What outdoor sports do you like? (Why?)

To be honest, I'm really into swimming, especially during the summer. Not only is swimming good for my health, but it also helps me get **in shape**. Besides, I sometimes **go jogging** to enjoy fresh air.

Vocabulary

In shape (idiom) in good health, fit, strong

13.6. How much time do you spend outdoors every week?

As I've already mentioned, I'm a little bit too busy these days for any physical exercises. If going to the supermarket or **go window-shopping** are also considered as 'getting outdoors' then yeah, I guess I get outdoor once a week.

Vocabulary

To go window-shopping (v) to just have a look around the shops

13.7. How often do you do outdoor activities?

I'm afraid not too often. I mean **it's not in my favor** now. These days I'm so busy that most of the time I get outdoor is to go to school. Although I still hang out with friends, basically we prefer having a drink and a little chit chat instead of **doing some sports**.

Vocabulary

In someone's favor (expression) liked by someone

To do some sports (v) to play sports

13.8. What (types of) outdoor activities are popular in your country?

I think sports is particularly popular nowadays, as keeping fit is becoming more demanding. The street activities such as skateboarding, street-performing are also growing more and more popular among the younger generation.

13.7. How and where do people in your country usually socialize?

It can be seen that while a number of adults prefer quiet places such as coffee shops to have a little chat with people they know, the young generation loves to get outdoor

or steps out of their **comfort zone**, spending their fresh energy on social activities to expand their social network.

Vocabulary

Comfort zone (n) a place, a situation or a level where SO feels confident and comfortable

14. Photos

14.1. Do you like to take photographs? Why?

If it were 3 to 4 years ago the answer would be a big no. But now it has become one of my hobbies and I'm actually thinking of learning more about it. I had no idea what I can do with my iPhone until I learned **to make use of** its wonderful camera as well as some miracle apps. Unlike some people, I indeed want my photos to look unique, lively and a little bit professional.

Vocabulary

To make use of (v) to use someone or something for a particular purpose, especially one that brings a benefit to you

14.2. Do you prefer to take photos yourself or to have other people take your photos? Why?

It would be way more comfortable taking photos myself, as I can **see crystal-clear** how ridiculous my face expression looks like or if there's something on my hair or stuck between my teeth. And in case it's a scenery photo, I can apply the techniques I've learned to produce stunning photos.

Vocabulary

Crystal-clear (adj) absolutely clear

14.3. How long have you liked taking photographs?

Just recently. As a final year student, I no longer can spend hours on drawing, reading or singing. Only photography which is way more instant suits me now to **document my life**. And as I enjoy my life on this campus, for example the road I walk to school

everyday, the sunset, the rainbow, the trees, photography is the best way to **store my memories**.

Vocabulary

Document one's life (expression) record the detail of one's life

14.4. In what situations do you take photographs?

As I've mentioned, I snap a photo of anything that catches my eyes when I'm **in a good mood**. So I take photos when my friends and I **hang out** or when I participate in social activities of the university and meet amazing people. However, **when it comes to** practicing for professional photography, I prefer taking photos of scenery and foods.

Vocabulary

In a good mood (idiom) a cheerful, well-disposed state of mind

When it comes to Sth/V-ing (adv) as for something; speaking about something

14.5. What kind of photos do you like to take? Why?

Food and scenery are definitely my inspiration. I just can't **sit still** when beautiful breakfasts and stunning landscape keep appearing on my Instagram everyday. **What is more**, it is my **natural instinct** that helps me to go find the simple uniqueness of my university, namely the sunset, the lake, the trees and flowers and show people how beautiful my university is. However, I'm not good at taking photos of people so activities or street-life is not my style.

Vocabulary

Sit still (idiom) to remain seated

Natural instinct (collocation) the way people or animals *naturally* react or behave, without having to think or learn

14.6. How (why) did you become interested in photography?

The situation was quite **all of a sudden**. I posted some scenery photos I took **on the spur of the moment** on Instagram and received lots of compliments, even from those whom I'm not following. Then I realized I should develop this skill, you know, should take it seriously and **keep up the good work**. And the more I learn about it, the more passionate I become.

Vocabulary

On the spur of the moment (idiom) do without planning, suddenly

All of a sudden (idiom) suddenly

To keep up the good work (phrase) used to encourage SO for continuing what they are doing well

14.7. How often do you take photographs?

Not too often I must say. Since I really don't like posting boring photos with the same object all the time, so timing is everything. I believe my **guts** will know exactly when and how I should flick to produce high-quality photos.

Vocabulary

Guts (n) to be used in reference to a feeling or reaction based on an instinctive emotional response rather than considered thought.

14.8. Do you prefer to take pictures of people or of scenery?

I think I'm gonna go for taking scenery photos. As a beginner, the knowledge of human facial expression, the part that needs focus, the harmonization between them and their surroundings are a bit too advanced for me. I can't really make the person in my photo become lively as I do with the scenery. Besides, looking at the **beauty of nature** and capturing it is kind of **mind-purifying** to me and is a good way to escape from the **artificial** world. So yeah, scenery is safer and more enjoyable.

Vocabulary

Mind-purifying (adj) make your mind naturally pure, free from negative thoughts

14.9. Who do you take photos of?

Although I'm not good at taking photos of people, I do **take selfies** with new friends whom I meet when I participate in social activities. To me it's more like a reminder or something **to look back**, reminding me that yeah, this time last year I went out, I met amazing people and had lots of fun.

Vocabulary

To look back (v) to think about a time or event in the past

14.10. How do you keep your photos?

Printing the photos out, making an album or sticking them on the wall for decoration sound so common and also interesting. But I don't think photos are worth that much time and budget, unless what I captured is apparently important to me, otherwise I only keep them in my iPhone.

14.11. Do you keep your photographs on your computer?

I don't think I need to do so. Firstly, because my memory is somewhat similar to **goldfish memory**, storing in different devices would drive me crazy. Plus, my iPhone has large memory storage so I think I won't need computer for storage.

Vocabulary

Goldfish memory (n) SO who quickly forgets things

14.12. Are there any photos on the walls of your house?

Since my parents love decorating our house, putting photos nicely on the walls of my house is an essential part of their decoration style. Some photos go with frame or plastic cover, some are stucked directly onto the wall in heart-shaped. However, it's quite ridiculous for me to see myself grinning everywhere in the house so I told them to let me decorate my room on my own.

Vocabulary

To see one's-self doing Sth (n) to have an eye on SO doing Sth

On my own (adv) do Sth alone

14.13. Do you frame (or have you framed) any of your photos? yes, which?& why?

Although I don't usually print my photos out, I think I would store some photos of me with my high school friends or me with my family. And framing helps preventing scratching and is good for long-term storage, so this is probably a good alternative beside albums.

14.14. Do you prefer to send postcards to people or to send photos that you took yourself? (Why?)

Firstly, the postcards are made of thicker paper, which makes it way more convenient for long-term storage as well as decoration. Secondly, the process of sending and

receiving postcards appeared to be simpler and faster compared to photos. For those reasons I think I probably go with sending postcards.

15. Teachers

15.1. What kinds of teachers do you like best?

My favorite kind of teacher is someone who is helpful, quite firm and **has high expectations** for students, especially if he/she teaches the subject I love. That kind of teachers always have admirable passion for their job which motivates me to work harder in order to impress them.

Vocabulary

To have high expectations for SO (v) to strongly believe that someone will or should achieve something

15.2. Who was your favorite teacher when you were young?

Definitely my Literature teachers in my high school. The first reason is because Literature is my favorite subject that I believed my knowledge and efforts could impress the teachers. Secondly, my Literature teachers tended to have a soft voice and inspiring teaching style that got me excited whenever the class began.

15.3. Would you want to be a teacher in the future?

I think I would, but I want to become a lecturer instead. Although teaching has always been my dream job since I was a kid, my **specialization** is not **pedagogy**, which makes it difficult for me to teach at schools.

Vocabulary

Specialization (n) The process of concentrating on and becoming expert in a particular subject or skill

Pedagogy (n) The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept

15.4. Have you ever had bad teachers before?

Luckily I haven't met such an evil teacher. I think as long as you're hard-working and you do all the homework, learn the lessons well enough and don't break any school's regulations, your name shall not appear on the teachers' **blacklist**.

Vocabulary

Blacklist (n) A list of people or groups regarded as unacceptable or untrustworthy and often marked down for punishment or exclusion

16. Indoor Games

16.1. Do you play any indoor games?

I don't **have an inborn talent for** sports but have developed a **strong passion for** table tennis - an indoor game I **took up** during my university. At other times, I show a **big preference for** badminton, which boosts my height and increases my flexibility greatly.

16.2. Do you prefer to play indoor games or outdoor games?

If I were to **take a pick**, I'd definitely go for indoor games for the simple reason that in this tropical country, there are **frequent downpours**. So I guess it's quite inconvenient if you have a match of any game **in bad weather condition**. **In this respect**, indoor games **serve a better purpose**.

16.3. What indoor games did you play when you were a child?

There are a couple of games, actually, but the one I want to **single out** the most is badminton. Although most people would go to the park for a match of this game, I'd rather go to some clubs where it is played indoors. And, I'm a fan of this sport since I was **knee high to a grasshopper**.

16.4. Is there any particular indoor game that you liked?

Just as I have mentioned, I have a **particularly strong passion for** a range of indoor games, not because I **fear the open outdoors** but it seems pretty convenient to play those games. For me, **nothing compares to** badminton **when it comes to** strengthening your stamina and increasing your body agility.

16.5. What sorts of indoor games do children play now?

As far as I'm concerned, the kids today only go for one or two types of indoor sports, instead they are more **hooked** on outdoor activities simply because they are vibrant and dynamic than the previous generations. One of the most popular game I guess is chess as it involves little movement and requires only a board to play.

17. Video Games

17.1. What is the benefit of video games?

Video games can be very entertaining. Users, or gamers, are transported into virtual worlds which are often more exciting and engaging than real-life pastimes. They can shoot their opponents in the games, chat with them and having a blast with their virtual characters.

17.2. Can video games be educational?

From an educational perspective, these games encourage imagination and creativity, as well as concentration, logical thinking and problem solving, all of which are useful skills outside the gaming context. Furthermore, it has been shown that computer simulation games can improve users' motor skills and help to prepare them for real-world tasks, such as flying a plane.

17.3. What are the drawbacks of video games?

Gaming can be highly addictive because users are constantly given scores, new targets and frequent rewards to keep them playing. Many children now spend hours each day trying to progress through the levels of a game or to get a higher score than their friends. This type of addiction can have effects ranging from lack of sleep to problems at school, when homework is sacrificed for a few more hours on the computer or console. The rise in obesity in recent years has also been linked in part to the sedentary lifestyle and lack of exercise that often accompany gaming addiction.

17.4. What are the benefits of computer games?

Computer games have many educational benefits, for example, they help children develop problem-solving and analytical skills, such as drawing conclusions, seeking alternatives and making predictions. Computer games increase cognitive skills and

encourage practical experience. They are designed to encourage creativity, initiatives and mental power. Many computer games are used to teach and reinforce academic subjects, e. g. some computer games enhance mathematical skills. Computer games are designed to be entertaining; most computer games offer a multiplayer function; inviting people to share their entertainment.

17.5. What are the drawbacks of computer games?

Most computer games encourage violent tendencies such as aggression, antisocial behaviour and recklessness. There are many games which show graphic fight scenes where the most brutal is most applauded. The language tends to be violent. Moreover, computer games can not only decrease interaction and social skills, but it also causes psychological and mental problems tension.

18. Music

18.1. Do you often (like to) listen to music? Or Do you like listening to songs?

So far I haven't met anyone who dislikes listening to music. However, when the **workload** is too heavy that requires me to **stay highly focused**, music is a **huge distractor**. Unlike many people who like listening to instrumental music because it highly benefits for their concentration and study, in my case the music makes me feel instantly sleepy.

18.2. When do you listen to music?

Well, music is essential to human in the whole world so I'm **no exception**. I usually listen to cheerful music when I need motivation while sad music is my **go-to choice** during emotional days.

Vocabulary

To be no exception (adj) if someone or something is no exception, they are the same as all others so they can be included in a general statement

18.3. How much time do you spend listening to music every day?

As I've mentioned I prefer working in silence. **To put it simply**, no music is allowed during my working hours. After a long day at school, I probably want to **chill out** for like half an hour with music to help me stay energetic so I can get back to work later.

Vocabulary

To put it simply (expression) used for saying that you are explaining something in a clear and simple way

Chill out (phrasal verb) to relax

18.4. What kinds of music do you like to listen to? Or What's your favorite kind of music?

My music taste varies widely from West to East and from the 90s to modern EDM. But if Korean pop is considered as a kind of music, then yeah, that's my favorite of all time. More than half of my playlists are Korean songs and I always **keep myself updated** with the news related to Korean showbiz.

Vocabulary

To keep updated (v) to follow a celebrity by frequently reading news about them

18.5. Have you ever been to a concert before? Or Have you ever been to a musical performance?

Once in a blue moon I attend a concert, since the ticket price for foreign artists' concerts is so **out of my reach** that I can only stay home and watch online. It was 2014 that I finally did go to a concert **on my own**, obviously it was an international music concert. It was absolutely **mind-blowing** and unforgettable for me.

Vocabulary

Once in a blue moon (idiom) rarely

Out of my reach (idiom) to be unable to afford

On one's own (idiom) Responsible for oneself, independent of outside help or control

Mind-blowing (adj) Sth overwhelmingly impressive

18.6. Do you like to listen to live music?

Unless it's live at a coffee shop, where literally there are only you and music, then yeah I would love to. But I would **change my mind** if it's a concert. The crowd is too crazy. It's completely **a mess** that most of the time I **end up** having serious dizzy and headache.

18.7. When did you start listening to this type of music?

Since the day a friend of mine introduced her favorite group to me. She **couldn't help herself talking on and on** about them that I thought I somehow needed to catch up with her. And the more I know about Korean pop, the more passionate I've become.

Couldn't help one's self doing Sth (n) continuously doing Sth

On and on (expression) continually; at tedious length

18.8. Where do you listen to it?

Almost everywhere, except for classroom. It's the **golden era** of mobile devices, everyone carries earphone and phone with them all the time, music therefore **is on their fingertips**.

Golden era (n) a certain period of time that Sth vastly develops

On their fingertips (phrase) easy to reach

18.9. How do you feel when you listen to this music?

Well I'm a **type of person** whose mood is easily affected by what I'm listening to, thus as the music changes, my mood also fluctuates. But most of the time, listening to some music helps me **pick up my energy** and chill a bit.

Vocabulary

To be a type of person (that) (phrase) to belong to a group of people who share a similar characteristic

Pick up my energy (phrasal verb) to get better, stronger

18.10. Have you ever learned to play a musical instrument?

I learned to play the organ when I was in kindergarten. It was quite funny because I **started out** as one of the performers, then my teacher told my mom that I had better play the organ instead of performing, so I became her trainee and it continued for around 4 to 5 years until I was 10.

Vocabulary

To start out (v) to begin

18.11. Is music an important subject at school in your country?

Music is one of the **compulsory** subjects for primary and secondary students in my country. However, mainly singing is focused. We can also add some movements to make the songs more lively. Only those who are selected for the big performances are allowed to use musical instruments.

Vocabulary

Compulsory (adj) to be required

18.12. Did you often listen to music when you were a child? (If yes give details.)

Since my parents are **music-lovers** and they also have very good tastes, I was exposed to the old kinds of music at a very young age. Sometimes my mom **sang me to sleep** with her **lullabies**. Although I can't get the message at that time, my mom said that I **buoyed up** when listening to them.

Vocabulary

Bouyed up (adj) feel cheerful

18.13. What kinds of music are (most) popular in your country?

Beside pop music, the young generation nowadays expose to a number of different types of music. It is indeed difficult to tell which is the most **in demand**, since from my point of view each type has roughly the same popularity. But I guess pop music is the most **sought-after** now. At least I've never met someone who completely doesn't know a single pop song.

Vocabulary

Sought-after (adj) in demand

18.14. Do you like traditional songs?

Well, it's easy for me to name some traditional songs, some of which are even quite familiar to me. But to be honest, I think **I'm not that into** this kind of music.

19. Study

19.1. Describe your education

I graduated from High School for the Gifted and headed to the International University because I think 2-year studying at this university would prepare me well, especially my English before I finish another 2 years abroad at the University of Nottingham.

19.2. What is your area of specialization?

I'm currently taking Plant Biotechnology. I've committed to Biology since I was in high school and I think a **shift** to a field where Biology and advanced technology are associated would be interesting and promising for my future career.

19.3. Why did you choose to study that major?

There are many reasons for my choice. As I've already explained about my long-term interest in Biology and plants, another reason could be because of science itself, since I've found my personalities have changed in a positive way, you know, like I've become more patient and skillful.

19.4. Do you like your major? (Why?/Why not?)

To tell you the truth it was quite challenging for me **at first**, because the university's requirements are especially high and you know science itself highly demands skillful hands and curious mind. However, as time goes by I think I'm getting used to the amount of pressure and actually enjoy my study.

19.5. What kind of school did you go to as a child?

Well just like most of the pupils, I spent five years at the government's primary school. It took me only 10 minutes to go to school and I had my parents take me to school everyday. Classes start at 7 in the morning and end at 5 in the evening.

19.6. What was your favourite subject as a child?

To tell you the truth, I was quite good at Literature back then. Thus I always tried my best to get high score and impressed my teacher.

19.7. (Possibly) Are you looking forward to working?

To be honest, working is actually my **plan B** just in case I need to **make ends meet**. In the future I think my higher degree is my priority.

Vocabulary

Plan B (n) back-up plan

To make ends meet (v) to make money, to earn a living

20. Housework

20.1. Do you often do housework?

Since I am no longer living with my family, I have to take care of my own place without any assistance from other siblings with the housework. Due to **time constraint** and **health condition**, I only do my chores 2 times per week. My work and studying **consume** most of my time and it's not until after 7 in the evening do I come back to my apartment. I am so mentally and physically **exhausted** by then that I save all the housework for midweek and weekend.

Vocabulary

Time constraint: time limitation or restriction

Health condition:

Consume (v): to use something, especially fuel, energy or time

Exhausted (a): very tired

20.2. Do you like doing housework?

Personally, I don't think anybody likes to do housework but, of course, there will be exceptions. Since I only **manage to** do my chores twice a week only not to turn my apartment into a garbage dump, I cannot say I like doing it. However, for some people, cleaning houses or doing dishes have them **occupied** and free their mind from other **bothersome** issues, at least temporarily.

Vocabulary

Manage to do something: to succeed in doing something, especially something that needs a lot of effort or skill

Occupy (v): to fill or use a space, an area or an amount of time

Bothersome (a): causing trouble or difficulty

20.3. Do you think children should do housework?

Well, obviously, children should be encouraged to share housework with other family members to **cultivate** their **sense of responsibility** and **appreciation**. Of course, it doesn't have to be anything too **extreme**. Some little helpful deeds such as keeping their toys from **scattering** all over the place or folding their own clothes are meaningful enough.

Vocabulary

Cultivate (v): to develop an attitude, a way of talking or behaving, etc.

Sense of responsibility | Sense of appreciation

Extreme (a): serious or severe

Scatter (v): to throw or drop things in different directions so that they cover an area of ground

20.4. How much time do people in your country spend doing housework?

It's hard to say the average amount of time since each family has their own **arrangement**. However, I believe it wouldn't **exceed** two hours per day because of people's busy schedule, especially in the **hustle and bustle** of today's lifestyle. Necessary chores that cannot be delayed such as cooking, dish washing or house cleaning are usually done daily, meanwhile less emergent housework can be **put off** until weekend like groceries shopping or gardening.

Vocabulary

Arrangement (n): a plan or preparation that you make so that something can happen

Exceed (v): to be greater than a particular number or amount

Hustle and bustle: a large amount of activity and work, usually in a noisy surrounding

Put off (phrasal verb): to change something to a later time or date; delay

21. Activity near water

21.1. What activities would you do if you were spending some leisure time at a beach or near the ocean?

Obviously I'd first take some picture. The ocean looks stunning at any time to me. Then I'll go swimming. There's no such thing more relaxing than surfing and chasing big waves. Then probably I'll build some sandcastle or just lie down and enjoy the fresh air.

21.2. Why do some people like water sports?

The first reason that pops up in my mind is because people want to be immersed in water which is ideal for the hot summer days. Water is also believed to have the capability of **easing our mind**, which might explain why people love swimming. Besides, **when it comes to** diving, surfing or canoeing, the story is totally different. Extreme sports under the water bring about unforgettable experiences with nature.

21.3. Do you think the government should invest money in developing facilities for water sports?

Since I'm not a fan of **aquatic** sports, what I know about the current problem of facilities is actually limited. But personally, I think it depends on whether that type of water sports worths investing in. If it serves for national or international competitions, definitely upgrading should be allowed.

21.4. Do you think that human activity is posing a threat to the oceans of the world? What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of travelling on the ocean?

There are indeed a large number of human activities that have serious impacts on the oceans, namely fishing, shipping, **oil spillage** and tourism. Some of the consequences remain unsolved for many years. Along with other activities taking place on land, human beings are continuously destroying the nature. There is such a wonderful world under the sea that almost every human desires to discover. Travelling is a good mean to kick-start. However, a multitude of accidents have occurred. Therefore, travelers' safety is one of the top concerns.

Vocabulary

Oil spillage (n) a quantity of liquid that has spilled or been spilled

21.5. Do you think it's important for children to learn how to swim?

It is extremely important for children to learn swimming. A number of accidents have taken place over the past few years due to parents' unawareness. Thus, children need to be taught to swim so they can protect themselves.

21.6. Do you think it's best for a child to be taught to swim by a parent or by someone else?

Of course, because a child should be taught how to swim to avoid being vulnerable by drowning. However, their parents should also be there with their children to encourage him/her or protect him/her.

22. Music & Instruments

22.1. Do you think children should learn to play musical instruments?

I think it's not a must but it'll definitely make the children's life more colorful. They could play the instrument in their spare time and it can become their hobby. However, I don't like the fact that a lot of parents are forcing their children to learn musical instruments. I think they should respect their children's choice.

22.2. Have you learned to play any musical instrument?

Yes. I can play guitar, though not very well. I started learning guitar two years ago. The primary initiative was to entertain my girlfriend, though she left me for another person soon after I started. It was heart-breaking, but I didn't stop, because I needed something to hang on to, a goal. I'm happy now and I'll keep on playing my guitar, whoever I may play for.

22.3. Do you play any instrument? And what is it?

Actually, I am not a big fan of instruments. I enjoy listening to music, but **performing instruments is not my strong suit**. I did learn to play the piano for a couple of months when I was little, but I **ended up quitting**. I think this whole hobby thing **requires music talent**, which I definitely don't have.

22.4. What might be the best age to start learning to play a musical instrument?

I'd say, as early as possible, because learning a musical instrument requires a lot of practice. When one is young, his/her fingers are often very agile. And they are quick to learn. But when they grow older, their fingers become stiffer and they probably don't have enough time because of their busy study or work.

22.5. Do men and women play different kinds of musical instruments?

Well, it's hard to say. For one thing, I haven't paid much to what kinds of musical instruments people are playing. For another, from what I see and what I hear, nowadays, men and women are playing all kinds of instruments as they are interested in.

22.6. What kind of natural sound do you love to listen to? And explain why.

I love to listen to birds chirping, leaves rustling, rain falling onto the ground, waves lapping over the beach and streams gurgling down in the valley. They are the real sound of nature. The beauty is indescribable.

22.7. Do you love listening to music?

Absolutely, I am a big fan of music. Music can always weave its magic to give people different feelings. And people say that music speaks international languages. I think it is totally true. Say, people from different countries can all appreciate the same music.

22.8. What kinds of music do you love listening to?

I love so many kinds of music, such as R&B, soul, new age, reggae and blues. Among all these kinds of music, I love R&B most. When R&B singers sing, they perform with all their heart and soul. And I can feel overwhelming emotions coming out from their voice.

22.9. Where and when do you usually listen to music?

Actually, I always take my iPod with me, so basically, I can listen to music anywhere and anytime I want. The MP3 has been such a blessing! Thanks to the inventor of the MP3, my music world is awesome!

22.10. Do you want to be a singer?

Well, from what I've known, being a singer is not easy at all. It's not just about performing, but it's also involved in interaction with fans and other colleagues. Based

on what I've known about showbiz, and even the music industry in general, I think that I don't belong to that world.

Vocabulary

Not at all (phrase) certainly not

23. Chocolate

23.1. How often do you eat chocolate?

Well mostly I don't buy myself chocolate, since it's quite pricey and not my favorite snack. Only when someone gives me chocolate will I eat some.

23.2. What's your favorite flavor?

Though I'm **not addicted** to chocolate, I do have my **all-time favorite** flavor, which is the white chocolate. Since I **have a sweet tooth**, dark chocolate would be too bitter for me. Meanwhile, milk chocolate just isn't sweet enough. So white chocolate is just a perfect fit.

Vocabulary

All---time favorite (noun) favorite of all choices, during all times

To have a sweet tooth (n) to like sweet foods

23.3. When was the first time you ate chocolate?

I think most of the children at that time were a fan of M&M chocolate and I was no exception. Now that my taste changed though, still I enjoy having some M&M snacks.

23.4. Is chocolate popular in your country?

There are a variety of chocolate brands with different price range and quality available in the market nowadays. Thanks to the **health benefits** that it offers for human, consuming chocolate at a suitable level is encouraged. The sweetness of chocolate also makes it a common present that men choose to give their beloved women in special days, especially Valentine's Day or International Women's Day.

23.5. Is chocolate good for our health?

Scientifically, chocolate provides human a number of **health benefits**. Firstly, eating chocolate helps improve our mood, even when we're **under pressure**. Secondly, consuming chocolate at a reasonable amount is good for **cardiovascular system**. Interestingly, chocolate has been proved to contain **antioxidants**, which benefits for women as well.

Vocabulary

Cardiovascular system (n) The system that circulates blood and lymph through the body, consisting of the heart, blood vessels, blood, lymph, and the lymphatic vessels and glands

To benefit for (v) to provide advantages to SO

Antioxidant (n) a substance such as vitamin C or E that removes potentially damaging oxidizing agents in a living organism.

24. Holidays

24.1. What public holidays do you have in your country?

My country has a great range of public holidays but to me the most important one is the [____]. It is considered as a national holiday, which is annually celebrated on [____]. These days are to celebrate the end of the War and **usher in** a new era of peace and reunification

24.2. Do people in your country celebrate foreign festivals?

Of course we do. We celebrate Christmas with extraordinarily colorful lights and decorations similar to those found in Western countries. It is a grand party when the fun-loving and sociable citizens, whether being a Christian or not, celebrate with gusto. Besides, there are also sparkling lighting decorations on the streets and in front of houses, turning particular places into Christmas area. Usually the shops will have their signs advertising sales for Christmas seasons, and the piercing cold is a wonderful chance for people to get dressed up.

24.3. What do you usually do during public holidays?

Well, I often spend my time gathering with my beloved family and friends. Maybe go shopping and **take advantage of** the sales which my favorite shops are offering or **hanging out with** friends and having a good time at some entertaining places.

24.4. Do you like short holidays or long holidays?

Both options have their own merits, but if I have to choose one, I would pick short holidays. The reason for this is that I can feel more prepared to **go back to study** and feel **less fatigued** than spending a week for playing or travelling. The purpose of holiday should be to give people **a temporary rest** and help them **recharge the batteries for a fresh period ahead**. Therefore, it is not recommended that people **turn their days off** into a long holiday, **indulge themselves** and **neglect their study and work**

25. Friends

25.1. Do you think friends are important in your life?

Sure, they **play an important role in my life**. I agree that **friends are your relatives chosen by yourself**. My friends **accompany me when I am going through ups and downs**. I think your **happiness will be doubled and sadness will be halved** if they are shared by your friends. In addition to that, good friends **offer me valuable suggestions** when I feel lost.

Or:

Well, honestly, besides my family, my friends **play an important role in** my life. With them, I am able to share all the problems that I find difficult to talk to my parents. They're also the ones who I can **trust** and enjoy the most beautiful moments of my youth.

25.2. What does friendship mean to you?

I think friendship is a necessary part of life. Friendship, in my opinion, means you have somebody who can **share your happiness and pain**. Friends are those **whom you feel easy with**. They are always your good listeners. And they are the people you can **discuss the interesting issues with**.

25.3. How can be a good friend to others?

A good friend must be supportive, loyal and trustworthy. Whenever you need him, he will be there. He can share happiness and sorrow with you.

25.4. What qualities do you value in your best friend?

Honesty and faith, I think, are the most important. We needn't agree on everything, but we can trust each other totally. I don't like being with a person who always tells lies. It's too boring to judge all the time whether he is telling the truth or not. If I **go astray** he will point it to me frankly without hesitation. I don't like the friends who often **flatter** me. In fact they are not real friends.

Or:

Well, it's hard to say anything. Though making friends is easy, **maintaining** that relationship is much harder. Therefore, I think my best friends are those who should be honest and **sympathetic** because I am a kind of person that prefers the truth and easily **get affected** my emotions.

25.5. How do people make friends with others? How do you make new friends?

Besides being classmates and colleagues, I think the most common way to make friends is through other friends. It is especially true for Vietnamese, because we are usually **introverted and not used to introducing ourselves to strangers**. In addition, with the development of the Internet more and more young people enjoy **making friends online**.

Or:

Let me see, I come from a country which is agricultural, so it means that the people are very friendly and **warm-hearted**. In my country, it is very easy to make friends just by saying hello to someone, then asking about other's health. Sometimes, just a smile can bring people close to each other.

25.6. What are the differences between adults and children in making friends?

I think children make friends just for playing together. If they can play with each other, they will become good friends. A toy or a candy can make them become friends. **Their friendship is rather pure**. But of course they are likely to **break up easily and make up again**. When they grow up, they will not **make friends very readily**. Adults choose friends

more cautiously. And they may have many kinds of friends, such as business partners, colleagues. The friendship has some profits or advantages for them.

Or:

Well, this question is such an interesting one. In fact, adults and children do have a difference in making friends **owing to** their age and their interests. While adults prefer friends who have the same jobs and goals in life, children make friends as they simply want to find someone who can play and have fun with them.

25.7. Where do young people usually meet in your city?

Well, it's difficult to say because there are many **good meeting places** in my city, like cafes, cinemas or parks. **As far as I am concerned,** I usually meet my friends in the cafes. They have **comfortable seats and pleasant background** music. We can chat without being disturbed while **enjoying a cup of coffee or juice.** If the weather is fine we will go to the parks. It is agreeable to sit on the bench near the lake, enjoying the pleasant scenery far away.

25.8. Have you made any friends on the Internet?

Yes, I'm keen on surfing the Internet, especially chatting with others on Facebook. I have made many friends via the Internet. In my opinion, they are not different from other friends of mine. We know each other's personal information and trust each other. We often discuss something we are both interested in. The only difference is that we meet online but not in real places

25.9. How can you keep in touch with your friends if you two are not seeing each other frequently?

Everything becomes easy with modern technology. We call each other or send messages. Sometimes we chat online and even see each other on the screen with the help of a small camera. We often send pictures and letters by Internet as well.

25.10. Do you prefer to spend time with friends or alone?

To me, friends are the best thing that I've ever had, so whenever I am free, I usually would like to spend time with my **beloved** friends. We often **hang out** at the coffee shop in the weekends, **gossiping** about our daily **issues**.

25.11. Do you have many friends?

Oh, many friends? I am a kind of person who is **fun-loving** and outgoing. Therefore, that I have many friends is just a matter of time. I have my friends, most of whom are my classmates from my high school and my university. We find it very exciting to **be friends** for such a long time.

25.12. Do you like meeting new people?

Honestly, I am a kind of person who is very **reserved** and quite, so I prefer meeting my acquaintances rather than try to make new friends. I don't like meeting new people since I have to start all the things to **get to know** those and **balance** the new relationship, which takes a lot time and efforts.

25.13. What kind of friend do you want to meet in the future?

In the future? Oh well, I prefer making friends who are better than me both in **general knowledge** and **soft skills**. Therefore, in the future, I would like to meet friends that may **set the same goals** as mine in their careers and in their lives. Besides, those who **master** in English do catch my attention a lot since English is my favorite language.

26. Sunny days

26.1. Do you like sunny days?

I definitely love sunny days, on which I can **hang out** with friends or do some sports. It is even better with the winds blowing. Sunny days are somehow helpful for laundry as well as cleaning both inside and outside the house.

26.2. What do you like to do when it's a sunny day?

I'd love to participate in some outdoor activities under the sun like meeting up with some friends or do some sports, especially swimming. Or I'll **grab the chance** for a photography tour. Everything becomes so clear and stunning on sunny days, no matter it's **early in the morning** or **late in the afternoon**, as long as the sun shines, I'm sure I'll find inspiration almost everywhere.

Vocabulary

To **grab the chance** (v) to have an opportunity to do Sth

26.3. Would you like to stay at home or go outside when the weather is great?

I think I would say it depends on my mood and my **workload**. I definitely cannot go out enjoy myself if my work is still a mess, even though it was such nice weather. And unless I feel super energetic and motivated, I think most of the time I'd prefer staying inside, no matter how the sun shines or how cool the weather is.

26.4. Are there many sunny days in your hometown?

It is a modern big city so unless it's our rainy season, otherwise the sun would shine most of the time, either during one day or the whole year. Sometimes the temperature rises so high that it feels like burning, that's when people prefer staying indoor enjoying the cool air produced by air conditioners.

27. Handwriting

27.1. Do you often write things?/ At work or in your studies, do you often write things?/Do you write everyday?

I love writing I must say. Writing helps me stay focus and organize things way more effectively. In class I always have my pen and notebook ready to take some notes and when going out I type my notes on the phone.

27.2. Do you like your handwriting?

My handwriting is actually one of the things that I'm proud of myself. Yet I think it's only beautiful when I'm completely calm and focused. During exams time, my handwriting looks a bit messy. In addition, when I brainstorm ideas, I prefer drawing maps.

27.3. What do you usually write?

Mostly I like to write notes in class since it helps me concentrate on the lectures. Written notes are also good reference for exams. Besides, I often write to-do list so that I make use of my time. I also make lists of stuffs I need to buy before I go shopping or things I need to pack before any trips.

Vocabulary

To concentrate on/to focus on/to pay attention to (v): to especially concern about Sth

Make (a) list(s) (v): to write down things in orders

27.4. Do you think it is possible to know somebody by their handwriting?

Handwriting has been proved to tell a lot about one's personalities. For me, in particular, I can recognize most of my friends' handwriting and I can see their handwriting is somewhat related to their characteristics.

27.6. Do you like writing to people?/ 27.7. Do you prefer to type or to write on paper?/

27.8. Do you usually write by hand or write using a computer?

With the advent of technology, the most common means of daily communication nowadays is typing. Personally I prefer typing. Email, chatting and other important documents due to high standardization. However, if it's a letter, a card or a postcards to relatives or friends, I'd live to send them handwritten form to show my respect and love.

27.9. Do you like receiving postcards?

I'm quite emotional so a postcard can make me shed a tear. it's like telling me that even though we're miles apart, we still think of each other and wish to share great moments together. It would be more sincere if the postcard has their handwriting.

27.10. Do you think computers might one day replace handwriting?

Computers are actually replacing handwriting. It is evident that most of daily communication is through typing, especially important documents, announcements and even resume. I guess it is due to the standardization among languages and convenience that people prefer typing to handwriting.

27.11. When do children begin to write in your country?

In my country, children begin learning to write when they're around 6 years old, starting primary school. I suppose learning at such early age would help train the child's patience and somewhat reflects their artistic characteristic.

27.12. Do you think handwriting is very important (nowadays)?

In recent years, handwriting is no longer so important. Instead, typing is more suitable for development of technology. In addition, not many people have readable and organized handwriting, thus complicating the social standards, especially in case of important documentaries. However, handwriting represents our uniqueness, even though it's no more crucial, I still go for the idea of teaching children to write before they get access to other high-tech means.

27.14. How can children today improve (or, practice) their handwriting?

I guess practicing to get beautiful handwriting is not as important as it was 10 years ago. Yet due to its benefits especially in terms of patience, children can re-write any poems, paragraphs, essay, etc. that they feel interested in in their free time. Parents can also give comments on their handwriting and encourage them if they can write beautifully.

27.15. What impression does a person's handwriting have on other people?

One's personality can be reflected quite clearly through how they write. To tell you the truth, I'm not an expert in this. Yet I think handwriting only give first impression. We had better get to know a person for a while.

27.16. Do you like to send e-mails?

E-mails can be considered as the most useful means of communication for me. We communicate with our lecturers mostly through e-mails. Besides, compare to direct communication, e-mails helps me getting the information more effectively.

28. Shoes

28.1. Do you like shoes?

I have a **lifelong passion for** shoes since I was a child. When I'm not **overloaded with** work, I will go to the shopping complex to **indulge myself in** tons of different stylish shoes. Until now I reckon that I spend much more money on shoes than anything else.

Vocabulary

To have a passion for (v) to be enthusiastic about Sth

Overloaded with (v) having or supplied with too much of something

Indulge myself in (phrase) to allow oneself the pleasure of something

28.2. Which do you prefer, comfortable ones or fashionable ones?

Well, it depends on the situations. If I go out for a **chit-chat** with my friends, I will prefer the former one. When wearing comfortable shoes, I can easily **stroll around** the areas and feel more enjoyable. Meanwhile, if I have an important appointment or meeting, the trendy shoes will definitely my choice.

Vocabulary

Chit-chat (noun) light informal conversation for social occasions

Stroll around (phrasal verb) walking around casually

Or:

I cannot say for sure what others' preference is: comfort or beauty, but there is little doubt that it depends on the occasion and situation to some extent. If anyone is going to attend a cocktail party or on her way to one of the most exclusive clubs, she will be **dressed up to the nines** with fancy-looking shoes despite its **discomfort**. In contrast, no one will pick high heels over sneakers on their picnic day or for running session.

Vocabulary

be dressed up to the nines: to be wearing very fashionable or formal clothes for a special occasion

discomfort (n): a feeling of slight pain or of being physically uncomfortable

28.3. Are people willing to buy expensive shoes?

Well, it's safe for me to say that the vast majority of people feel a little bit **reluctant** to pay for shoes that **cost them an arm and leg**. This is due to the fact that the living

standard of people in my country is not really high; therefore, they have more important things to worry about like food, healthcare and education.

Vocabulary

Reluctant (adj) unwilling

Cost somebody an arm and leg (idiom) very expensive

Or:

It's noticeable that people nowadays **are** more **aware of** their appearance and have **higher sense of fashion**, which is proven by the fact that plenty of high-end fashion brands are thriving better than ever. **Wealthy** figures have no second thoughts on buying luxurious items, shoes included. **Premium** brands such as Jimmy Choo, Christian Louboutin, Jordan and so on have attracted millions of customers even though their products **cost an arm and a leg**.

Vocabulary

Be aware of (adj) knowing or realizing something

Wealthy (a): having a lot of money, possessions, etc.

Premium (a): used to refer to something that is of higher than usual quality

Cost an arm and a leg: to be very expensive

28.4. Have you ever bought shoes online?

Personally, I think it's easily understandable since there is no **one-size-fits-all** kind of shoes. Each has its own purpose and in order to **fulfill people's lifestyle** and participate in different activities, various shoes types are needed. For example, one cannot go to the gym with a pair of Italian leather oxford nor can he attend a job interview in sandals. As a result, having a couple of different types of footwear not only proves your well-prepared and considerate character but **maturity** as well.

Vocabulary

one-size-fits-all: acceptable or used for a wide variety of purposes or circumstances; appealing or suitable to a variety of tastes

fulfill one's lifestyle: to do or achieve what was hoped for or expected

maturity (n): the quality of thinking and behaving in a sensible, adult manner

28.5. Have you ever bought shoes online?

Online shopping has never been more convenient and **affordable** and of course, how can I possibly **miss the opportunity** to **take full advantages** from many occasional big sales promotions, especially clothing and **footwear**. Although buying shoes or any items online comes with the inability to actually try them on, **competitive** prices, wide product ranges and other exclusive customer's experiences on some websites are quite attractive. Once I even got my hands on a limited-edition pair of running shoes thanks to the **accumulated** points I received from my previous shopping on an online store and I have been their loyal customer ever since.

Vocabulary

Affordable (a): cheap enough that people can afford to buy it or pay it

Miss/ pass on the opportunity:

Take full advantages of: make good use of the opportunities offered by (something)

Footwear (n): things that people wear on their feet, for example shoes and boots

Competitive (a): as good as or better than others

Accumulate (v): to gradually increase in number or quantity over a period of time

29. Family

29.1. How often do you meet with your family?

Well, because all of us are fully **occupied with** our schedule, we don't see each other during daytime. In the evening we'll have dinner and watch TV together and talk about our day. I think in the future if I'm ever able to move out, I'll try to **set aside** time to visit my parents at least twice a week.

Vocabulary

Occupied with (adj) busy

Set aside (phrasal verb) reserve for a special purpose

29.2. How do you spend the time with your family?

We'll have a **delicious big dinner** together with **scrumptious** food prepared by my mom. After we have dinner at around 7 o'clock, we'll watch the news, have some chat with each other or **huddle together** to play cards. It's a precious time when we can momentarily get away from the **hectic whirlwind** of daily activities.

Vocabulary

Scrumptious (adj) delicious

Hectic whirlwind (expression) a busy schedule

Huddle together (phrase) gather together

29.3. Do you want to live with your family in the future?

I think probably not. It's better for me to try to start an independent life as a **grown-up**. However, I still have the responsibility to **tak good care of** my parents that I'll **make time** to visit them at least twice a week.

Vocabulary

To make time to do Sth (n) to try to spend time doing Sth that is not just for fun like hobbies

29.4. What activities do your family like doing together?

Well, as I've mentioned we usually have dinner together. Besides, on weekends, we would love **to eat out** or get outdoor. Sometimes we have a family trip to the beach to enjoy ourselves on the day that all of us are free from work.

Vocabulary

To eat out (v) to have meal outside

Family trip (n) to travel with family members

29.5. Are you close to of your family members?

My parents are quite traditional that they try to **form a strong bond** between all of the family members. They **take good care of** my brother and me and guide us in some of our life aspects.

Vocabulary

To take good care of (v)

29.6. How has your family influenced you?

Although my parents are traditional, they try to become my friends, by helping me and encouraging me without forcing me to **live up to their expectations**. They also **imprinted on** me proper principles like moral values, respect, humbleness, patience, **deligence**, etc. I think my family shaped who I am now. I'm deeply thankful for having such a wonderful family.

Vocabulary

To live up to SO's expectations (v) to try to please others

Imprint (v) to establish securely, as in the mind or consciousness

Deligence (n) careful and persistent work or effort

30. Carrying things

30.1. What will you bring when you go out?

Oh, this is such an interesting question to me. Being a girl means that being **neat** and beautiful is her **top priority**. Hence, whenever I go out, I often carry a black leather backpack which **contains** a comb, a pack of **tissues**, a bottle of water and a jacket that would protect me from the **severe** sunlight of the sun during a day.

Vocabulary

Neat [a] A neat person likes to keep themselves, their house and their possessions tidy and in good order

Priority [n] something that is very important and must be dealt with before other things

Contain [v] to have something inside or include something as a part

Tissue [n] soft paper which is used for cleaning, especially your nose, and is thrown away after use, or a small rectangular piece of this

Severe [a] causing very great pain, difficulty, worry, damage, etc; very serious

30.2. Did you ever forget to bring things?

I'm kind of **absent-minded** so I sometimes forget to bring the keys. I tend to toss keys everywhere so I have lost them several times.

Vocabulary

Absent-minded (adj) forgetful

30.3. Will you bring different things in the daytime or at night?

I would say that most of the time when I go out during the daytime or night, I always **bring along** a purse which contains my credit and debit cards, small money, and driving license. However, I will bring some **make-up** and **skin-care** products like **sunscreen** in my vintage bag when I go out in the daylight hours.

Vocabulary

Bring along (phrasal verb) to bring someone or something while going somewhere

Skin-care (phrase) things that you do and use to keep your skin healthy and attractive

Or:

The difference? Well, it's hard for me to say exactly what the specific things are.

However, there's a **subtle** difference between the stuff I carry in the morning and in the evening. I enjoy wearing a backpack with a pack of tissues, a bottle of water and a comb, **except** a jacket in the evening since the sun won't **scare** me anymore.

Vocabulary

Subtle [a] small but important

Except [pre] not including; but not

Scare [v] to (cause to) feel frightened

30.4. How would you remind yourself of something you need to bring?

Well, I have **never ever** thought about it. Such an interesting question, though. I think that I can **refresh my memory** by **taking note of** every single thing I should bring along during the day shortly after I get up. This is because in the morning, I can **recharge enough energy** after a healthy sleep, thereby being able to avoid forgetting things to carry along.

Vocabulary

Never ever (expression) an emphatic way of saying never

Take note of (phrase) to give attention to something

Refresh my memory (phrase) to help you to remember something

30.5. When you go to different places, do you carry different kinds of things?

Well, I'm a kind of person who prefers the same things all the time, so it's not very easy for me to change my **stuff**. Whenever I go out, I **hardly** carry a lot of things. Hence, when I arrive at different places, I still bring my favorite backpack with the same **personal objects**, such as: a pack of tissues, a bottle of water and a jacket.

Stuff [n] used to refer to a substance or a group of things or ideas, etc., often with a description of their general type or quality or saying who they belong to, without saying exactly what they are

Hardly [adv] only just; almost not

Personal object [phrase] things that belong to someone

31. Hats and bags

31.1. Do you like to wear hats?

Although hats help **shield** your hair and face from direct sunlight, to be honest I don't really like wearing hats daily. My hair **is** always **a mess** after I **take them out**. Instead of wearing hats, I think I prefer bringing an umbrella with me.

31.2. What kinds of hats do you have?/ 31.3. Where do you like to buy hats?

Well as I've mentioned, wearing hats is definitely not my daily style, so generally I don't have any hats at home. There is the only type of hat I'm particularly fond of, which is baseball caps. This kind of hat can give me a sporty and strong look, you know.

31.4. Is wearing hats popular in your country?

It's not much **sought after** in my country where motorbike is the most common means of transportation, and it is **a must** to wear a helmet whenever you ride a motorbike for safety. I think you can imagine how much uncomfortable it is to wear a hat under the helmet. Thus in most of the case, hats are for **pedestrians** and **fashionista**.

Vocabulary

Sought after (adj) in demand; generally desired

Pedestrian (n) a person walking rather than travelling in a vehicle

Fashionista (n) a person who dresses in fashion

31.5. Do you like bags?

Bag is not really must-have item to me. I just use a backpack due to its convenience. Probably I'll spend some time **getting to know** more about bags **later on**.

Vocabulary

Get to know (phrase) to start to be familiar with someone or something

Later on (phrase) in the future, or after the time already mentioned

31.6. What types of bags do you like?

I'm not a big fan of this item so the only bag I use **from time to time** is the backpack. I love backpack because I tend to put a lot of heavy stuff inside such as my laptop, my water bottles, etc. whenever I get outdoors. It's the long-term convenience that makes high-quality backpacks worth my money.

31.7. Do you usually carry a bag (when you go out)?

As aforementioned I carry my backpack all the time, when I go to school or hang out with friends. Although it may not **give me a fashionable look**, I think comfort and convenience is the top priority to me.

Vocabulary

To give a fashionable look (v) to look fashionable with Sth

31.8. Do you have different bags for different occasions (or, different purposes)?

Well I must say that at present I have no idea about different types of bags or that sort of things. And it also **costs me an arm and a leg** if I ever want to become a bag collector with, say, twenty different bags for different occasions. However, I do have one fashionable small **satchel** for special occasions. I'm also kind of afraid that wearing heavy bags **all the time** will somehow affect my **spine** and my shoulders.

Vocabulary

All the time (idiom) repeatedly; habitually

Spine (n) a series of vertebrae extending from the skull to the small of the back, enclosing the spinal cord and providing support for the thorax and abdomen; the backbone

31.9. What do you put in these bags?

Well, when I go out or go to work, I usually put my laptop, cellphone, charger, basic beauty products like lipsticks, lotions , water bottle and probably a pair of earphones. When I use the smaller backpack, I tend to leave everything at home but my makeup kit and water bottles.

31.10. What sorts of bags do women like to buy?

I think every women regardless of age, occupation, tastes, needs, etc has at least one backpack with them. As I've already explained about its convenience, backpack is ideal for everyday life. However, the top favorite bag would be the well-designed handbag.

32. Drawings & Paintings

32.1. How often do you visit art galleries?

Once in a while, really. When there is an art exhibition around, I usually find time to attend it no matter how busy I am.

32.2. What kinds of things do you like to draw?

Personally speaking, I would love to **try my hand** at drawing some portraits of my friend. In fact, they often ask me to do it for them as I'm quite good at painting.

32.3. Is it easy to learn how to draw ?

As far as I'm concerned, if you are talented at it, you can learn it **in no time**. In fact, I have not received any formal training in how to draw, and it just **follow my instinct**.

32.4. Do you like painting/ drawing? Why?

Yes, I do. I used to be fancy of drawing when I was in primary school. I just enjoyed copying the figure in my drawing book and making use of any color as I like. I felt proud of being praised by my relatives when they saw my drawing pasted on the wall of my house.

32.5. Do you think children should learn drawing?

It depends. If a child has interest in drawing, it's OK for him to do. Parents should encourage their children to do what they like. However, it's useless to push every child to learn drawing.

32.6. Why do primary schools have painting class?

It's said it's a great time for children at primary schools to do painting for plenty of advantages. Children can express what they think of the world through drawing, and many enjoy the various colors. Besides children will think for the figure they'd like to draw, the tool they need to complete their painting. Children will be more creative in the process of doing painting.

32.7. Why do people display art work (painting) at their homes?

Most people do that because of their love of artwork. For example, people in love of photographing, though they are amateur, and they prefer to hang the pictures they took at home.

32.8. Have you ever bought any painting?

Yes, I have. The only painting I bought was the one sold at the charity activity held in my secondary school. Each year, a fete will be organised when students donate something to sell to others, and the money will be collected to help students from poor families. The painting was a copy of the famous painting "Playing Shrimps" by a new student, whom I made friends with later.

32.9. Do you think painting (or drawing) is important for adults?

Yes, I do. Adults can draw or paint what they like in their spare time. It is a hobby that won't disturb others, and you can enjoy it very much if you can explore it deeply.

32.10. Do you still draw those pictures that you did in your childhood?

Not really. I don't draw the sun, flowers, and trees as I did in my childhood. Now I draw those elements in a different way, in a more abstract way.

33. Robots

33.1. Are you interested in robots?

It might be a little strange not to be amazed by robots because they can be seen as one of the most **innovative advancements** of mankind. Thanks to the **AI technology**, robots are able to **imitate** and perform most of human tasks such as house cleaning, cooking, serving and most significantly, interacting, which is pretty frightening to me since I keep imagining what life would be if robots one day can somehow understand emotions and function accordingly.

Vocabulary

Innovative (a): introducing or using new ideas, ways of doing something, etc.

Advancement (n): the process of helping something to make progress or succeed; the progress that is made

AI technology: Artificial Intelligence technology

Imitate (v): to copy somebody/something

33.2. Would you like robots to work at your home?

Honestly, who wouldn't. If you have a robot taking care of your daily chores such as making dinner, cleaning house, massaging and more, you can **optimize** your day with more meaningful and **engaging** activities with friends and family. Robots are organized, efficient and especially, **non-intrusive**, which makes them the best housemate of all time.

Vocabulary

Optimize (v): to make something as good as it can be; to use something in the best possible way

Engaging (a): interesting or pleasant in a way that attracts your attention

Non-intrusive (a): not intrusive or disruptive

33.3. Do you want to take a car in which a robot is the driver?

I have never been on a backseat of a self-driving or robotic car and would love to try at least once. Though different opinions about driverless vehicles have been **arisen**, I personally believe they will provide a safer solution for those who are not legally **eligible** to drive given their situation such as drunk or underaged drivers and people with disabilities.

Vocabulary

Self-driving (a): used to refer to a vehicle that drives itself

Arise (v): (especially of a problem or a difficult situation) to happen; to start to exist

Eligible (a): a person who is **eligible** for something or to do something, is able to have or do it because they have the right qualifications, are the right age, etc.

34. Leisure Time

34.1. Do you spend your free time at home or outside?

Starting to go to work means that I **have a craving for** my free time. Whenever I have a day off, I always enjoy those moments by staying at home and sleeping. The reason for this choice is because I have to work outside all day, so my house is a perfect place for me to **let my hair down**.

34.2. What do you do in free time?

To me, free time is such a precious gift from the busy pace of life. Hence, I always do my favorite things in my free time. Since I am still a **postgraduate**, I often enhance my English by watching films. Then I sometimes bake some cakes for my **snacks** for the following week.

34.3. Do you like to spend your free time with families or friends?

Well, there's no denying that families are the best thing that people have. Therefore, I prefer spending my free time with my beloved family to with my friends. I love doing that because that's only the time I can sit with my parents and **seek for advice** about my daily problems.

Vocabulary

- **craving** [n] a strong or uncontrollable want
- **let my hair down** [idiom] to allow yourself to behave much more freely than usual and enjoy yourself
- **postgraduate** [n] a student who has already got one degree and is studying at a university for a more advanced qualification
- **snack** [n] a small amount of food that is eaten between meals, or a very small meal
- **seek advice** [phrase] ask someone for a piece of advice

35. Birds

35.1. How do you feel about birds?

Well, I'd have to say that I am quite fascinated with birds. I guess each person is attracted to a different species, and my favorite in the animal kingdom happens to be birds.

35.2. Why do you feel that way?

Well, it is primarily because I have developed a keen interest in flora and fauna, especially flying creatures. I also watch a lot of movies about birds. For example, Rio, an animated movie by Disney, about the journey of a blue bird into the great outdoors

35.3. How do people in your country feel about birds?

Overall, they are not very into birds. Only elderly people are fond of keeping birds. Most of people only like to eat them especially game birds. They are considered sort of delicacy.

35.4. Are there birds near your home?

You know, I haven't spotted any in my neighborhood. You're more likely to find them in zoos, national parks or in the countryside. Also, a lot of barbershops in my city have bird cages. Not sure why that is.

35.5. Have you seen many different kinds of birds?

I have only seen a few, I am not much of a bird watcher. The ones I have seen are pretty common, like pigeons and sparrows. I haven't sighted any exotic breeds.

Vocabulary:

Animal kingdom (phrase) the world of animals

Develop a keen interest in (expression) to be very interested in something

Flora and fauna (phrase) plants and animals

Great outdoors (phrase) the woods, the wilderness, the wild

Game birds (noun) a bird that may be legally hunted according to the laws

Delicacy (noun) a choice or expensive food

Bird watcher (noun) a person who watches and identifies wild birds

Exotic (adj) originating in or characteristic of a distant foreign country

36. Food/Cooking

36.1. Is food important to you? (why?)

Yes, definitely. I believe food is an **essential** part of everyone's lives. Without it, we wouldn't have the **energy** and **nutrients** to grow and develop, be healthy and **active**, to move, work, play, think and learn.

36.2. What kinds of food you like? (why?)

I have to say that I'm a big **fan** of Korean traditional food because it's **tasty, healthy** and not **greasy** at all. It is usually made with plenty of vegetables, and **flavored** with fresh **herbs** and **spices**. Just thinking of it **whets** my **appetite** already.

36.3. Is there any food you don't like? (why?)

Yes, there is. I'm not a **fussy eater**, but I can't **stand** onions and I have an **allergy** to seafood. I try to avoid meals that might contain these products.

36.4. What kinds of food are the most popular in your country?

I think traditional food here is always everyone's favourite in my country. But recently **foreign** foods from Korea, Japan or Western countries are also gaining more and more popularity. Eating the same kind of food can **dull** our **appetite** so we sometimes want to try something new.

36.5. Do you like cooking? (why?/why not?)

Well, I love to cook, especially for my family on special occasions, but I find everyday cooking a real **chore**. I like to try out new **recipes** when I'm in a **relaxed mood**.

36.6. Who usually does the cooking in your home?

Mostly my mother, but I **take turns** sometimes. To me she's the best cook ever who can always **guarantee** lovely home-cooked food. Unlike her cooking, the quality of my food is a bit **hit-and-miss**.

Vocabulary

Essential [adjective]: completely necessary; extremely important in a particular situation or for a particular activity

Eg: Even in small companies, computers are an **essential** tool.

Energy [noun]: the physical and mental effort that you use to do something

Eg: She put all her **energies** into her work, so she arrives home very tired.

Nutrient [noun]: a substance that is needed to keep a living thing alive and to help it to grow

Eg: Plants draw minerals and other **nutrients** from the soil.

Active [adjective]: always busy doing things, especially physical activities

Eg: Although he's nearly 80, he is still very **active**.

Fan [noun]: a person who admires somebody/something or enjoys watching or listening to somebody/something very much

Eg: I'm a big **fan** of Italian food, especially pizza and spaghetti.

Tasty (adjective): having a strong and pleasant flavour

Eg: The food is **tasty** and well-presented.

Healthy [adjective]: good for your health

Eg: We have a very **healthy** diet, with lots of fruit and vegetables.

Greasy [adjective]: covered in a lot of grease or oil

Eg: The sink was piled high with **greasy** dishes.

Flavor [verb] to add something to food to make it more tasty

Eg: She likes to flavor her cooking with lots of spices.

Herb (noun): a plant whose leaves, flowers or seeds are used to flavour food, in medicines or for their pleasant smell. Parsley, mint and oregano are all herbs.

Eg: Add a teaspoonful of mixed **herbs** before you put the pizza in the oven.

Spice [noun]: one of the various types of powder or seed that come from plants and are used in cooking. Spices have a strong taste and smell

Eg: The shop sells a large range of herbs and **spices**.

Whet [verb]: to increase your desire for or interest in something

Eg: The travel program will **whet** your appetite to visit Paris.

Appetite [n]: physical desire for something, usually food

Eg: He suffered from headaches and loss of **appetite**.

Fussy [adjective]: too concerned or worried about details or standards, especially unimportant ones

Eg: Our teacher is very **fussy** about exact punctuation.

Stand [verb]: used especially in negative sentences and questions to emphasize that you do not like somebody/something

Eg: I can't **stand** the sight of blood, so I could never be a nurse.

Allergy [noun]: a medical condition that causes you to react badly or feel ill/sick when you eat or touch a particular substance

Eg: I have an **allergy** to animal hair and I start to sneeze.

Foreign [adjective]: in or from a country that is not your own

Eg: He drives a **foreign** car, which was imported from Germany.

Dull [verb]: to become or make something less bright or sharp

Eg: Don't eat anything before a meal – it will **dull** your appetite.

Chore [noun]: a duty, responsibility, etc. that causes worry, difficulty or hard work

Eg: I am sick and tired of all the **chores** in the house.

Recipe [noun]: a set of instructions that tells you how to cook something and the ingredients (= items of food) you need for it

Eg: Each month we feature easy low-fat **recipes**.

Mood [noun]: the way you are feeling at a particular time

Eg: She's in a good **mood** today (= happy and friendly).

Turn [noun]: the time when somebody in a group of people should or is allowed to do something

Eg: When it's your **turn**, take another card.

To guarantee [verb]: to make something certain to happen

Eg: These days getting a degree doesn't **guarantee** you a job.

Hit-and-miss [adjective]: not done in a careful and planned way

Eg: I may pass the exam, but my revision has been a bit **hit-and-miss**.

37. Rain

37.1. Does it rain much in your country? (Where? When?)

I would say yes. It rains a lot in the summer when **tropical storms strike** our country. There is **torrential rain** in the region in June, July and August, and the rainfall tends to be higher in the North than in the South.

37.2. Is there any part of your country where it doesn't rain much?

To tell you the truth, I have no clue about this. I do not **give a hoot about** geography and the amount of rain in my country. I think the most rainfall is in the North where there is an **intricate** system of rivers.

37.3. Does it rain a lot in your hometown?

Well, it depends on the season. In winter and spring, there is a **dearth of rain** associated with the **arid weather**. In contrast, it is usually **raining cats and dogs** in summer and august, causing **loads of troubles** for people travelling on the road.

37.4. Can you remember any time when it rained particularly heavily in your hometown?

That would be last summer. I was going to work and then **all of a sudden** it started to rain, followed by a **deluge**. I was soaked to the skin and couldn't attend a very important meeting.

37.5. Does rain ever affect transportation in your hometown?

Yeah, of course. Traffic is often held up when it rains. All the roads are clogged, and people find it difficult to escape from traffic congestion. I would stay at home and watch TV rather than going out and being caught up in traffic.

Vocabulary

Tropical storm (phrase) A tropical storm is an organized system of strong thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds between 34 knots (63 km/h) and 64 knots (119 km/h).

Torrential rain (phrase) If it's raining extremely hard, then the rain is torrential

Give a hoot about something/someone (phrase) to not be interested in someone or something

Intricate (adj) very complicated or detailed.

Dearth (noun) a scarcity or lack of something.

Arid (adj) (of land or a climate) having little or no rain; too dry or barren to support vegetation

Rain cats and dogs (idiom) rain heavily

All of a sudden (phrase) happening, coming, made, or done quickly, without warning, or unexpectedly

Deluge (noun) a great flood of water

Hold someone/something up (phrasal verb) to delay someone or something

PART 2 & 3

1. Describe a person/something that made you laugh

Children, with their **innocent** mind, could make people around laugh by their witty words and funny actions. I'm going to talk about my niece, a four-year-old energetic girl who did something that really made me **laugh my head off**.

As usual, after finishing dinner, she played toys by herself. There was a night when I was doing my assignment. Suddenly, she knocked the door and told me **tenderly** that she wanted me to **come over** to her room. I thought she needed to take any toys on the shelf so I came there immediately. Surprisingly, she asked me sit down and started to sing a Korean song named "Three little bears". She sang and did funny actions that I **couldn't help** laughing. Her parents and my mom heard the noise, they came to her room. She was **aware of** many people around. Interestingly, she opened the wardrobe, chose a pink dress like a princess, took a lipstick from my bag and acted like a true singer that everyone **couldn't take their eyes off** her. Whenever she finished, she always questioned whether we like to listen to more songs.

We had a nice night together. Our life is so busy and it's hard to find a true happiness that makes us laugh and enjoy. That was probably the best part of our family memories that I will never forget.

Vocabulary

Innocent (adj) morally good and with no wish to harm anyone

Laugh your head off (idiom) laugh loud and long

Tenderly (adv) softly and gently

Come over (phrasal verb) visit someone

To be aware of (v) Having knowledge or perception of a situation or fact

Can't help something (v) used for saying that someone cannot stop themselves doing something

Can't take your eyes off somebody

(phrase) unable to stop looking at them because they are so attractive or interesting

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

1.1. How would you define happiness?

“What is happiness” is a difficult question that remained unanswered for centuries. For me, happiness doesn’t mean feeling good **all the time** or being rich. Happiness is a combination of how satisfied I am with my life and how good I feel on a **day-to-day** basis. Happiness can come from a very simple thing like waking up with a delicious breakfast prepared by my mom or receiving a **good morning message** from my beloved one.

Vocabulary

Day-to-day (adj) daily, everyday

1.2. Do people like to watch comedy?

Similarly to people around the globe, **getting engrossed** in a comedy show is the best way to forget about tomorrow's worries. Studies have shown that when you watch a comedy show that **evokes hearty laugh**, you **encounter** situations with a positive frame of mind. Shows that can make you laugh have proven to ease and **soothe stress**. Thus, as life’s **getting tough**, comedy shows appears to be the best choice.

Vocabulary

To get engrossed (v) To absorb all the attention or interest of

To evoke (v) Bring or recall (a feeling, memory, or image) to the conscious mind.

Hearty laugh (phrase) laugh with true delight at something

To encounter (v) Unexpectedly be faced with or experience (something hostile or difficult)

A positive frame of mind (phrase) positive mindset

To soothe stress (v) to release stress, to relax

To get tough (adj) difficulties that cause one to struggle

1.3. Who is the most popular comedian in your country?

Rubin Williams is the most popular comedian not only in my country but also in other countries. With his great talents in comedy, he also received two Emmy Awards, and five Grammy Awards throughout his career. Up to now, he is still very **well-loved** by the public and continues to be one of the most **sought-after** comedians.

Vocabulary

Host (n) A person, place, or organization that holds an event to which others are invited

Step by step (adv) slowly, with carefulness

To be well-known(adj) to be famous or popular

Well-loved (adj) popular

1.4. What do you do when you feel unhappy?

I tend to be alone when I'm **in a bad mood** because I think it would be better for me and people around me. In those **chunks of bad time**, I read the Holy Bible and pray to help myself **calm down** and release all negative thoughts. Sometimes, when I'm **in a chatty mode**, I find some friends to talk to. We could hang out or walk around. Taking a deep breath and **going sightseeing** also make me feel better.

Vocabulary

In a bad mood (expression) unhappy

In a chatty mood (phrase)

To go sightseeing (v) The activity of visiting places of interest in a particular location

Chunks (n) A significant amount of something

1.5. Why do children tend to be happier than adults?

I guess the **first and foremost** reason is because children tend to **let** their feelings **go** while adults tend to **hold** their feelings **back**. In fact, children's thoughts are simple and innocent. They also have the ability to simplify everything that they see, feel and encounter, which helps them to be more careless and not **over-analyze** things like most adults do. Besides, they don't have to **face up with** any troubles at work and they often forget what just happened. They have no worries, no doubts, no disappointment about anything. Thus, their life is much easier and happier.

Vocabulary

First and foremost (phrase) most importantly; more than anything else

To let Sth go (v) to allow someone or something to escape or go free

To hold Sth back (v) to hesitate to act or speak

To face with (v) to deal with

2. Describe your favorite movie

You should say:

When and where you saw it

What type of film it was

What the film was about

And explain why it is your favorite film

As a frequent **moviegoer**, I watch a multitude of films. One of the movies I'm much into is "One day", an American romantic drama movie. It is directed by Lone Scherfig based on a novel of the same name. I watched this movie at least three times yet still love to watch **again and again**.

The movie opens with a short scene of the day after their graduation on 14 July 1988 of two main characters, Dexter Mayhew (Jim Surgess) and Emma Morley (Anne Hathaway). They **spent the night** together but **came up with** an agreement to be just friends, and spent the following day together, the 15th, St. Swithin's day. However, they couldn't **keep the promise**. They **went through** different **circumstances**, troubles, got marriage and lived apart from each other until 2004, Emma and Dexter finally realized they were **a perfect match** and got engaged and married. Unfortunately, despite many efforts, they have not yet had kids. On 15th July 2006, Emma had a car accident when she was crossing the street. Dexter became **inconsolable** and was particularly **desolated** each year on that day. The movie ends up with the scene back to 1988 when they first met and promised to always be best friends.

This movie usually get me **burst into tears** no matter how many times I've watched it. Not only was the story itself so miserable but also the actor and actress **outperformed the ordinary**. This movie also aimed to encourage people to appreciate the happiness and true love from the ones who have **always been there for** them.

Vocabulary

Moviegoer (noun) a person who goes to the cinema

To do Sth again and again (v) to love constantly repeating Sth

To spend the night (v) to sleep over

To come up with (v) to think of Sth

To keep the promise (v) to do what you said you would do

A perfect match (n) to perfectly fit with another

Inconsolable (adj) so unhappy or disappointed that no one can make you feel better

To always be there for SO (v) to strongly and consistently support SO anyhow

To outperform the ordinary (v) to perform significantly well

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

2.1. Do you think (watching) films have (has) educational benefits?

Absolutely, I think. Take romantic films as an example, they can help educate people about the value of love, honesty, and faithfulness. They can make the audience **sympathize with** other people and respect what they have. Indeed, films can teach people **good virtues** to become better citizens through stories. Besides, in most high school and college courses, movies, whether documentary or narrative, are a creative approach in teaching, helping students have a brief idea about the history, social issues, or scientific experiments. History, for example, indeed becomes more approachable and interesting in movies.

Vocabulary

Good virtue (n) behavior showing high moral standards

Sympathise (v) to feel sorry for somebody, to show that you understand and feel sorry about somebody's problems

2.2. In what ways are documentary films and films only for entertainment different?

From my perspective, they are different in various aspects, especially their purposes. Documentaries are a reliable source of information and a powerful **means of conveying social message** to the world. It brings many benefits to the society. For instance, by watching documentaries together, many sensitive social issues, such as **homosexuality**,

are discussed freely between parents and children instead of attempting to hide it. Films for entertainment, in another way, are mostly for people who need to **chill out** after work or study. Those movies tend not to discuss nothing but relationships between people.

Vocabulary

Means of Sth (n) a tool or a way to do Sth (commonly used with unc. noun transportation, entertainment)

Homosexuality (n) sexual attraction to people of one's own sex

To chill out (v) to relax

2.3. Why do you think documentary films are not so popular?

Personally, I think the foremost reason which makes documentary films are not as popular as entertainment films is that documentaries require the audience to think critically about a current issues, b help them escape from the **harsh realities** of everyday life. For example, the series of “Prison life – love in prison”, which describes the prison sex, is an educational and emotional documentary that brings a different view about prisoners. Another reason is this kind of movie **aims to** provide education and lack entertaining features compared to other kinds of movies, therefore, it’s hard to reach a wide range of audience.

Vocabulary

Rather than (phrase) used with the infinitive form of a verb to indicate negation as a contrary choice or wish

Harsh reality (n) the difficulties

(The) naked truth (n) the complete, unembellished truth

To aim to do Sth (v) to have a purpose to do Sth

2.4 How are movies and real life different ?

Life in movies is so much different than real life. In real life, there is no script and you will write your own story day by day. Life is full of **ups and downs, twists and turns**. However, they both inspire each other since real life is a great material for **making movies**.

Vocabulary

Ups and downs (n) good and bad times

Twists and turns (n) challenges or turning points in life

To make a movie (n) to produce a movie

2.5 Do men and women like to watch the same kinds of films?

It depends, I guess. It is thought that men like action movies with shocking and dangerous scenes like Fast and Furious or **sci-fi** movies with imaginative, futuristic plots like Avatar while most women prefer romantic movies or comedies with meaningful messages. It seems logical; however, there are still many converse cases. Therefore, I think there is no boundaries for preferences between men and women **when it comes to** films.

Vocabulary

Sci-fi movies (n) science-fiction movies

When it comes to (phrase) speaking about

2.6 Do different age groups like the same kinds of films?

Obviously. It's undeniable that different generations prefer different kinds of movies. Children, for example, are usually **fond of** cartoons or funny movies such as Frozen or Tangled. Adults, on the other hand, tend to watch various types of movies such as action films, romantic films, documentaries or romantic films depending on their tastes.

Vocabulary

To be fond of (adj) to be interested in

2.7 Do you like any particular film star? Why?

I like Emma Watson, a British actress, model and activist. She is **famous for** her first professional acting role as Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter film series. What I love about her is that not only is she an outstanding actress with **admirable** personalities but also she is the spiritual inspiration as the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador. My favorite quote is "I don't want the fear of failure to stop me from doing what I really **care about**", encouraging me to **chase my dream** despite many troubles ahead.

Vocabulary

To be famous for (adj) to be known about by many people

To care about (v) to feel concern or interest; attach importance to something.

3. Describe a piece of equipment in your home

You should say:

What it is

How often you use it

Who you usually use it with

And explain why this item is important to you

The past few years is the **golden era** of advanced technology, and I suppose **household appliances** are no exception. I'm going to describe the refrigerator as a household equipment that I find most useful for my family.

My mom loves cooking and she's actually a good cook. She's mainly **responsible for** shopping for healthy food and cooking **scrumptious** meal for all of us. And **as a matter of fact**, our refrigerator is essential **when it comes to** food storage. Its size is **perfect for** the corner area in our kitchen, yet big enough to store a large amount of food for the whole family. We keep the vegetables and certain kinds of fruits **at the bottom**, whereas the **leftovers** are kept on top. And some cakes that are made by my mom are kept cold **in the middle**. **As regards** my family meals, fresh meat **is a must**. In particular I **cannot go a day without** a single piece of pork or beef. Thus, the fridge has always **done a great job** of keeping the meat and seafood fresh all the times. Besides, ice cream bought by my dad every two to three weeks is also stored in the same freezer.

Refrigerator is a wonderful technological invention I must say. It is an **indispensable** appliance for almost every household. Since the country possesses **tropical weather** and particularly quite high **outside temperature** these days, it is difficult to keep the

vegetables or meat fresh even for a few days. I think **down the line** if I ever move away, fridge is definitely on top of my **must-have** list.

Vocabulary

Household appliance (n) a machine that is designed to do a particular thing in the home, such as preparing food, heating or cleaning

To be responsible for (adj)/To take the responsibility to Having an obligation to do something, or having control over or care for someone, as part of one's job or role

Scrumptious (adj) very delicious

As a matter of fact (phrase) in reality

When it comes to Sth/V-ing (phrase) speaking about

At the bottom/in the middle/on top (adv)

As regards (expression) in regard to

To be a must (adj) to be highly required

To go a day without (v) Sth that is not necessary to do on a certain day

To do a great job (v) to do Sth well

Indispensable (adj) absolutely necessary

Tropical weather (n) Very hot and humid

Down the line (idiom) in the future

Must-have (n/adj) Essential or highly desirable

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

3.1. Has (the item you choose to talk about) changed much over the years?

As far as I'm concerned, innovations of refrigerators have taken place extensively in terms of size, price ranges and quality **in accordance with** different usages. For instance, while families prefer fridges that are large-sized and have high electric capacity, fridges which are specifically used for laboratories are more advanced for chemicals storage.

Vocabulary

In accordance with (phrase) in agreement with something

3.2. Do you think everyone needs to know how to use [the item you choose to talk about]?

Unlike other electrical **household appliances**, refrigerators are **way** easier to use, even for children, unless they are too short that they cannot reach for their favorite ice cream stored in the freezer. However I suppose when purchasing a fridge, people should at least **bear in mind** what they're going to use the fridge for as well as how to **make the most of**. Besides, due to frequent functioning, fridges sometimes have electrical problems that had better be fixed by specialists.

Vocabulary

Way (adv) at or to a considerable extent; far (used before an adverb or preposition for emphasis).

To bear in mind (v) to consider

To make the most of (phrase)

to exploit something; to get as much out of something as is possible.

3.3. What kinds of electrical appliance are most used in the home, besides the telephone and computer?

A number of electrical appliances are being used nowadays in order to enhance the efficiency of doing household chores within less time. Due to varied demand and preference of the family, it is difficult to rank which appliance is mostly used, so I'll just **make a guess**. I think the most useful piece of household equipment ever is the refrigerator, for its wonderful **capacity of** storing almost all essential daily foods for a long time.

Vocabulary

A number of Sth (plural) (phrase) a large number of Sth

Household chores (n) a routine task at home

Demand (n) need

3.4. What are some examples of electronic or electrical equipment that are used commonly for communication?

Two common means of communication from home are telephone and desktop. Despite the fact that smartphones are more popular among young family members, our parents or grandparents are way more familiar with using conventional dial telephones. Although the phone bill have risen significantly, telephones are still **in need** for some families to b with each other. Desktop with high-speed Internet connection is another good tool for communication, especially for video calls with relatives living miles away. Physical distance no longer matters.

Vocabulary

To outweigh (v) to provide greater benefits compared to many other things

To be in need (adj) to be required

Physical distance (n) distance that can be measured

4. Describe an interesting song

Unlike my friends, I love folk music because every song is a story that is told by music. The Marvelous Toy of Peter, Paul and Marry band is an interesting song for children that I've ever listened to.

Peter, Paul and Mary is an American folk group formed in 1961. Actually, "The Marvelous Toy" is not the hit of this band. However, for me, its lyrics is very innocent that **brings me back to my childhood**, a beautiful period in my life. The story begins when a little boy received a toy, which became his "heart's delight". The sound from the toy made him curious. When it moved, it went "zip". When it stopped, its sound was "bop" while "whirr" was the sound when it stood still. He was **excited about** exploring that toy. Peter, Paul and Marry performed that song in a very funny way. They made the sound "zip, bop, and whirr" by their mouths so the song is very lively and brings a very relaxing feelings for audiences.

Vocabulary

To bring SO back to my childhood (v) to remind SO of their childhood memories

To be excited about Sth (v) to be interested in Sth, to be into Sth

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

4.1. What do old people like to listen to ?

I think elderly people love to listen to classical music. The lyrics of those songs are **deeply emotional** that is hard for young generations to **understand completely**. Other than that, the rhythm is pretty slow. Listening to those songs will **recall** their memories about a period of time when they were young.

Vocabulary

To **recall (v)** to remember Sth happened in the past, usually memories

4.2. How would your grandfather feel if you gave him some hip hop music to listen to?

It would be quite shocking to him, I think. My father is a professor; thus, he is pretty strict and told us to listen to instrumental music or at least the lyrics that **make sense**. Therefore, I guess he would not be **pleased with** my hip hop **taste** because they contain inappropriate messages **related to** sex, drugs or **discrimination** which are not suitable for **youngster**.

Vocabulary

To **make sense (v)** to have certain meaning

Youngster (n) the young

4.3. Why do you think old people like old songs?

Obviously, old songs were composed in their generations. When elderly people listen to those songs, they will serve as a **memento** of the memories about their first love or a period of life, for example.

Vocabulary

Memento (n) an object kept as a reminder of a person or event.

4.4. Why do you think people of different age groups have different favourite songs?

First, the older we get, the more different our mindset will change. Therefore, the taste of music also change **in accordance to** age. For example, children love to listen to simple songs with repeated lyrics and fun melody while adults have **a wide range of** choices such as rock, R&B, country, pop, etc. Second, for adults, music is not only a **means of**

entertainment but it also help ease stress and emotions. Thus, they need songs with meaningful and touching lyrics.

Vocabulary

In accordance to (phrase) along with

A wide range of (phrase) many choices are available

Means of Sth (uncountable nouns: transportation, entertainment, etc.) (phrase) to be used as a tool of Sth

To help do Sth (v) to assist

4.5. What kinds of music do (small) children in your country like to listen to ?

In the past decade, most children were taught traditional folk songs in nurseries and kindergartens. Those are simple songs composed specifically for them. However, **thanks to the popularity of** technology, particularly internet and Ipad, children could easily **access to** different websites to enjoy music. Significantly, they tend to listen to English songs. Therefore, children's taste in music has been slowly changing.

Vocabulary

Thanks to Sth (phrase) Positivity results from Sth

To (get/gain) access to Sth (v) to connect with Sth, to approach Sth

4.6. What are the differences between popular music and the music that (young) children like to listen to ?

Popular music are songs mostly for adults because the contents are mostly inappropriate for children such as love or relationships. On the other hand, music for children is more innocent **in terms of** simple topics like family, friends or daily activities which have educated meaning. Moreover, the lyrics are short, **catchy** and easy for children to memorise.

Vocabulary

In terms of (phrase) speaking about

To be catchy (adj) easy to remember

4.7. Why do you think some people like to play instruments in the open?

There are many reasons for someone to perform instruments in front of the crowd. I've seen many people who play instruments in train stations or on the street. Money is what they expect, obviously. However, how can they play without their passion and motivation? For example, I met a man, who played guitar in a station. He shared with me that he and his friends **have passion** to create an organization for homeless children where they could learn to play musical instruments. Therefore, performing in the open can attract people and this helps to **boost** the program effectively.

Vocabulary

To **boost** (v) to increase, to enhance

5. Describe a gift that you recently gave to others

Jenny is my best friend since we were together in kindergarten. Thus, on her 20th birthday, I decided to give her a special gift.

Choosing a gift for someone is usually a very difficult task because you should **make sure** that the receiver will like it. Jenny is not a typical girl, she's a **sporty** girl. I remembered she had told me that she wanted a ball with Manchester United symbol, her favorite football team and that ball is **limited stock**. I spent around a month before the date, went to some shopping malls and tried to find that gift for her. Unfortunately, it was **out of stock**.

I was so disappointed. My brother knew it and suggested me to **search online**. Before the birthday three days, I received a call from a boy who wanted to sell the ball for me with a half price compared to the original one. I **was on cloud nine**. I came to his house immediately and brought that ball back home. I also chose a nice paper with Manchester United symbol and wrapped it carefully.

Jenny **jumped for joy** when she received my gift. It is true that our friendship is valuable and what we did for each other **builds up our friendship** more and more.

Vocabulary

Limited stock (n) Sth that are produced at a limited amount

Out of stock (phrase) a product that is no longer available

To search online (v) to look for Sth on the Internet

To be on cloud nine (adj) to be extremely happy

Build up/Cement friendship (collocation) Maintain a healthy & intimate relationship

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

5.1. In your country, when (on what occasions) do people give gifts to others?

People usually give presents to others on a **wide range of occasions** such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries or opening ceremonies. Especially, after travelling to a new place or a new country, they always give souvenirs or foods from that place to their friends and relatives.

Vocabulary

A wide range of Sth (n) many choices are available

5.2. What sorts of things do they give?

Depending on different occasions and the receivers that we have a suitable gift to give. It could be clothes, jewelry, souvenirs or even some DIY stuffs. For example, flowers are the common gifts for opening ceremony which are always in a beautiful **bouquet of flowers** that represents **prosperity**.

Vocabulary

Bouquet (n) an attractively arranged bunch of flowers

Prosperity (n) The state of being prosperous

5.3. Do people today still give the same kinds of gifts that people used to give, many years ago?

I think people today tend to **go for** conventional gift choices, thus they could choose a present easily. Online business **allows** customers **to choose** gifts without directly going to the shop. Personally, I usually **put more thoughts and efforts into** looking for a meaningful and useful gift for my family, relatives or close friends.

Vocabulary

To allow SO to do Sth (v) to let SO do Sth

To put thoughts into Sth/doing Sth (v) to carefully think about Sth

5.4. Why do people like to receive gifts?

Gifts could bring happiness to one's special day. The receivers would be **full of the joys of springs** when they feel the caring and love from the givers because the givers remember the special days and send them gifts as the best wishes.

Be full of the joys of springs (idiom) to be very happy

5.5. Do you think it's suitable to give money as a gift?

I find it's no problem with gifting people with money. It is much more popular nowadays, especially on wedding days or birthdays because it is considered as a **down-to-earth** gift. It's hard to find a suitable present so the receiver could use that budget to freely buy what they need.

Vocabulary

Down to earth (adj) practical and realistic

5.6. Do you think it's a good idea for people who are doing business with each other to exchange gifts?

I think it's quite popular in business nowadays. In some ways, it is a good idea if the gifts are given in a thankful way after a successful project. It is an important part of business **protocol** nowadays in some Asian countries like Japan or China. However, I think it's not good if the meaning of gift-giving **turns into** achieving a purpose.

Protocol (n) unwritten rules or guidelines that are peculiar to every culture or organization

Turn into (phrasal verb) to change or develop from one thing to another

5.7. Why do some people not give gifts to others very often?

Choosing perfect gifts is something which can **stress people out**. It could create the **hassle** of picking the right gift. The presents could cause disappointment to receivers because it might not be what they expect. Therefore, giving money or going out for a meal is always the best and convenient way to avoid those problems.

Vocabulary

Stress somebody out (phrasal verb) to make someone feel very nervous and worried

Hassle (noun) (a situation causing) difficulty or trouble

6. Describe an interesting neighbor

You should say:

Who the person is

How long do you know the person

And explain the reason why you think the person is interesting

Sample 1

There are many households in my neighborhood, and if you ask me to **give you an account of** a person who I reckon the most **intriguing** I wouldn't be hesitant but say it's Mr X, who is in his early 50s.

As for his **outer appearance**, he's a **well-built** person with **broad shoulders** and **wavy hair** not typically seen among his **peers** at that age. This can be explained by the fact that he **works out** quite regularly in the gym as he has nothing to do during the day.

What strikes me about this man is that he's a real fun, always **crack a joke** whenever he can. He can **mimic the voices** of celebrated figures in the media. So you can see, every time he **pays a flying visit to** my house, everyone **jumps for joy**.

If I recall correctly, when I was undergoing a **nerve-racking** period of my life, **up to ears** with revising and reviewing for the finals, he came to me like a hero, and **playing some jokes on** my the bad side of my character, making me forget all the hardships and continue studying. At the end, I passed the test **with flying colors**.

Vocabulary

Give an account of (expression) describe somebody/something

Intriguing (adj) arousing one's curiosity or interest; fascinating

Outer appearance (noun) physical appearance

Well-built (adj) (of a person) large and strong

Wavy (adj) rising in waves

Peer (noun) someone who is of the same age as another person

Work out (phrasal verb) do physical exercise

Strike (verb) [for a person] to impress someone as something or a particular type of person

Crack a joke (phrase) say something fun

Flying visit to (phrase) a short visit

Jumps for joy (phrase) to jump into the air because you are very happy

Nerve-racking (adj) making you very nervous or worried

Up to ears in something (idiom); very busy doing something; involved in a difficult situation, or with more work to do than you can deal with

Play a joke/trick on someone (phrase) to do something to someone that you think is funny because it makes them look silly or feel embarrassed

With flying colors (phrase) very successful

Sample 2

My family live in a truly friendly neighborhood where people are more than willing to support each other whenever somebody is in need, which is also why we are all very close. Among them, Charlie – a kind **middle-aged** man and my father’s best friend – is the one I find most **intriguing**, yet mysterious at the same time.

Charlie has been living next door for how long that I can hardly recall, but I know for certain that his baking skill **is off the charts** – another reason why he’s my favorite. When I was younger, Charlie and his wife usually came over our house on weekend where we had barbecue and cold drinks together and Charlie would make special chocolate cookies for me everytime. My first **impression** about him wasn’t that pleasant though since he grew full beard and had a scary eagle tattooed on his bicep, which was terrifying for any little girl. In spite of his not-so-friendly appearance, Charlie is a true **softie** who acts like a **mother hen** occasionally. Then I understand why there’s a saying “**Don’t judge a book by its cover**”. Besides his talent in the kitchen, he is such an amazing

story teller that I kept tailing him, literally, as a kid for more extraordinary tales. What makes his stories **appealing** is not only his warm voice but the **underlying** messages that he tries to deliver through them. I have learnt a lot from Charlie and he is like my unofficial god father, which makes him hold a very special place in my heart.

Vocabulary

Middle-aged (adj): no longer young but not yet old

Intriguing (a): very interesting because of being unusual or not having an obvious answer

Be off the charts: much better than usual

Impression (n): an idea, a feeling or an opinion that you get about somebody/something, or that somebody/something gives you

Softie (n): a kind, sympathetic or emotional person

Mother hen (n): a person who likes to care for and protect people and who worries about them a lot

Underlying (a): important in a situation but not always easily noticed or stated clearly

Appealing (a): attractive or interesting

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

6.1. Do you think people's relationships with their neighbors today are the same as they were in the past?

It's noticeable that relationships among people in this modern society have **significantly altered** over the last few decades and I **reckon** that it's a positive change. Most people are no longer as friendly and helpful as they used to without getting something **in return**, especially in **urban** neighborhood. If you could easily run into a small group of women gathering to talk about nonsense things many years ago, it probably takes you

a while, if not forever, to find one in the city nowadays. People live in their own world with limited contacts with their neighbors.

Significantly (adv): in a way that is large or important enough to have an effect on something or to be noticed

Alter (v): to become different; to make somebody/something different

Reckon (v): to think something or have an opinion about something

In return: as a way of thanking somebody or paying them for something they have done

6.2. Do you think it's important to have a good relationship with one's neighbors?

My philosophy is to **maintain good relationships with** everyone that I have spent time and effort making friends with and neighbors are one of them. **Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.** In some certain circumstances, even the one sharing the same blood line may not be as helpful as your next-door buddy. For example, if you go on a vacation for a few weeks and you live alone, who is going to watch out for your apartment better than your neighbor. Even if you don't need their help in any case, having someone nearby to talk to and have fun with is wonderful enough.

6.3. How can people improve relationships with their neighbors?

The key in any lasting relationships is **sincerity**. You don't have to **overdo** or change yourself to promote a perfect friend-next-door image but be true and confident **in your own skin**. Smiling and saying hello to your neighbors can be the simplest way to make friends and **initiate** a conversation. You cannot actually improve relationships with your neighbors if you don't have one. Besides, people should make effort to **engage in** groups' activities within the neighborhood such as street party or knitting class, whichever you find captivating to **widen your network** and share memories.

Sincerity (n): the quality of showing or saying what you really think or feel

Overdo (v): to do something too much; to exaggerate something

Initiate (v): to make something begin

Engage in something (phrasal verb): to take part in something; to make somebody take part in something

6.4. What makes a neighborhood a good one to live in?

When it comes to an ideal neighborhood to live in, each person has his own expectations. To me, good place to live goes with low **crime rate** which gives people **sense of ease and calm**. It will trouble anyone living in an area if they don't feel **secure** every time going for a walk for the fear of robbery. Another factor is entertainment and outdoor activities. For an active resident like me, there's nothing cooler than being close to fitness centers and swimming pools to exercise and relax during my spare time. Lastly, excellent restaurants will make a neighborhood a must-stay place since many people keep a habit of dining out since they have no time cooking.

Crime rate: the ratio of crimes in an area to the population of that area

Secure (a): able to avoid being harmed by any risk, danger, or threat

6.5. Do you think it's important to know your neighbours?

If yes:

Yeah, I suppose it is, because I think it helps **create a good community spirit** if we know our neighbours. In other words, it **kind of** gives the neighbourhood a nice, friendly feel, instead of a cold, unwelcoming one, if you know what I mean!

If no:

No I wouldn't really say it is, because for me I think friends and family are enough. And I mean, in my case I don't spend nearly enough time with my family as it is, so I can't really see the need to **get to know** my neighbours as well. And this probably goes for a lot of people, not just me.

Vocabulary

Kind of (phrase spoken) use as a filler in speaking; when you are talking about someone or something in a general way without being very exact or definite

Community spirit (collocation) friendliness and understanding between local people
Get to know (phrase) to spend time with someone or something so that you gradually learn more about him, her, or it

6.6. What sorts of problems can people have with their neighbours?

Well I guess one of the main ones would be noise. You know, like putting on music too loud or having the TV on full volume, that kind of thing. So that's probably the biggest complaint that people have with their neighbours. And as well as this, I suppose another problematic issue could be pets. For example, a lot of neighbours who have dogs don't **keep them on a lead** which I think is quite **inconsiderate**, as a lot of people are quite **scared of** dogs.

Vocabulary

On a lead/leash (phrase) a long narrow piece of leather, chain etc that you fasten to the collar around a dog's neck in order to control the dog. The usual American word is **leash**

Inconsiderate (adj) not thinking about other people and their feelings

6.7. In what ways can neighbours help each other?

I'd say they can help each other in all manner of ways. For example, **babysitting**, **looking after** a pet while you're away, um, what else, um, oh yeah, keeping **a spare house key** for emergencies, you know, stuff like that.

Vocabulary

Look after (phrasal verb) to take care of someone or something

6.8. What are the differences between neighbours and friends?

These two are first different in definition. Neighbours are those who live geographically near you, while friends are people **attached to** you by **affection** or **esteem**. They don't have to be near you; however they are **always there for you** in one way or another.

Vocabulary

Attached to (adj) liking someone very much, or loving them

Affection (noun) a feeling of liking and caring about someone or something

Esteem (noun) a feeling of admiration and respect for someone

6.9. Do you think neighbours are important?

I think neighbours are very important because they are some of the people that you are around practically every day. If you ever have a problem you may need to **ask a neighbour for help**, since they are right nearby, if you are new in a place, you can always ask a neighbour where to find something. And they are also right there if you are **in danger** and knowing they are there might make you stronger or less afraid.

Vocabulary

In danger (phrase) a situation in which harm, death, damage, or destruction is possible

6.10. What are the qualities of a good neighbour?

I think the most important quality of a good neighbour is friendliness. For example, saying “Hello” when you see each other is a good **virtue**, I often speak to my neighbours and try to be friendly because one day I might be lonely and sad, and if I have been friendly to my neighbours they will be friendly to me and **cheer me up**. I also like for my neighbours to be patient and honest. If I **make noise** and disturb them I would like them not to **lose temper** but to just tell me that the noise is bothering them. I also think neighbors should be polite and not disturb each other unnecessarily.

Vocabulary

Virtue (noun) a good quality or habit that a person has

Cheer someone up (phrasal verb) to make someone feel less sad

Lose temper (phrase) to suddenly become angry

7. Describe a special meal you have had

The most special meal I’ve ever had in my life was on my Dad’s birthday last year, which was prepared by all of my family members.

The idea was **put forward** by my sister. We planned to surprise him and prepare his favorite foods. On that day, my Mom cooked Pho, a Vietnamese beef noodles, while I baked a birthday cake for him. My siblings were **in charge of** decoration and music. Everything had been done properly a little bit earlier before he came home. When he

opened the door, he was **astonished** because of seeing a colorful “Happy birthday Daddy” banner stuck on the wall in the living room. Standing in front, my mom gave him a **bouquet of** red roses, his favorite flowers. We enjoyed the **scrumptious** meal and shared our best memories with my Dad.

After washing dishes, we gathered together in the living room. My Dad **made a wish** and blew candles. He said **in tears** that he was **over the moon** and he **was proud of** us, his home and his family. We gave each other great hugs before going to sleep.

Vocabulary

Put forward (phrasal verb) to offer an idea, opinion, reason etc

To be in charge of (adj) to take responsibility for Sth

To astonish (v) to fill with sudden and overpowering surprise or wonder; amaze

Bouquet (noun) a bunch of flowers

Scrumptious (adj) very delicious

Over the moon (idiom) very happy

QUESTION FOR PART 3

7.1. Describe what you think is a healthy diet.

Developing **healthy eating habit** isn't as confusing or as restrictive as many people imagine. Personally, a **healthy diet** is the one which combines enough nutrients for one's life. Therefore, consuming a **rich variety of** food is very important because eating a wide **assortment** of foods helps ensure that you get all of the nutrients, especially the **disease-fighting potential** that foods offer.

Vocabulary

Healthy diet (noun) A healthy diet is one that helps to maintain or improve overall health

Assortment (noun) a group or set of things of various types

7.2. Are there many vegetarians in your country?

Yes, they are. The number of people following vegetarianism has been increasing recently. It is thought that old people or those following a religious, like Buddhism, will

be vegetarians; however, youngsters also join to vegetarian community because of many reasons.

7.3. Why do you think some people choose to be vegetarians?

People become vegetarians for many reasons, including health, religious convictions, concerns about animal welfare or the use of **antibiotics** and hormones in **livestock**, or a desire to eat in a way that avoids excessive use of environmental resources. Some people follow a largely vegetarian diet because they can't afford to eat meat. Vegetarianism has become more appealing and accessible, thanks to the **year-round** availability of **fresh produce**, more vegetarian dining options, and the growing **culinary** influence of cultures with largely **plant-based diets**.

Vocabulary

Animal welfare (noun) good care and living conditions for animals

Antibiotics (noun) a drug that cures illnesses and infections caused by bacteria.

Livestock (noun) animals such as cows, sheep, and pigs that are kept on farms

Year-round (adj) happening, continuing, or available through the whole year

Produce (noun) food or other things that are grown in large quantities to be sold

Culinary (adj) relating to food and how to cook it

7.4. Is the food that people eat today in your country different to the food that people used to eat in the past? (if yes, in what ways has it changed?)

Personally, eating style of most people has changed recently. Significantly, food **hygiene** is mentioned everyday in news. Therefore, people are very cautious when they choose ingredients in reliable market/supermarket and cook properly. Those **fat-free or low-fat** food and **veggies** are more preferred in daily meal compared to in the past, choosing food were mostly based on interests.

Hygiene (noun) the practice of keeping yourself and the things around you clean, in order to prevent illness and disease

Fat-free (adj) containing no fat

Low-fat (adj) low-fat food contains only a small amount of fat

Veggie (n) a vegetable

7.5. How do you think the way we eat will change in the future?

Yes, I do. I think people nowadays **pay more attention to** healthy food because the awareness of health has been raised among young and old people. Therefore, it will be a remarkable innovation in food consumption in the future.

7.6. Is American-style 'fast food' popular in your country? (Why? Popular with whom?)

Due to the trend of globalization, fast food has become more and more popular such as KFC, Lotteria, Burger King or Domino. Why are those brands popular in our country? The first cause is needs of modern community which have intensive activities. In a family, both husband and wife **have a tendency** to have a job. Consequently, they do not have enough time to cook and the frequency of eating out increases. Secondly, efforts of fast food restaurant companies to enhance the **nutritional quality** of their products and services are also the cause of their popularity.

Have a tendency for something (phrase) an attitude, habit, or situation that is starting to develop in a particular way

Nutritional quality (phrase)

7.7. What do you think of this popularity- is it as good thing?

The popularity of fast food restaurants has certainly influenced some of the changes in the community. It brings benefits to this **hectic** life with its quick service and convenience place. Other than that, the increasing number of customers that come to restaurants became the reason for greater number of restaurant staff to be needed and the demand for restaurant personnel made it possible for more people to consider work in a restaurant as an attractive option. With this said, there are many more **entry level job** opportunities for people.

Hectic (adj) full of busy activity

Entry-level job (phrase) an entry-level job is at the lowest level in a company or organization

7.8. More and more people are becoming overweight nowadays. What do you think might be the causes of this?

One major consequence of eating fast food every day is excess calorie consumption. Most fast food contains calories from **refined sugar** and **fats**. It is also **high in sodium** from salt and other **addictive** substance which can cause someone to eat it more and more. Consuming more calories than human needs leads to **obesity** which causes some health problems such as **hypertension**, diabetes, heart disease and even cancer.

Refined sugar (noun) it comes from sugar cane or sugar beets, which are processed to extract the sugar

Fat (noun) fats (plural)

High in (adj) containing a lot of something

Addictive (adj) Causing or tending to cause addiction; habit-forming

Hypertension (noun) abnormally high blood pressure

8. Describe a favorite part of your city or home that you often visit/

Describe a place where you relaxed

In this **hectic** life, it is easy for people to get **stressed out** from different situations. Therefore, we all need a place of rest and relaxation where we can temporarily **get away from the hustle and bustle** of the daily life. Everyone needs a place to **hide away**. For me, that is the kitchen. I choose blue and white for kitchen's wall because those colors help me to **unwind**. On top of that, I **enjoy every single moment** spent in the kitchen. When I cook in the kitchen, I find myself in another world where I am able to mix all ingredients together to **try out a brand new recipe**. Therefore, there are many baking stuff and machines **arranged nicely** in my kitchen. After cooking, I usually invite some of my close to **come over** and **throw a party** to enjoy my home-made cakes and dishes; but **every now and then**, I just cook for my family. My mother and father always **give some generous compliments on** my cooking skills and keep telling me that cooking is my inborn talent, which makes me **jump for joy**. That's why I always love to be in the kitchen. It also becomes a very social place where everyone in the house gathers together to **have a small chit-chat** about our daily life. Therefore, kitchen, for me,

represents a place of **spiritual meaning**. I believe that the warm from kitchen will **warm up** the house and the moments we spend in the kitchen can help **strengthen the family bonds**.

Vocabulary

Stress out (verb) be nervous, worried

Get someone or something away from someone or something (phrasal verb) to take someone or something away from someone or something, in any combination

The hustle and bustle of something (phrase) busy and noisy activity

Hide away (phrasal verb)

Try out a brand new recipe (phrase) try a new recipe

Unwind (verb) To become free of nervous tension; relax

Every now and then (idiom) sometimes

Throw a party (phrase) arrange a party

Chit-chat (noun) friendly conversation about things that are not very important

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

8.1. How often do you visit parks?

My area is **filled with** parks and there's a park very close to where I live, so I probably go there once or twice a week if the weather's neither **scorching hot** nor **freezing cold**. I love to go jogging with my father in the early morning where we can enjoy **fresh air** and **spectacular scenery**.

Fill with (verb) To supply or provide to the fullest extent

Scorching hot (adj) extremely hot

Freezing cold (adj) extremely cold

8.2. Do we need big parks or small parks in the city?

Personally, small parks in the city are much more convenient than big parks. Firstly, it would serve better quality for citizens in an area. Parks are the places for people to not only take physical exercise, but also **wind down** and relax. It would also create a friendly environment for everyone. Second, a big park **takes up** too much available space in the

city. This space can be used for educational purposes rather than just for entertaining ones.

Wind down (phrasal verb) to relax after a period of excitement or worry

Take up (phrasal verb) to fill a particular amount of space or time

8.3. Why is it important to have parks in a city?

Parks **play an important role** in a city. The foremost reason is that parks **contribute to** reduction of the urban heat effect. Another reason is Parks provide space for neighbourhood residents to **interact with** each other and meet new people. They're also great spaces for events and for people to **engage in recreational activities**. This allows people to develop **a sense of community**. A park is perfect for a picnic, a concert, or a farmer's market - whatever your community feels it needs.

Vocabulary

Engage in something (phrasal verb) to take part in a particular activity, especially one that involves competing with other people or talking to them

A sense of community a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together

8.4. Do you like to visit movie theatres?

I love to spend time watching movie in cinema with my friends. That is a moment that we can **chill out** after working and **build up** our friendship by sharing our common hobby.

Chill out (phrasal verb) relax

Build up (phrasal verb) to create and develop something over a long period of time

8.5. Where do people like to go on weekends?

In the past, most people usually stayed at home and spent time with family. However, this habit has changed currently. Shopping malls and restaurants have been increasingly opened and become the entertaining place for everyone, especially families with children. Moreover, officers participate in yoga classes or sport centres to exercise.

8.6. What do old people do to relax?

Stress in the elderly has many sources, including the loss of a partner, money worries, health problems and a lack of independence. They tend to **isolate** themselves at home with negative thoughts. Therefore, the elder people should be encouraged to find and maintain **social contact** as interaction with other old friends. Joining to a club or community service is another way to make them feel happier.

Vocabulary

A sense of community (n) a feeling of belonging

To chill out (v) to relax and stop being angry or nervous, or to spend time relaxing

To be spectacular (adj): extremely impressive

Wind down (v): to relax after a period of excitement or worry

9. Describe a holiday you want to go on in the future/ describe a bicycle/motorbike/car trip you want to take in the future

Frankly speaking, I'm not an **extrovert**, so I haven't been on many trips up to now. However, I would **crave for** having a pleasant experience on a **package tour** to [place] - only within a 50- kilo meter drive from my house. I intend to travel **on my own** to **do the sightseeing**, which may **save me from the hassle and nuisance** from my friends, who usually complain **all the time** while being on a long holiday. If everything goes according to plan, the tour should be **reasonably priced**, at 40 USD for at least 2 days 1 night and it should promise **luxurious accommodation** and **scrumptious** food. So you see, I tend to go for cheap holiday without **second thoughts** as it is exactly what I want to expect. The first part of the journey will probably be good enough for me because it will take me not too much time to **reach the destination**. Besides, I am **looking forward to** chances to **engage in** any gossip with other passengers so that the trip will go by with a lot of fun. I imagine that the moment we **check in** at the hotel near the beach, I will be really glad that the quality of the room will definitely be **up to standard**. If I recall correctly, I **made it quite clear** to the travel agency that the bed must be cozy and comfortable and the air-conditioner has to work well. Regarding the swimming and the seafood, the weather

on that day will be so sunny for sunbathing, which will make me feel like jumping my feet into the seawater. **To add to the fun**, because I am going to travel during **off season**, the seafood won't be too **pricey** and the **servings** will be therefore large for a person like me.

Vocabulary

Extrovert (noun) someone who is very confident, lively, and likes social situations

Crave for (verb) to want something very much

Package tour (noun) package vacation, or package holiday comprises transport and accommodation advertised and sold together by a vendor known as a tour operator

On my own (noun) unaccompanied by others; alone

Do the sightseeing (phrase) the activity of visiting the famous or interesting sights of a place

Hassle (noun) argument

Nuisance (noun) disturbance

Scrumptious (adj) delicious

Second thoughts (noun) a change of opinion after considering something again.

Engage in (verb) take part in a particular activity

Up to standard (phrase) good enough

Make it clear to somebody (phrase) If you make something clear, you say something in a way that makes it impossible for there to be any doubt about your meaning, wishes, or intentions

Off season (phrase) a period of the year when there is less activity in business

Serving (noun) a quantity of food suitable for or served to one person.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

9.1. What can people benefit from travelling?

Clearly, there are a number of **merits** brought by travelling. But I would probably say that the thing that really **stands out** is we can **broaden our horizons** of the world. To be more specific, when coming to a new region or a country, we have the chances to

sample the local life, enjoy the cuisine and learn a great deal of interesting stuff. Besides, a second positive point could be that we can **let our hair down** after **undergoing nerve-racking period of time** of hard work or study. A **flying visit to** somewhere can help us **recharge our batteries** and work more effectively afterwards.

Vocabulary

Merit (noun) the quality of being particularly good or worthy

Stand out (verb) to be easy to see or notice because of being different

Broaden one's horizon (phrase) to make you see a wider range of opportunities and choices

Let hair down (idiom) relax

Nerve-racking (adj) nervous

Flying visit to (phrase) short visit

Recharge one's batteries (phrase) to rest and relax for a period of time so that you feel energetic again

9.2. Do you like to travel on your own or with your family?

Personally, I like the former option. Travelling on my own can **free me from** the burden of others and so I can have more freedom and independence to **explore to my heart's content**. To be more precise, when you travel on a **package tour** with your family members, you have to plan your budget, must **keep an eye on** the small kids or have to follow the instructions of the tour guide. However, when you are **on your own**, you can head to anywhere you feel like, stay with the local people, experience many different feelings, and become more independent. You can also have **me time** to reflect on your life or **contemplate** the meaning of life.

To one's heart's content (phrase) as much as one wants

Keep an eye on (phrase) to watch someone or something; to monitor someone or something closely

On one's own (phrase) alone

Me time (phrase) time that you spend relaxing and doing things that you enjoy rather than time spent doing things for other people

Contemplate (verb) to think very carefully about something for a long time

9.3. Do you like to visit popular places or less-known places?

If you choose to visit touristy places:

If you ask me, I would say that I'd rather **pay a visit to** popular tourist destinations. The main reason for my choice is because I will feel more safe and secure in a place that I **know like the back of my hand**. To be more precise, I could know where to **get a good bargain for** a service or won't **fear the risk of** getting lost. On the contrary, if you venture to visit tourist places of no good reputation, you may risk your life or get **ripped off** in some cases. In addition, I am not a kind of extrovert and dynamic person, so I'd prefer to go to popular sites instead.

Know like the back of my hand (idiom) be entirely familiar with a place or route.

Get ripped off (verb) to be cheated, especially by charging them too much money for something

If you prefer less-known places:

To be honest, I **have proclivity for** travel to not touristy places where I can have more space **to capture the breathtaking landscapes** without disturbing other travelers. Besides, visiting a site which has not yet been well-known makes me enjoy to discover more about that place. This is because I want to become the **pioneer** who can help introduce the place to more visitors with my photos I snapped and travel guidance I wrote.

Have proclivity for (phrase) have a tendency or inclination to do something

Breathtaking (adj) causing awe or excitement

9.4. Where do people like to travel in your country?

It depends on different preferences and ages. For example, young American, who are adventurous and **curious about** new places, tend to choose **brand new** places where haven't exploited by tourist, whilst old people prefer to stay in a resort nearby a beach or in a village in order to bring back their memories and do meditation.

Curious about (adj) Eager to learn more about something

Brand new (adj) completely new

9.5. Is international travel popular with people in your country?

Recently, most of the people spend their time to travel abroad. Their common first destinations are South East Asia area such as Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries like China, Taiwan, Hongkong, etc. The reason might be because more and more cheap flight from a number of air lines either domestic or international one are available in my country. Tourist agencies also have various promotions for group people or family. Therefore, international travel seems like not a dream any more.

9.6. What is the relationship between travel and the environment?

Obviously, travel has an adverse impact on the surrounding environment. Air pollution is one concern. This is because people must get on a coach, a train to reach their travel destinations and these means of transport give off huge amounts of emissions into the surrounding air, making the air quality from bad to worse. Another thing is litter dropping issue. All the travelers do is enjoy the services, and throw away trash onto the ground, spit anywhere and these things really spoil the cityscape.

9.7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of travelling alone?

Well firstly I'd say the good thing about travelling alone is that you get to do what you want, without having to ask for anyone else's approval. So basically, you can be really flexible with your plans. But on the downside, if you're travelling on your own, you might feel lonely at times, especially if you've got no one to talk to.

9.8. What are the differences between young people and old people when they go travelling?

I guess there are a **handful of** differences, of which one would be that young people generally like doing quite exciting and energetic things, like **bungee jumping**; or, if they're going somewhere coastal, they might wanna do some watersports like jet skiing, whereas I would say the elderly, **on the whole**, tend to simply like relaxing when they go on holiday, so they'll probably take a few books with them and spend most of the time on a deck chair next to a swimming pool **soaking up** the sun and enjoying the feeling of doing nothing.

A handful of (phrase) A small, undefined number or quantity

Bungee jumping (noun) a jump made by someone from a high bridge, building, etc, secured only by a rubber cord attached to the ankles

Soak up (verb) to absorb

10. Describe an activity that you feel excited

Sample 1

By nature, I'm easily **captivated by** numerous things around me, and **off the top of my head**, one such a thing is learning foreign languages, particularly English. This is a habit I picked up since I was **knee high to a grasshopper**, at about 10, to acquire a huge number of vocabularies in English.

I try to **devote a great deal of my time to** revising and reviewing English words, in which I take careful notes and keep them in my pocket all the time. Each time I'm free from work or academic study, I take them out and start whispering to myself all the words that I have **jotted down**. I feel really **exhilarated** when I recall correctly a word after hiding my fingers over it. If I remember exactly, there was a time I was **thrilled to bits** and even shouted out loudly on the bus because I recited correctly all 100 vocabularies in my notebook in succession.

Learning English is an activity which I have **engaged in** for so many years, and I **take a great pride in** saying this that I have never been **fed up with** learning this marvellous language. There is no limit to knowledge **when it comes to** a beautiful language like English.

Vocabulary

Knee high to a grasshopper (idiom) very small and young

Devote/Dedicate something to doing something/somebody (verb) to give all of something, especially your time, effort, or love, or yourself, to something you believe in or to a person

Jot down (verb) to write something quickly on a piece of paper so that you remember it

Exhilarated (adj) very excited and happy

Thrilled to bits (adj) extremely pleased about something.

Engage in (verb) take part in

Take pride in (phrase) to feel very pleased about something

Fed up with (phrasal verb) be bored of something

When it comes to (phrase) as for something; speaking about something

Sample 2:

I suppose there are a number of great moments that I have had throughout my life, but for now I would like to talk about the first time I went **ice-skating**.

It was the summer break when I was studying abroad. We're so bored of going to shopping malls and eating out, thus our seniors who has lived here for more than 5 years suggested us to try ice-skating. I was quite **freaked out** because I was the only person who has never known how to skate and I was so scared of falling. However, my friends encouraged me as they said they were going to help teach me how to skate. The skating area was very crowded. A lot of children were **proficient in** skating as they could go really fast. As an **amateur** I fell a number of times and got my skin scratched and bled a bit. However, I was strong enough to get up and continue practicing. **At the end of the day**, I finally can skate slowly without any help. After 3-hour skating we had a large meal and headed home.

I think what I've learned from skating or playing any other sport is the "never give up" spirit. I have to **take it seriously**, spending countless time on it with **full of passion** and energy despite failure. Even though it hurted quite badly in the following days, I'm still thankful that my friends gave me an unforgettable experience that I've never thought I could gain.

Vocabulary

Amateur (n): newbie, opposite to "profession"-(pro)

Freak out (verb) be shocked or frightened

Proficient in doing something (adj) skillful at doing something

At the end of the day (idiom) used for saying what you consider is the most important thing about a situation after thinking about it

Take something/someone seriously (phrase) to think that someone/something is important and should be given careful attention

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

10.1. Is it good for people to try new things?

I guess, people should rise to the occasion and take chances to have novel experiences, the main reason being that they can discover their potential in new fields and cultivate their talent. For example, if you're always seared of water and never jump in the swimming pool to have a swim, you won't ever know that you **have an inborn talent for** swimming. After all, changes can be tough at first, but the long-term effects are worthwhile.

Have an inborn talent for something (phrase) God-given talent; have ability to do something better than others from birth

10.2. How can we help others when they try new things?

There are a couple of methods that people can **take into account** when they want to help their friends or children to have more informed decisions when trying new things. The first one is that they should give advice from their **own experience** which can makes their friends feel more **confident in** their decisions. The second approach can be that adults should **encourage** their kids **to be on the go**, actively **seeking information** and experience from others rather than being passive and randomly **making a decision**.

Take into account (phrase) consider something; think carefully

On the go (adj) active

10.3. Why some people are afraid to try new things?

Probably they fear the possible bad consequences of their actions. What I'm trying to say is some people don't **have a knack for** certain stuff, and believe that they will perform poorly at it, without even **making an attempt**. Such reasoning can prove to be wrong as some are an **expert on** it after their first try. Besides, some fear injuries or

wounds as some tasks may involve some risks, and if not managed well, you may have to **pay a big price**.

Have a knack for something (phrase) To be exceptionally proficient at (doing) something

Pay the price (phrase) to suffer the consequences for doing something or risking something.

10.4. Should young people play dangerous sports?

Personally speaking, we should give them the freedom to do what they like. After all, **Extreme sports** can bring huge benefits as it **boosts their confidence** and gives them **unforgettable real-life experiences**. Through some sports like **bungee jumping** or bull riding, the young want to **test their own limit** and try to **overcome their fears** in some areas. Having said that, the authorities should be responsible for ensuring the **minimum safety standards**, like they should not allow those having **cardiovascular diseases** to join the dangerous sports, as well as this, the equipment must be **up to standard** to minimize the likelihood of an accident **taking place**.

Extreme sports (noun) a sport that is physically hazardous, such as bungee jumping or snowboarding

Bungee jumping (noun) a sport in which a participant jumps from a high bridge, building, etc, secured only by a rubber cord attached to the ankles

Cardiovascular disease (noun) Heart and blood vessel disease

Up to standard (adj) good enough

11. Describe an experience you spent your time with a child

Sample 1

Children, with their **innocent** mind, could make people around laugh by their witty words and funny actions. I'm going to talk about my niece, a four-year-old energetic girl who did something that really made me **laugh my head off**.

As usual, after finishing dinner, she played toys by herself. There was a night when I was doing my assignment. Suddenly, she knocked the door and told me **tenderly** that she wanted me to **come over** to her room. I thought she needed to take any toys on the shelf so I came there immediately. Surprisingly, she asked me sit down and started to sing a Korean song named “Three little bears”. She sang and did funny actions that I **couldn’t help** laughing. Her parents and my mom heard the noise, they came to her room. She was **aware of** many people around. Interestingly, she opened the wardrobe, chose a pink dress like a princess, took a lipstick from my bag and acted like a true singer that everyone **couldn’t take their eyes off** her. Whenever she finished, she always questioned whether we like to listen to more songs.

We had a nice night together. Our life is so busy and it’s hard to find a true happiness that makes us laugh and enjoy. That was probably the best part of our family memories that I will never forget.

Vocabulary

Innocent (adj) morally good and with no wish to harm anyone

Laugh your head off (idiom) laugh loud and long

Tenderly (adv) softly and gently

Come over (phrasal verb) visit someone

To be aware of (v) Having knowledge or perception of a situation or fact

Can’t help something (v) used for saying that someone cannot stop themselves doing something

Can’t take your eyes off somebody (phrase) unable to stop looking at them because they are so attractive or interesting

Sample 2:

Well, a child? This topic **challenged** me a lot. I think the last time I played with a child was 2 weeks ago. It's not very long, right? The child who is 2 years old is my aunt's son. He is quite **mischievous** and really cute. Since his mom had to go out for shopping, I **took care of** him for 2 hours, which I must say that it could be a **disaster**. Playing with a child is not easy even when he is still very young. I **looked after** him, not letting reach any high places and checking his **diapers**, which nearly killed me. That the kids are very **active** and curious means that a second without looking after him would **cause** a **consequence**. Therefore, I ought to watch every step and **prevent** him from doing anything dangerous like **approaching** a plug or trying to take a pen. 2 hours was just like 2 **decades** that already scared me to death, not because I am get bored with the child but because I'm afraid that something **unexpected** would **harm** the kid. Now I agree that **experience** is a good lesson for me though.

Vocabulary

- **challenge** [v] to test someone's ability or determination
- **take care of = look after** [phrasal verb] to take care of or be in charge of someone or something
- **disaster** [n] (an event which results in) great harm, damage or death, or serious difficulty
- **diaper** [v] a square of thick soft paper or cloth which is fastened around a baby's bottom and between its legs to absorb its urine and solid waste
- **active** [a] busy with or ready to perform a particular activity
- **cause** [v] to make something happen, especially something bad
- **consequence** [n] a result of a particular action or situation, often one which is bad or not convenient
- **prevent** [v] to stop something from happening or someone from doing something
- **approach** [v] to come near or nearer to something or someone in space, time, quality or amount

- **decade** [n] a period of ten years, especially a period such as 1860 to 1869, or 1990 to 1999
- **unexpected** [a] not expected
- **harm** [v] to hurt someone or damage something
- **experience** [n] something that happens to you that affects how you feel

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

11.1. Are sweets a good thing to reward children?

Definitely yes. From my experience, children are often **thrilled to bits** when they **catch sight of** pieces of candies, especially those **with colorful packaging**. It can be easily understandable because children **have a sweet tooth** and candies are **no wonder** a perfect suit for them.

Vocabulary

Thrilled to bits (adj) excited and happy

Have a sweet tooth (phrase) like to eat sweet things

11.2. What social values should parents teach children?

I strongly believe that parents should **take more responsibility for** educating their kids about various social values as early as possible. Out of these, the thing I'd like to **single out** is that children should be taught about the **sense of community** when they are still young. For example, they should **lend a hand** to those in need of support by stuff like helping an elderly cross the road or yielding their seat to the disabled on the bus. On top of this, adopting moral and social etiquettes should be another thing worth teaching them. Kids today are becoming **cheeky and stubborn**, some even fail to greet elderly people, or use **bad language**. Considering this, they should be taught to behave more politely.

Vocabulary

Take more responsibility for (phrase) be more responsible for

Single out (phrasal verb) choose one out of a group of things

Sense of community (noun) the feeling that you belong to a community

Lend/Give somebody a hand (phrase) give somebody help

11.3. Why do children feel happy easily?

As the mindset of a small child is very simple and optimistic, he has quite an outgoing and relaxed **attitude towards** life. What a child does is to play and he also receives much protection and care from their parents. They don't have to worry much about how to make ends meet or other complicated situations in life. Moreover, they tend to **take things less seriously** and only **retain sweet memories** in their minds.

11.4. How important is childhood?

It is perhaps the most important stage in one's life. It **shapes most of one's personality** in addition to all those beautiful memories that can **last with one for a life-time**.

11.5. Do parents in your country spend a lot of time with their children?

As far as I can tell, Vietnamese people **are constantly up to ears in their work** and **hardly spare enough time for their kids**. Instead, I reckon grandparents are often the ones who **look after** them as people in my country generally **live in extended families** and these elderly members have more free time. The direct result of this is that children **end up being closer to their grandparents** than their own mother and father.

Up to ears/neck in something (idiom) very busy doing something

Extended family (noun) a family unit that includes grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, and uncles, etc. in addition to parents and children >< **Nuclear family (noun)** a family consisting of two parents and their children, but not including aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.

11.6. Why do children tend to be happier than adults?

I guess the **first and foremost** reason is because children tend to **let** their feelings **go** while adults tend to **hold** their feelings **back**. In fact, children's thoughts are simple and innocent. They also have the ability to simplify everything that they see, feel and encounter, which helps them to be more careless and not **over-analyze** things like most adults do. Besides, they don't have to **face up with** any troubles at work and they often forget what just happened. They have no worries, no doubts, no disappointment about anything. Thus, their life is much easier and happier.

Vocabulary

First and foremost (phrase) most importantly; more than anything else

To let Sth go (v) to allow someone or something to escape or go free

To hold Sth back (v) to hesitate to act or speak

To face with (v) to deal with

12. Describe an event in history/historical event in your country

[The name of your country] is often **widely acclaimed** for its **time-honored traditions** and long periods of wars and battles. **Off the top of my head**, the most prominent one that **stands out** in my mind would be the victory of [August revolution in 1915], an event that **marked a huge milestone** in history: the peace and a **brand new** start of our country.

Before the success of the revolution, people had to **suffer from immense hardship**. There were many lives sacrificed, mothers losing their sons in the meaningless battles, and the whole country was **in a state of fear and instability**. At the time, people lived in **poor living conditions**, **burning the candles at both ends** working for the landlord to earn a **meager income**, so their lives were miserable indeed.

This historic event **ushered in** the new era for our country with no more wars and hunger. On top of that, people were liberated from their past sufferings, and given a chance to **start a fresh life**, with their own freedom and the right to rule their own country. In a nutshell, the victory of [August evolution in 1915] was truly a unforgettable **turning-point** for the people in my country. We are really proud of our ancestors

Vocabulary

Acclaim (verb) to give public approval and praise

Time-honored (adj) respected or valued because it has existed for a long time

Off the top of my head (phrase) without giving it too much thought

Milestone (noun) a significant event in life, history, etc

Brand new (adj) completely new

Burning the candles at both ends (idiom) to work very hard and stay up very late at night

Meager (adj) deficient in quantity or quality

Usher in (verb) To make known the presence or arrival of

Turning point (noun) an event marking a unique or important historical change of course

QUESTION FOR PART 3

12.1. How can people learn about history?

Knowledge is one of the most **precious** treasures and fortunately, they are easily accessible and widespread around the world thanks to the **advent** of technology. For people who are passionate about history, there are many ways to **trace** back time and learn about historical events. The most traditional and authentic way is to visit museums where hundreds of ancient pieces are **on display** and historical movies are shown for public to be able to visually **immerse** in the event. Furthermore, historical websites and **virtual** courses are also available for anyone who misses history class or has no time for museums. Most of them are incredibly informative and carefully **revised** by experts so you may find them helpful.

Precious (a): valuable or important and not to be wasted

The advent of something: the coming of an important event, person, invention, etc.

Trace (v): to find the origin or cause of something

Be on display: has been put in a place where everybody can see it

Immerse (v): to become or make somebody completely involved in something

Virtual (a): made to appear to exist by the use of computer software, for example on the Internet

Revise (v): to change something, such as a book or an estimate, in order to correct or improve it

12.2. Will museums be replaced by technology someday?

Even if I can't tell for sure at the moment, I don't think it would be a smart move to replace everything with technology, museums included. Museums are not **merely** historical **institutions** for **artifacts** and objects collected from time to time but also considered **national landmarks** and **public treasures** that can hardly be replaced. The Louvre in Paris or British Museum in London are iconic features that attracts hundreds of visitors every year to learn about history as well as the architectures themselves. Without them, these cities will surely not be as appealing as they are and citizen have one less **phenomenal** educational place.

Merely (adv): just; only

Institution (n): a large important organization that has a particular purpose, for example, a university or bank

Artifact (n): an object that is made by a person, especially something of historical or cultural interest

Phenomenal (a): very great or impressive

12.3. Are history museums useful?

It would definitely be a yes in my opinion. **First and foremost**, history museums are where most of historical objects are displayed with thorough information about what it is and its usage. Students who find history class **tedious** and too **theoretical** can be more enthusiastic with such **authentic** experiences. Besides, museums are open for public with reasonable ticket fees that can not only help to **preserve** their best condition but attract tourists to the city. Finally, these institutions are interesting places to hang out with your friends and families or meet new people, **nurturing** relationships in a positive way.

First and foremost: more than anything else

Tedious (a): boring

Theoretical (a): concerned with the ideas and principles on which a particular subject is based, rather than with practice and experiment

Authentic (a): true and accurate

Preserve (v): to keep something in its original state in good condition

Nurture (v): to help somebody/something to develop and be successful

12.4. Should museums be free?

I am partly **on board with** the idea that people should be charged upon visiting museums but carrying out that plan may result in some **undesirable** responses. Most museums are financially sponsored by governments for constant **maintenance** and **renovation**, however, public also **contribute** to the preservation of these places with their spending on entrance tickets. Without that amount, I believe museums can still function by itself but with a little struggle indeed. Having said that, many people are having second thoughts on whether to visit museums if they will be charged when there are other attractions without entrance fees required. Therefore, whichever way authorities decide to go, two sides of the issues need **taking into consideration**.

Maintenance (n): the act of keeping something in good condition by checking or repairing it regularly

Renovation (n): the act or process of repairing and painting an old building, piece of furniture, etc. so that it is in good condition again

Contribute (v): to give something, especially money or goods, to help somebody/something

Take into consideration: to think about a particular fact or detail and allow it to have some influence when you are making a decision

12.5. What is the importance of history? Do you think history is important?

Definitely yes, history **has a significant role to play** in our daily lives. Through historical lessons, people are more aware of their **ancestors'** achievements and therefore **appreciate the freedom and peace** they are enjoying.

12.6. What is the importance of learning about history?

Studying history enables us to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. History is **illuminating** and allows us to understand how past human actions influence the present and the future, it teaches us many **lessons of life**, therefore it helps us be able to think more logically and **make sound judgments** about current and future events. History enlightens future generations.

Illuminate (verb) clarify

12.7. Do you think the internet is a good place to learn about history?

It is true that the Internet is a good **source of information** and a **means** through which people can discover and learn more about the past history. However, it's quite unpopular among people nowadays as more young people merely see the internet as a place to relax themselves. Therefore, TV programs or films, I suppose, are better alternatives.

12.8. Do you think people should be able to see historical exhibitions for free? Do you think museums should be free?

To be honest, although **charging a small amount of entrance fee** will give the organizers funds to **continue their operations** and encourage the artists to **produce more decent works**, in my country, people seem to **show no appreciation of artistic values**. Therefore, the local authorities had better let people enter for free to **arouse the public's interests** first and then, if people are interested, a **small admission fee** should be considered afterwards.

Decent (adj) good

12.9. Do people like visiting museums and art galleries?

Not everyone enjoys going to museums. Most of my friends are not interested in art, but I **have a great passion for it**. After I graduated, I began to enjoy taking trips to

various art exhibits. Since then I have made a few friends that are artists, and now they invite me to their galleries quite often.

12.10. How can more people become interested in history?

I'm not that sure, but I suppose the way it's taught at school could be improved, and possibly made more interesting. So for example, instead of simply staying in the classroom, teachers could take students out more to visit historical sites and anything of historical relevance. So that's one thing, and as well as this I guess, um..., increasing the amount of history documentaries on TV could also **have a positive effect on** developing people's interest in history.

12.11. Would you say movies help people develop more interest in history?

Yeah, I'd say they can, because after all, movies are quite **vivid** and so they make history **come alive**. And another thing is that a lot of people can't be bothered to read a book about history, but they'd gladly go and watch a film about it, simply because movies are a bit more entertaining. So yeah, I'd say they generally do help people become more interested in history.

Come alive (verb) If you make something come alive, you make it seem real and interesting

13. Describe a garden you visited and like.

You should say

- Where the garden is
- How do you feel about it
- Why do you like it

As a citizen in a **metropolitan** city, I **am usually partial to** fresh outing spaces for relaxation after being **up to my neck in** work. The list of **ideal** places to visit is in fact pretty long but if I have to **single out** the most preferable one, I would probably pick the Queen Botanical Garden **on the outskirts of my city**. I really need to add that whenever I

am **under pressure** of the **fast – paced** living, I will pay a visit to this **amazing** park, **stroll around** a bit to **decompress**. The fresh and peaceful atmosphere at this Garden totally enables me to **get away from the hustle and bustle** of the city. After **going for a stroll** in the park and get a **full lung of fresh air**, I feel like I've been **fully recharged** and ready for any challenges ahead. The factors **accounting for** my special love to this park are not only the fresh **ambiance** but also the meaning of this botanical garden **dedicated to** the collection, **cultivation** and display of **a multitude of** plants, especially **endangered plant species**. For years, this park has always given me lots of **precious opportunities** to enjoy the **stunning fauna and flora** with **a plenty of** gorgeous flowers and trees. There is no doubt to confirm that this garden has **made great contributions to preserving** local plant diversity as well as **diversifying** people's recreational activities. Almost every individual comes to this park **show their great appreciation for** the local authority's **attempt in conserving** nature lives.

Vocabulary

Metropolitan (adj) belonging to a big city, or typical of big cities

To be partial to (phrase) to like something very much

Up to one's neck in something (idiom) very busy doing something

On the outskirts of something (phrase) a part of the city far removed from the center

Under pressure (phrase) be stressed

Fast-paced (adj) including a lot of different things happening quickly

Stroll around (verb) to walk around casually

Decompress (verb) to relax

Hustle and bustle (phrase) busy and noisy activity (usually + of)

Go for a stroll (noun) a slow walk for pleasure

Account for (verb) explain

Ambiance (noun) atmosphere

Dedicate to (verb) to use space, time, or money for a particular thing

Cultivation (noun) the process of growing crops or plants

Fauna and flora (noun) animals and plants

Plenty of (noun) many

Make contribution to something (phrase) an amount of money or something else of value that you give in order to achieve something or to help make it successful

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

13.1. Are there many public gardens in your country?

To be honest, there are only a few public gardens due to the shortage of **residential areas** especially in large towns and cities. The authorities seem to pay **excessive** attention to economic growth and ignore the provision of green spaces for citizens' enjoyment and relaxation. For example, Madrid City has a small number of public gardens, but a lot of **high-rise** buildings.

13.2. Do you think there are enough public gardens in your hometown?

Personally, I think the number of public gardens in my hometown is **insufficient**. Due to the shortage of housing and the increasing number of citizens, people tend to make use of land for living or cultivation rather than giving priority to public areas such gardens or parks.

13.3. What do you think are the benefits of having gardens in the city?

Having sufficient **urban green spaces** will bring many ecological and health benefits for the city and its residents. Regarding the environmental benefit, public gardens help to **preserve** various species of wild plants, they have beautiful flowers and they keep the **ecological** balance of the area. City gardens also have a positive impact on the health of city dwellers and factory workers.

13.4. Very often, public gardens are not designed in a simple way but, instead, are laid out in a rather complex way. Why do you think this is the case?

In my opinion, a public garden built in a complex design pattern is very **eye-catching** and attractive for people to visit. A garden consisting of sculptures, various rare species of plants and special **landscaping** will be more **appealing** to visitors who wish to explore something **unique**. To make an **analogy**, I believe that public gardens are designed to

capture public attention in the same way that architects design the structure of their buildings.

13.5. Do you think governments should provide more public gardens for people to visit?

Of course, I definitely agree with the idea that governments and authorities ought to provide more public gardens for their citizens for the following reasons.

Public gardens are collections of plants and flowers; they are used not only for enjoyment but also education so that people, especially children, can have the chance to understand and be close to nature. In this function as outdoor classrooms, they **raise an awareness of** environmental issues as well as the **conservation** of special species.

Also, urban green spaces play an important role in leisure and recreation – imagine the pleasure of sitting and reading a book or strolling and chatting with friends, surrounded by the sight and smells of beautiful flowers.

13.6. What do people do when they go to a public garden?

There are various reasons why citizens go to a public garden, but I think the main one is to find an **oasis** of peace and tranquility amid the **frenzy** and **chaos** of city life. Residents in general can go there to enjoy the fresh, tranquil atmosphere and relax themselves simply by **appreciating** the beauty of the flowers and the songs of the birds. Moreover, it is very practical for children and students to visit public gardens in order to be **in touch with** nature and acquire knowledge about it. As a student, I would say that public gardens are also a great place to read a book and to reflect on the lectures or seminars of the day.

13.7. How do people of different age groups use public gardens?

Different age groups will have dissimilar preferences in using public gardens. For example, elderly people tend to go there to relax, go jogging or doing exercises like tai chi. Then again, when public gardens also **incorporate** play areas, these are very safe environments in which parents can **keep a watchful eye** on their children.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Residential areas** [noun]: areas consisting of houses, not factories or offices
Example: She lives in a quiet **residential area**, but she has to travel a long way to work.
- ✓ **Excessive** [adjective]: greater than what seems reasonable or appropriate
Example: They complained about the **excessive** noise made by their neighbours.
- ✓ **High-rise** [adjective]: a building that is very tall, and has lots of floors
Example: She lives on the 10th floor of a **high-rise** apartment block.
- ✓ **Insufficient** [adjective]: not large, strong or important enough for a specific purpose
Example: There was **insufficient** time in the exam to answer all the questions. ❓
- Urban green spaces** [expression]: areas of open land within large towns or cities
Example: In our city there are insufficient **urban green spaces** for residents to enjoy.
- ✓ **Preserve** [verb]: to keep something in existence and in good condition
Example: The society was founded in order to **preserve** elephants from extinction.
- ✓ **Ecological** [adjective]: the relationship between plants and animals to their environment and to each other
Example: When rats were introduced to the island, they destroyed the **ecological balance** between the animals already living there.
- ✓ **Eye-catching** [adjective]: immediately noticeable, because it is very attractive
Example: The actors wore beautiful clothes in **eye-catching** colours.
- ✓ **Landscaping** [noun]: the process of making a garden or other pieces of land more attractive by changing the design or planting trees and flowers
Example: The new campus at the university has beautiful **landscaping**, making it a very attractive place at which to study.
- ✓ **Appealing** [adjective]: attractive and interesting
Example: The design of the doll is very **appealing** to young girls.
- ✓ **Unique** [adjective]: very special or unusual

14. Describe an area of science subject that you are interested in (medicine, physics, mathematics, etc)

Well, the first thing I should mention is that my school life was pretty easy for me as I had the chance to choose and **concentrate on** my favorite subjects. Among them, Mathematics is the one that I really **devoted my effort and time to** learning. It was not my case to say that I **fell in love** with it **at first sight**, actually, I had been **struggling** a lot on the path of **figuring out** the right method to learn it well. In the early years of secondary school, Math for me was the matter of **learning by heart** all the formulas. Therefore, it was **intricate** and **thorny** for me to be good at Math. However, when I was in grade 10, I had the chance to meet Mr. Philip, who is one of my greatest teachers, ever. His unique way of teaching in fact **provoked my passion for** this subject. To be more specific, he **altered my perspective** of learning Math. He showed me the vital role of Math in the real life and how to learn it **effortlessly**. Since then, under his guidance, I **pay more focus on** the way Math can be applied in my life. Over a few months, my ability for Math improved **by leaps and bounds** and I became **addicted to immersing myself in** Math. It is my teacher that **lighted up** my study journey and inspired me to continuously practice for a better me.

Vocabulary

Concentrate on (verb) to give all your attention to the thing you are doing

Devote to doing something (verb) to spend a lot of time or effort doing something

Fall in love with somebody/something (phrasal verb) to start to love someone

Figure out (verb) to be able to understand something or to solve a problem

Learn by heart (phrase) memorize something

Intricate (adj) difficult to understand

Thorny (adj) difficult

Perspective (noun) a way of thinking about something

Effortless (adj) done well or successfully and without any effort

By leaps and bounds (idiom) used for saying that someone or something improves or increases a lot

Addicted to something (adj) enjoying a particular activity very much and spending as much time as you can doing it

Immerse oneself in something (verb) to spend most of your time doing something or thinking about it

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

14.1. What is your opinion of modern education (in school)?

What I think about modern education... I guess people are incorporating a lot of technology in the classroom. Like at a university right now, you can see that teachers, or should I say lecturers, deliver their lessons using computers and projectors, and students study with the slides given by their **educators**. Students may also **submit** their work online instead of **handing it in** directly like before, and some of them study with e-books and mobile applications instead of carrying around textbooks all day long. This approach to teaching will certainly **filter down** to secondary school education, too.

14.2. What school subjects do you think are most important (in primary school or high school)? (Why are they important?)

I would say **Literacy** and Math, for primary school children. They help youngsters form their basic skills and ability like calculating, **analyzing** or the ability to express their thoughts. Without these two, children may have trouble communicating and thinking logically. Literacy and Math are like the **foundation** of everything, I think.

14.3. What school subject do you think will be the most useful in adult life (or, most useful for society)?

Literacy, as in teaching people how to think critically, how to write a proper piece of writing and how to express their thoughts. Subjects like Mathematics, well its advanced version only, or Physics or Chemistry will rarely be applied in life unless you really understand them and you do some kind of job related to them. Literacy, however, assists people in both their normal life and their professional one, particularly in the

way they speak, write, and think. That's why I believe literacy is the subject that will be of **prime** importance to people throughout their lives.

14.4. Which subjects do you think should be optional and which should be compulsory?

I believe subjects requiring a bit of natural ability should be optional, as not everyone can show **aptitude** for things like music and art. Compulsory subjects should be natural sciences and some part of literature which teaches writing or expressing ideas, as these can help students form skills like **critical thinking**, calculating, or analyzing. In some countries, languages should be compulsory too, for example some minorities will need to learn a second language to be able to communicate with the world.

14.5. What are the advantages of studying computing in high school?

Studying computing in high school is really advantageous to students. Technology, or - well in this case - the computer, is used almost everywhere nowadays you know, you can see it being a part of almost everything. This is why learning computing means giving students a chance to catch up with what's **going on** in the world. Computing would also assist them in their future careers as more and more jobs nowadays require the use of computers.

14.6. In the west, (upper) high school students are allowed to choose many of the subjects they study. Do you think that would be a good idea?

It depends. This would be a good idea for those who already know what they want to do in the future, as they could easily choose the subjects that are necessary to **realize** their dreams. Also, leaving students to choose the subjects they study means letting them **have a say in** deciding their future from an early age, which can **boost** their independence and determination. However, this would cause problems to those who don't know yet what they want to do in the future, thus stopping them from studying their **potential** favorite or important subjects.

14.7. How are educational priorities today different from those in the past?

In modern society, a higher priority is placed on the education of children than in the past. This is simply, in my opinion, a recognition that we now live in a world of work in

which **specialist** knowledge and skills are essential for many jobs. So, education now gives more priority to the ability to use technology. Students today must be both literate and **computer-literate**.

14.8. What is your opinion on the way languages are taught in schools?

Too passive, I think. Most schools in our country focus too much on teaching grammar and vocabulary, thus **neglecting** speaking, listening and writing. Except for those from **specialized** schools, most students often speak with no **intonation**, their pronunciation of each sound is rarely fully correct, and it's hard for them to **strike up** a conversation with a foreigner in English due to their poor speaking and listening skills. Most of them can hardly **come up with** a **decent** piece of writing either.

14.9. What changes do you think will happen in the classroom in the near future?

Studying in the future may include a lot of technology. Right now education technology is already on the rise, and I think it's going to be everywhere in years **to come**. The role of the teacher may be minimized, and in some places the physical classroom may also be **eliminated** and replaced by the **virtual** one.

VOCABULARY

✓ **Incorporate** [verb] to include as part of something

Example: The textbook **incorporates** all the latest information on climate change.

✓ **Educator** [noun] (formal) a person whose job is to teach or educate people (formal)

Example: Modern **educators** prefer a different approach to the teaching of reading.

✓ **Submit** [verb] to give a document, proposal, etc. to somebody in authority so that they can study or consider it

Example: Completed projects must be **submitted** by 10 March.

✓ **Hand something** [phrasal verb] = submit

Example: You must all **hand in** your projects by the end of next week.

✓ **Filter down** [phrasal verb] to move slowly down to lower levels of an organisation or system

Example: During the day, the news that the company was going to close **filtered down** to the employees.

✓ **Literacy** [noun] the ability to read and write

Example: Now that most children go to school, the rate of **literacy** in the country is improving.

✓ **Analyze** [verb] to examine the nature or structure of something, especially by separating it into its parts, in order to understand or explain it

Example: He tried to **analyze** her feelings and finally managed to get what she wanted.

✓ **Foundation** [noun] a principle, an idea or a fact that something is based on and that it grows from

Example: Respect and friendship provide a solid **foundation** for marriage.

✓ **Prime** [adjective] main; most important; basic Example: The care of the environment is of **prime** importance.

✓ **Aptitude** [noun] natural ability or skill at doing something

e.g. After working for several months, she got promoted as she showed an **aptitude** for the work.

✓ **Critical thinking** [noun] the process of analyzing information in an objective way, in order to make a judgement about it

e.g. The school encourages **critical thinking** and problem solving skills.

✓ **Go on** [phrasal verb] happen/take place

Example: I often check the news on the internet to know what's **going on** in the world.

✓ **Realize** [verb] to achieve something important that you want to do

Example: She never **realized** her ambition of becoming a singer.

✓ **Say (in something)** [noun] the right to influence something by giving your opinion before a decision is made

Example: We had no **say in** the decision to sell the company.

✓ **Boost** [verb] to make something increase, or become better or more successful

Example: The movie helped **boost** her screen career. She received several prizes and was asked to do some TV commercials.

✓ **Potential** [adjective] that can develop into something or be developed in the future

Example: First we need to identify actual and **potential** problems, then we may come up with some solutions.

✓ **Computer-literate** [adjective] able to use computers well

Example: She is highly **computer-literate** and she now teaches other people to use computers.

✓ **Apparent** [adjective] obvious

Example: It was **apparent** from her face that she was really upset.

✓ **Pay attention to smt/smb** [expression] listen to, look at or think about something/somebody carefully

Example: The teacher asked her students to **pay their full attention to** what she was saying, as that part was really important.

✓ **Neglect** [verb] not give enough attention to something

Example: She has **neglected** her studies – all she's done is playing.

✓ **Specialized (chuyên)** [adjective] designed or developed for a particular purpose or area of knowledge

Example: The course is very **specialized**; only psychologists are allowed to attend it.

✓ **Intonation (ngữ điệu)** [noun] the rise and fall of the voice in speaking, especially as this affects the meaning of what is being said

Example: In English, some questions have a rising **intonation**.

✓ **Strike up sth (with sb)** [phrasal verb] to begin a friendship, a relationship, a conversation, etc.

Example: He would often **strike up** conversations with complete strangers.

Come up with [phrasal verb] to find or produce an answer, a sum of money

Example: She **came up with** a new idea for increasing sales.

Decent [adjective] of a good enough standard or quality; acceptable to people in a particular situation

Example: I need a **decent** night's sleep; I have been staying up late recently.

✓ **To come** [idiom] in the future

Example: They may well regret the decision in years **to come**.

✓ **Eliminate** [verb] to remove or get rid of something/somebody

Example: The police have **eliminated** two suspects from their investigation.

✓ **Virtual** [adjective] made to appear to exist by the use of computer software, for example on the Internet

Example: New technology has enabled development of an online “**virtual** library”.

15. Describe a future plan which is not related to work or study

You should say:

What it is

Why you have this plan

What you will happen need to do in order to make the plan

How you think you will feel after you achieve this

Sample 1

You may or may not notice but we have **run across** at least one or two articles illustrating how people should **live their lives to the fullest** every single day. Reading those sharing has **struck** me hard that I haven't tried doing something worth risking or adventurous enough in my life, which will somehow leave a regretful feeling to my older self when years **come by**. And that's why I have **scratched** my original plan to **settle down** first to **make time for** traveling for at least 3 months within the next 2 years.

It may sound **far-fetched** to give up your usual lifestyle and stable income to commit for long-term retreat which **holds no guarantee** to be beneficial for your next job, however, life is not always about the results but the experience. It will take serious time and effort to carefully prepare for the journey unless you want to **let the grass grow under your feet**. Fortunately, I am that type of person; hence, I have already **sketched** a plan. The first thing crossing my mind when thinking about travelling is money, which is also the most crucial tool in any situation. Saving up to the amount that can cover at least all my

basic needs is the goal. Besides, it's nearly impossible to truly discover local cultures without understanding them and languages can break any **boundary**. Therefore, based on the list of countries I would love to visit, I will try to learn a little about their languages as well as look into their cultures and customs to be able to communicate more efficiently and avoid **taboos** that visitors usually make. Emerging yourself in an entirely different nature and people will definitely change how you **perceive** the world and **cultivate** your appreciation with everything offered.

Vocabulary

Run across (phrasal verb) meet or find by chance

Live life to the fullest: to fully enjoy one's life

Strike (v): (of a thought or an idea) to come into somebody's mind suddenly

Scratch (v): to decide that something cannot happen or somebody/something cannot take part in something, before it starts

Far-fetched (a): unlikely and unconvincing; implausible

Let the grass grow under your feet: delay in acting or taking an opportunity

Sketch (v): to give a general description of something, giving only the basic facts

Boundary (n): a line that marks the limits of an area; a dividing line

Taboo (n): considered so offensive or embarrassing that people must not mention it

Perceive (v): to understand or think of somebody/something in a particular way

Cultivate (v): to develop an attitude, a way of talking or behaving, etc.

Sample 2

The significant development of transport has made traveling nowadays more easily and comfortably. Especially when you're still young, the desire to know more about the world outside becomes even stronger. And **I'm no exception**. Traveling is definitely one of my goal before I'm 35. Although for now I've not yet **thought of** any specific countries or places, but I'm planning to have a perfect vacation with my lover after **putting aside** enough money.

Firstly, I want to spend my vacation with my lover. It may sound a bit **cheesy** but things would be quite boring if I didn't have someone to share with. Traveling is of course a good chance for us to make more memories. Moreover, as I suppose both of us prefer travelling by ourselves, having someone to assist you is necessary when it comes to new countries, especially in case you don't speak the language or you're not **familiar with** the culture.

Quite and peaceful places with nice weather would be a perfect destination for me. So beaches, highland or countryside are **on top of the list**. For me traveling is such a perfect time to just **let my hair down**, **recharge our own energy** after working hard **all year long**, to **get away from** busy lifestyle of the **concrete world** and to enjoy some fresh air. Thus, instead of crazy shopping or **stuck in traffic jam** for hours, walking or cycling **here and there** and trying some local foods would be amazing.

Finally the length of the vacation appears to be not so important to me **as long as** we can manage our time and health for work.

Vocabulary

To be no exception (adj): to be similar to other people

To be on top of the list (adj): to be considered as the first priorities

Let my hair down (idiom): relax

All year long (phrase): the whole year

Traffic jam (n): the situation when a large number of vehicles close together and unable to move or move slowly (peak hours)

Here and there (phrase) in or to several different places

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

15.1. Which do you prefer? Having plans or having no plans?

I **have inclination for** becoming organized and prepared for upcoming challenges. **Drawing up** a plan **in advance** can **equip people with** some knowledge when something unexpected **comes up**, or when everything just doesn't go according to plan. Without a plan, people can feel **at a loss** and have nothing to **fall back on** when they are **in the face of adversity**. However, it should be **pointed out** that we shouldn't **get into too much detail**, instead, just **getting the picture as to** what's gonna happen and how plan can be developed is enough for us to tackle it. I mean that plan there are a lot of external circumstances which **preclude** our detailed plan **from** coming true; as a result, there is no need to be too precise.

Have inclination for (phrase) have a feeling that you want to do something

Draw up (phrasal verb) to prepare and write something such as a document or plan

Equip somebody/something with something (phrase) to provide a person, object, or place with the things that they need for a particular purpose

Come up (phrasal verb) if a problem comes up, it happens and needs to be dealt with immediately

To be at a loss (phrase) unable to know how to act or what to do

Fall back on (phrasal verb) to depend on something after a loss or failure

Adversity (noun) a difficult period in your life in which you have many problems

Point out (phrasal verb) to tell someone something

In detail (phrase) including many facts or aspects of a situation

Get the picture (idiom) understand something

Preclude something from something (verb) if one thing precludes another, the first thing prevents the second one from happening

Precise (adj) exact and accurate

15.2. Do you think most people can carry out their plans?

I think only the minority have the ability to realize their plans. What need to be pointed out is that the majority tend to set up their plans in an ideal and perfect way without

being **aware of** the fact that **external circumstances** can **prevent them from** being fulfilled. Some might **end up** being driven to a **dead-end** and feel **at a loss** as to what to do next. We should **blame this on** our **inflexibility** and inexperience, rather than regarding the plan as a bad one. **At the end of the day**, what counts most is our capacity and experience to make our intentions **come true**, not just preparing a **detailed plan** beforehand.

Blame something on someone/something (verb) to say or think that someone or something is responsible for an accident, problem, or bad situation

Inflexibility (noun) no willingness to change your ideas, beliefs, or decisions

At the end of the day (idiom) used for saying what you consider is the most important thing about a situation after thinking about it

15.3. What's the difference between dream and goal?

As far as I'm concerned, there's only one big difference that **distinguishes a dream from** a goal, which is your determination and **stamina**. In other words, when you are **committed to** something, you will probably spend more time on it; **make concerted efforts** to **achieve the goal you have set**. **On the contrary**, just like its literal meaning, a dream is what you only wish to come but it is almost impossible to **come into reality** as you are lazy and **take no actions** to make your dream come true.

As far as I'm concerned (phrase) used when you are giving your opinion about something, especially when this may be different from other people's opinions

Distinguish from (verb) to recognize the differences between things

Stamina (noun) the ability to work hard or to make a lot of effort over a long period of time without getting tired

Committed to (adj) loyal to a belief, organization, or group, and willing to work hard for it

Make concerted efforts (phrase) work hard

Achieve goal (collocation)

Set goal (collocation)

On the contrary (phrase) used for emphasizing that something is true, even though it is the opposite of something that has been said

15.4. In general, do you think planning is important?

To be honest, I am a great planner and can hardly stick to my original plan. Yet, that's what planning is all about. They say "**plan to fail and fail to plan**" for a reason. Even though I usually end up ruining my schedule, I **make a habit of** noting my thoughts and what I have to do the next day, next week and next month since I think it's one of the best way to organize my mind and my life as well. Without a plan, even a **generic** one, you're just going around without **making any progress** towards your goals and advance in your career. Therefore, making sure to **keep track of** my schedule and personal goals through planning is my top priority.

Make a habit of: to do something so often that it becomes a habit

Generic (a): not specific

Make progress: to move forward in one's work or activity

Keep track of: to continue to know what is happening to something or someone

15.5. Do you think people should make highly detailed plans or just general plans?

There's no such fixed rules on whether people should detail their plans or not as it mainly depends on people's **preference** and the duration of the plans. They could be short, medium or long-term plans and usually the longer the time, the more general they seem. But again, it's **flexible**. I believe each kind of plans has its own advantage. For more detailed ones, planners would know exactly what to do to achieve specific goals in the period of time given. On the contrary, general plans are more about what directions you want to head rather than a list of to-do things daily. Therefore, depending on your purpose, plan wisely.

Preference (n): a greater interest in or desire for somebody/something than somebody/something else

Flexible (a): able to change to suit new conditions or situations

15.6. What type of people likes to make plans?

From my experience and observations, people who want to **make best use of** their time and aim to **take control of** their lives are dedicated planners. Lots of people are losing focus everyday and have no ideas what to do with their current situation. They hold onto the excuses of having no passion or necessary skills to **fulfill** their dreams, which **makes no sense** to most planners. Planners are convinced that in order to achieve anything, either big or small, plans should be made and efforts should be taken. As a result, the majority of successful people are those who make times to organize their thoughts and plan ahead.

Make use of: to use someone or something for a particular purpose, especially one that brings a benefit to you

Take control of: to get the power and right to direct someone or something

Hold onto: to continue feeling or believing something

Fulfill (v): to do or achieve what was hoped for or expected

Make sense: to be understandable, reasonable => **make no sense:** not understandable

15.7. Why do you think some people likes to make plans?

Some believe planning is not for everyone since many wants to live **spontaneously** without thinking too much but others have different opinions. People are into planning since many benefits it may bring. Planning helps you **clarify** your goals, **strategize** your tactics and **stay on track**. Even if sometimes you mess it all up, you will eventually get back to your **ultimate** destination. Without a plan, you are simply lost in a maze of **inconsequential** decisions.

Spontaneously (adv): n a way that is not planned but done because you suddenly want to do it

Clarify (v): to make something clearer or easier to understand

Strategize (v): devise a strategy

Stay on track: to stay on the path that one is on

Ultimate (a): most extreme; best, worst, greatest, most important, etc.

Inconsequential (a): not important or worth considering

15.8. Do you think it's important for a person to have a career plan?

There's no doubt about that. In fact, questions about career plan or personal growth are brought up in almost every job interview that every candidate has to carefully prepare. It's **justifiable** to ask such questions to further assess whether applicants are passionate about their job or not. If they already have a vision for their future selves, it's **praiseworthy**. But if that's not the case, people should keep looking for their purpose and **come up with** a career plan when possible, which will help you have a clearer picture of whom you're going to be in the next few years.

Justifiable (a): existing or done for a good reason, and therefore acceptable

Praiseworthy (a): deserving praise

Come up with: to think of something such as an idea or a plan

15.9. How do most people plan their future education and their future career? (What factors?)

They usually start from the very basic steps, I **presume**. In order to **obtain** further education, young students may start with improving their current performance at school today. Without an acceptable **transcript** or **references** from teachers, it's challenging to be offered a place at any high-ranking university. And to be able to cover the tuition, they probably start saving up as soon as they can to afford four years of college. Same thing with their future career. Plans are usually drawn out to **determine** where students will go and how to **land their dream job** after graduating. Finding an

internship or a part-time job is most of students' way to gain **hands-on** experience to fill up their resume.

Presume (v): to suppose that something is true, although you do not have actual proof

Obtain (v): to get something, especially by making an effort

Transcript (n): an official record of a student's work that shows the courses they have taken and the marks/grades they have achieved

Reference (n): a letter written by somebody who knows you, giving information about your character and abilities, especially to a new employer

Determine (v): to officially decide and/or arrange something

Land a job: to find a job and be hired

Hands-on (a): doing something rather than just talking about it

15.10. Do you think it's important for young people to get advice from their parents when planning a career?

Parents are predecessors with years of **wisdom** and experience so it would be an **oversight** not to **seek** career advice from your own folks. Since fresh graduates or young employees have not been through many situations, which can be either good or bad, and mainly concentrated on studying, they probably lack practical knowledge and determination to decide which career is suitable with their characteristics and **ambitions**. Hence, as part of parenting, it's parents' responsibility to help guide them towards their desired place.

Wisdom (n): the ability to make sensible decisions and give good advice because of the experience and knowledge that you have

Oversight (n): the fact of making a mistake because you forget to do something or you do not notice something

Seek (v): to look for something/somebody

Ambition (n): the desire or determination to be successful, rich, powerful, etc.

16. Describe a tall building you like or dislike

You should say:

- What is the name of the building
- Where is it located
- Why do you like/ dislike it

Sample 1

I guess I could begin by saying something about what this building is and I suppose I would have to choose one of the tallest buildings in the world, which is located in Taiwan. The building is called Taipei 101 because it has 101 floors.

Now going on to my next point, which is how it looks like. I really need to add that Taipei 101 was originally constructed way back in 1999 and finished 5 year later in 2004. The height of the building is 509 meters. It is shaped like a pagoda and the building is saved from many earthquakes in Taiwan.

Now **with reference** to what this building is used for. Well the point I like to make here is that Taipei 101 is a **multi-level** shopping mall, **adjoining to** tower house with hundreds of stores, restaurants and clubs. In fact, it chiefly caused as an economic and financial center of Taiwan.

With regard to the question about how often I visit this place. Well, really I should mention that I've had just one opportunity to visit it in 2009, it was on my 17th birthday **to be exact**. At the very first sight, I **was blown away** by the **unparalleled architecture** of Taipei 101 and I'm sure it will be **on my top list of must – go places** in the future.

Sample 2

I'm going to describe a **high-rise building** in my neighborhood. It's called Paradise Green City, located in Canada.

Unlike other **modern blocks**, which are usually **huge glass towers**, the building is painted yellow, although it's named Green City. The structure of Green City is not **dissimilar to** that of most buildings in Canada nowadays, with the bottom half used as a shopping center and the top **half occupied** by apartments.

One feature that makes the building unique is that its **trade center** offers Canadian products only, **with a view to** promoting domestic products to people and also to supporting national manufacturers. At the entrance of the building, if you look to the right, you can easily find a store named Masterchef bread, which serves traditional bread to people who just do not have enough time to go inside, so they **line up** waiting to pay.

In spite of its **prime location**, however, Paradise Green City offers a **reasonable price** for its apartments, which are affordable for many **middle-income** families. From the building, we can enjoy the **breathtaking scenery**. So, if you are planning to find a place with a beautiful and peaceful view, or simply want to buy something traditional, Paradise Green City may be a good choice.

(Dislike) What I don't like about Paradise Green City, however, is that its design is neither **eye-catching** nor original. In fact, I personally find that it resembles Sea view Tower, a modern building nearby. Moreover, the paint color doesn't **match** its modern structures, which makes the building somehow **old-fashioned**. And, the quality, as well as diversity of products on sale do not **live up to the expectations** of most customers. So, I guess it's the reason why the building doesn't attract as much attention from the public as expected.

Vocabulary

high-rise (adj) very tall and having a lot of floor

Block (noun) tall buildings that contain flats or offices

Huge glass towers (phrase) high-level buildings with the exterior made of glass

Dissimilar (adj) not the same

Feature (noun) A prominent or distinctive part, quality, or characteristic

Domestic products (noun) goods that are manufactured within a country, by manufacturers of that country.

Example: Famous by Boo is a clothing brand that offers domestic products.

Serve (verb) to provide food, entertainment or service

Prime (adj) excellent, the best available

Offer a reasonable price (phrase) sell with a price that is not too high, and affordable

Middle-income families (phrase) families in which the members have salaries which are not very high, but also not too low

Breathtaking scenery (collocation) very beautiful and spectacular landscape

Eye-catching (adj) tending to attract attention, good-looking

Resemble (verb) look like another person or thing

Match (verb) look good together

Live up to/meet expectations (phrase) be as good as expected

Attract attention (phrase) make people notice something

The public (noun) the community/ the people as the whole

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

16.1. How do people in your country feel about old buildings?

Our culture is tradition-oriented, which obviously means Indian people have a respectful attitude toward architecture built to last **for ages**. This can be seen through not only many famous old structures that are still preserved today, but also in interesting folktales about their construction.

16.2. Do old people and young people in your country have the same attitudes towards old buildings?

In my opinion, there is certainly a difference between the **perspective** of elderly people and that of young people on old buildings due to the generation gap. Elders are more respectful of old architecture compared with youngsters. They enjoy the

atmosphere created by old places where they recall the old times / their own history while the young generation finds it uninteresting.

16.3. Is it important to preserve old buildings?

Yes, I strongly support the idea of preserving old buildings. One reason for this is that the buildings represent both cultural and historical values, which could be viewed as precious **artifacts** worth retaining. The second reason is to create a sense of nostalgia which helps people **meditate** (away from their city lives).

16.4. What aspect of culture do old buildings reflect?

In terms of the cultural aspect of old buildings, they represent the religion and lifestyle of the time. The majority of the old buildings are associated with Buddhist architecture such as the pagoda, temple and shrine. Apart from religious design, old structures also reflect the lifestyle of people relating to the tradition of agricultural **work**. This can be commonly seen in the countryside where there are spacious old houses with private fields and gardens.

16.5. How do old buildings affect the appearance of a place? (Hint: Well designed and well maintained old buildings are visually attractive and add a touch of elegance to a location.)

There are two cases. If there are **dilapidated** buildings in the area, it will not only make for a gloomy sight but also is a waste of land. In contrast, well designed and well maintained old buildings are visually attractive and add a touch of elegance to a location, which results in it becoming a tourist attraction.

16.6. What benefits can people get from old buildings?

There are several advantages brought by old buildings. Beside the peaceful atmosphere they provide, old / traditional architecture plays an essential role as both cultural and historical artifacts for us to study about our **ancestors**. Therefore, when they attract a considerable number of visitors, local people can benefit from tourism.

16.7. Would you say buildings in the past were better than those of today, or those of today are better than those in the past?

In general, today's construction techniques have developed hugely, which makes modern towers more solid than those built a long time ago. However, there are magnificently extraordinary ancient structures that not only get admiration from people today but also remain mysterious-such as the Great Pyramid in Egypt.

16.8. Do you think it's worth the money to preserve old buildings?

Although I appreciate the value of old buildings, I think that the government should allocate a sensible budget to preserve them in good condition. As the population is sharply increasing and the polar ice is melting, the problem of insufficient living land has become more serious than ever. Therefore, **antiquated** buildings which are less valuable should be **demolished** to facilitate urbanization.

16.9. How have buildings changed in the past few years?

During recent years, there has been a tendency to construct tower blocks and **skyscrapers** as engineering techniques have considerably developed. Compared with finicky designs of old architecture, modern buildings are simpler and more uniform due to the construction materials changing from stone, wood and bamboo to concrete, steel and glass.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **for ages** [collocation] for a very long time
Example: We have so many things in common that it is like we have known each other for ages.
- ✓ **Perspective** [noun] a particular way of considering something
Example: You're approaching the problem from a completely different perspective.
- ✓ **Artifact** [noun] an object made by a human being, typically an item of cultural or historical interest.
Example: The museum's collection includes artifacts dating back to prehistoric times.
- ✓ **meditate** [verb] to think calm thoughts in order to relax or as a religious activity

Example: My aunt goes to the local pagoda to meditate for 20 minutes every day.

✓ **In terms of** [collocation] used to describe which particular area of a subject you are discussing

Example: In terms of money, I was better off in my last job.

✓ **Dilapidated** [adjective] old and in poor condition

Example: The hotel we stayed in was really dilapidated

✓ **Ancestor** [noun] a person related to you who lived a long time ago

Example: Apparently his ancestors came over from France in the 11th century.

✓ **Antiquated** [adjective] old-fashioned or unsuitable for modern society

Example: It will take many years to modernize antiquated agricultural industries.

✓ **demolish** [verb] to completely destroy a building, especially in order to use the land for other purposes.

Example: A number of houses in my neighborhood were demolished so that the supermarket could be built.

✓ **skyscraper** [noun] a very tall modern building, usually in a city

Example: New York is one of the biggest cities in the world in which there are thousands of towers and skyscrapers.

17. Describe a wild animal

You should say:

- What is the animal
- What are the special characteristics of that animals
- What is its habitat

To be quite honest, in general I would say that I **am** actually quite **keen on** wild animals, especially the enormous ones that survive well in the **savage** life. Talking of large

animals, elephant is usually the one that **crosses our mind**, but in actual fact, it is still small **as compared to** the largest animal in the world, the Blue Whale. Baby Blue whales are big, even in the early days of their **life cycle**. At birth, they are about 7 meters long and weigh 2 tons. In order to nurture that huge body, they assume up to 200 liters of milk every day and averagely they grow 80 kilograms more every passing day. In fact, they grow so quickly that I feel **as if** I could hear them grow. The young whales stay with their mother until they are a year old. During that time, the young whales learn to survive in the ocean. The mother whales teach their calves how to hunt and **fight off** enemies. When young whales become adults, they are about 35 meters long and weigh approximately up to 130 tons. Adult blue whales can absorb an **incredibly enormous** amount of food which is about 4000 kilograms per day. Nowadays, blue whales are currently considered as an endangered species and I always think that it's time for the world to **raise its responsibility** towards **wildlife conservation**.

Vocabulary

To be keen on (adj) enthusiastic about something

Savage (adj) extremely severe

Cross one's mind (phrase) if something crosses your mind, you think of it, but often not for very long or very seriously

As compared to (phrase) used for talking about the ways in which two things are different, or about the ways in which something has changed

Life cycle (noun) the length of time that something lasts or remains useful

QUESTION FOR PART 3

17.1. Do you think animals have feelings and rights? (Why?/Why not?)

I think animals can think and feel too. I'm sure you have heard of the story of a dog named Hachiko that waited for his owner's return every day for more than nine years after his owner's death. Such remarkable loyalty shown by a dog made me realize that animals can have emotions too. I also believe animals should be **granted** rights so that there's a clear legal limit to human behaviors in relation to animals.

17.2. Some people breed animals such as dogs for money. How do you feel about that?

I'm fine with people breeding animals for money as long as they don't hurt the animals in the process. I know some people who breed dogs for a living but I know that they love the dogs and truly care for them; they would never want to see the dogs in pain, so I don't see anything wrong with such a practice.

17.3. Do you think there should be laws to protect the welfare of pets and farm animals? (For example, laws against cruel treatment.) Why?/Why not?

Absolutely. If you think about it, animals are vulnerable, defenseless and completely under a man's control / in a man's charge. Nevertheless, I strongly believe that animals deserve to live their lives free from suffering and **exploitation**. People who disregard the wellbeing of animals should be brought to court and **held accountable for violating** animal rights.

17.4. Are there any wild animals in your country that are not found in any other country?

I'm aware of only a few **endangered** species, such as the pheasant, Tonkin snub-nosed monkey, Crested argus and the Annam black muntjac.

17.5. Are there any animal reserves in your country where wild animals can live in protection?

As far as I know, there are several national parks and nature reserves across the country to protecting wild plant and animal species and their habitats.

17.6. How do people feel about the protection of wild animals?

For the most part, I'm sure people are well aware of the importance of protecting wild animals and endangered species. Particularly many youngsters nowadays are actively playing their part in wildlife conservation by participating in animal **conservation** volunteer programs in remote areas of the country and sharing stories of illegal wildlife trade on their social medias in hope of raising overall animal welfare standards.

17.7. What do you think are some of the benefits to humans from protecting wild animals?

In my opinion, there are two main reasons to protect wild animals. One of them has to do with the protection of our **ecosystem**. Everything in the wild has evolved to work together to have a **biosphere** that sustains life. Yet, it is hard to know exactly what might happen to an ecosystem when even the smallest contributor to that ecosystem vanishes. Hence, wild animals, as a part of the ecosystem of the world need to be conserved and protected. Plus, a lot of medicines used to help cure various health conditions, such as heart diseases, **disorders** and other illnesses have been **derived** from the chemicals produced by animals. If wild animals are gone, it will be impossible for humans to study and learn from them.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Grant (verb):** to give or allow someone something
They granted her an entry visa.
- ✓ **Exploitation (noun):** the use of something in order to get an advantage from it
The protection of the Antarctic from commercial exploitation is an important goal of environmentalists.
- ✓ **To hold accountable for sth:** to consider someone responsible for something
I must hold you responsible for the missing money.
- ✓ **Violate (verb):** to break or act against something, especially a law
They were charged with violating federal law.
- ✓ **Endangered species (adj):** animals or plants that may soon not exist because there are very few now alive
- ✓ **Conservation (noun):** the protection of plants and animals, natural areas, and interesting and important structures and buildings, especially from the damaging effects of human activity

This fundraising program was established for the purpose of funding research and education initiatives that aid in the conservation of endangered species.

- ✓ **Ecosystem (noun):** all the living things in an area and the way they affect each other and the environment

Pollution can have disastrous effects on the delicately balanced ecosystem.

- ✓ **Biosphere (noun):** the part of the earth's environment where life exists

The biosphere extends from the deepest root systems of trees, to the dark environment of ocean trenches, to lush rain forests and high mountaintops.

- ✓ **Disorder (noun):** an illness of the mind or body

She suffers from an eating disorder.

- ✓ **Derive sth from sth (verb):** to get something from something else

The institute derives all its money from foreign investments.

18. Describe a time when you were busy.

You should say:

- When was that time
- Why was you busy
- How did you handle it

Nowadays, with the **incredibly fast – paced living**, it's not unusual to see how busy people are in their lives. Honestly speaking, I have found myself like thousands of time **up to my neck** in work, however the time that is most memorable for me is the one of **chasing the deadline** to submit my final thesis paper for graduation. The allowed time for me to fulfil this task is 2 months, nevertheless I spent almost three weeks struggling to **figure out** the topic. In addition, I was **under pressure** by the job pressure at the company where I was performing as an intern. Between working at the corporates, attending classes and completing the assigned thesis, I was in fact a **busy little beaver** for almost 2 months. I barely had time remaining for my personal stuff and I was really

stressed out that I was **falling behind my schedule** for my thesis paper submission. It was in deed a complicated one that required me to do tons of research, both from libraries and the Internet. In addition, I had to visit some local companies to collect data for my thesis. Those days were so tough and I had been so busy that sometimes I slept for 3 hours only at night. However, **at the end of the day**, I completed the thesis **with flying colors** and had it submitted **in due time**. Although it was extremely challenging for me at that time, I felt that all of my **dedication** and effort were **truly rewarding**. It also gave me some precious experience in **time management** and **dealing with** stress in life.

Vocabulary

Fast – paced (adj) including a lot of different things happening quickly

Up to one’s neck in something (idiom) involved in a difficult situation, or with more work to do than you can deal with

Figure out (verb) to be able to understand something or to solve a problem

Under pressure (phrase) be stressed

Busy little beaver (idiom) A very busy, assiduous, or hardworking person

Fall behind (phrasal verb) fail to keep up

At the end of the day (idiom) finally; in the end

With flying colors (phrase) with great success

In due time (phrase) after a certain period

Deal with (verb) to take action to do something, especially to solve a problem

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

18.1. Do you like the fast pace of modern life?

Not really. Living life in the fast lane surely can be both mentally and physically **draining**. I can see people nowadays often struggle to **juggle** work **commitments** with the demands of the family and keeping up with friends. Besides, a **hectic** lifestyle can very easily **take a toll on** our overall well-being if we fail to take better care of ourselves.

18.2. How do you feel when you are really busy?

Sometimes, it does **wear me out** to be so busy with work and study but I don't necessarily dislike it. When I'm busy, I actually feel a sense of satisfaction, knowing that I'm doing something productive. I used to be unemployed for a short period of time and it was seriously so **frustrating** to stay at home all the time, doing nothing while earning no money. I think that's the reason why I now prefer being busy and I often try to occupy my time with as much work and activities as possible, provided that I'm given a holiday break or time off to look forward to.

18.3. What's the best way to deal with stress?

As I am the type of people that cannot get anything done if I'm under too much stress, if I'm too busy to the point of getting stressed out, I would always try to **squeeze in** some quality relaxing time to do things that I love, like watching my favorite TV shows, going shopping or hanging out with friends. I found out that the best way for me to fight away stress often is to slow down, enjoy life more and fill my mind with only positive thoughts. Only then can I find peace within myself and **gather** more strength to fulfill my responsibilities at work and towards my family.

18.4. What kind of lifestyle is suitable to people in modern society?

I believe people of modern times should definitely **strive for** a more balanced lifestyle by making more **mindful** and healthier choices **for the sake of** their physical well-being. People can start taking charge of their life by being more active, enjoying hobbies and sharing time with friends and family. This, in my opinion, is the most important investment anyone can make in his or her life.

18.5. What relaxation techniques do you usually use?

As I mentioned earlier, some of the relaxation techniques for stress relief that work for me include getting a good belly laugh with some variety shows that I like or simply by surrounding myself with funny and cheerful friends; listening to slow and **soothing** music to calm my mind; **savoring** only the good experiences and trying to focus on the present and things that really matter in life, which are good health and having my loving family and friends by my side.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Juggle (verb):** to try to do two or more jobs or activities at the same time, because you do not have a lot of time
Flexible working hours help staff juggle work and family life.
- ✓ **Commitment (noun):** the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc.
He thanked them for their work on the book and their commitment to delivering a quality product.
- ✓ **Hectic (adj):** full of activity, or very busy and fast
The area has become a haven for people tired of the hectic pace of city life.
- ✓ **To take a toll on:** to cause damage or wear by using something or by hard living
Drug abuse takes quite a toll on the lives of people.
- ✓ **To wear sb out:** to make someone extremely tired
Walking around a museum all day really wears you out.
- ✓ **Frustrating (adj):** cause (someone) to feel upset or annoyed as a result of being unable to change or achieve something
It can be very frustrating to find that the size you want isn't there.
- ✓ **To squeeze sb/sth in:** to manage to do something or see someone in a short period of time or when you are very busy
While we're in Australia, we're hoping to squeeze in a trip to the Barrier Reef.
- ✓ **To gather (up) strength/courage:** to prepare to make a great effort to be strong or brave *I spent a week gathering the courage to say no.*
- ✓ **Mindful (adj):** conscious or aware of something
It is also good to be mindful of those who have less than we do.
- ✓ **To strive for sth:** to try very hard to do something or to make something happen
We strive to ensure that all children are treated equally.
- ✓ **For the sake of sb:** in order to help or bring advantage to someone
Their parents only stayed together for the sake of the children.
- ✓ **Soothing (adj):** making you feel calm

I put on some nice soothing music.

- ✓ **Savor (verb):** enjoy or appreciate (something pleasant) to the full
As for herself, she is going to make sure she savors every moment.

19. Describe a famous person that you admire

You should say:

- Who is this person
- What is their specialty
- Why do you admire him

Sample 1

In my to-meet list, there are so many **well – respected** celebrities whom I am desired to meet and spend time with. However, I would like to share about Pele, who is nicknamed as the greatest soccer player around the Globe.

Initially, I really need to **kick off** with the point that Pele was just seventeen when he first played in World Cup in Sweden of 1958 for Brazil. Despite his very young age, he was selected as to the national team participating one of the biggest sport competition on the planet. Back then, he was not the star player but when his teammate was hurt, Pele went into the game. He immediately scored goal and Brazil won the World Cup. By his amazing **aptitudes** and skills, Pele was feared by other teams. The Brazilian government even named him as a **national treasure**. It is not doubtful to say that Pele is one of the biggest factors making Brazil's soccer so **well – known**. His last World Cup was in Mexico in 1970. Brazil scored 4 goals against Italy to win the World Cup for the third time.

Another point that I would like to share is that Pele has an admirable career that every soccer players **craves for**. Pele **holds many soccer records** such as having over 1000 goals in his career. He was **nominated** as a athlete of the Century in 1980 and became a

member of a soccer Hall of Fame in 1993. Although he's now retired from professional competition, Pele is still **considered as** a great inspiration for soccer players and lovers.

Vocabulary

Kick off (verb) start

Aptitude (noun) natural ability that makes it easy for you to do something well

Craves for (verb) to want something very much and in a way that is very hard to control

Hold a record (phrase) make the best achievement so far in a particular activity, especially sport

Nominate (verb) to officially suggest that someone should be given a job, or that someone or something should receive a prize

Sample 2:

Speaking about a well-known person that I **look up to**, I would choose Nick Vujicic. I believe I am not the only person who is inspired and **moved to tears** by his journey.

Nick Vujicic is an Australian **evangelist** and motivational speaker. What makes him so special is that he was born without legs and arms due to a rare **disorder** called phocomelia. Like other **disabled people**, Nick faced countless physical and mental difficulties throughout his life. However, his successful career is the dream to a lot of people. How he stay positive to **overcome the obstacles** and **move forward** is so incredible that he becomes a good role model for everyone.

I first knew about Nick when his visit to Vietnam was live broadcasted on TV. His speech touched every audience regardless of age and occupations. After the live program, his books called 'Life Without Limits' become best-sellers both online and offline for several months.

Vocabulary

Evangelist (n): a person who tries to persuade people to become Christians, often by travelling around and organizing religious meetings

To be moved to tears by SO/Sth (adj): feeling very emotional that you want to cry

Disoder (n): an illness of mind or body

To be disabled (adj): not having one or more of the physical or mental abilities that most people have

To overcome obstacles (phrase): to win a situation when something blocks you that any movement, going forward, or action is prevented or made more difficult

To move forward (v): to get up and try again after failure

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

19.1. In general, how do people become famous?

In the era of technology, being famous has never been easier. People who have **extraordinary** skills or abilities /talents in any field would be able to become famous **with the assistance of** the media.

19.2. What kinds of people become famous?

In my opinion, there are two kinds of fame that are consistent with two types of people. The first type is well-reputed people with admirable skills or dedication to the civilization. They are usually scientists, researchers, athletes, or soldiers spending their lifetime working toward success without the desire to become well-known. The other type is attention/publicity-seeking people, who often are celebrities in the entertainment industry, politicians or those **becoming famous overnight**.

19.3. Do you think, to be famous, a person needs to have some special talent (or ability)?

No, I don't think so. Besides incredible **aptitudes**, people can also be famous for other qualities such as beauty or charity work.

19.4. What are some general qualities of famous people? Do they have any qualities that are different from ordinary people?

The basic benchmark of famous people is special talent or ability, which not so many people can possess. However, there are other qualities which are common that anyone

can have such as beauty or kindness because these are not difficult to achieve, for example, **undergoing cosmetic surgery** or doing charity work.

19.5. Compare how people become celebrities today with how people became celebrities years ago, for example, 30 or 50 years ago.

Nowadays, thanks to the modernization of technology, it takes only a few seconds to change a person's life. The invention of smart devices as well as social networking has made a person famous **at one fell swoop** whereas in the past, the only way to be celebrities was appearing on the television or radio.

19.6. Can you give me some examples of celebrities in your grandfather's time (i.e., about 50 years ago)?

Hmm...50 years represent a **considerable** generation gap, therefore, I only know a few celebrities in that time. They are actress Marilyn Monroe, rock star Elvis Presley and the pop music band The Beatles.

19.7. Compare what kinds of people were famous in China in the past (e.g., when your grandfather was young) to the kinds of people who are famous today.

In the my grandfather's era, only people who dedicated their talents and knowledge to achieve great feats were respected by the public in China. However, the young Chinese generation today is **familiar with social networking where they can easily gain either good or bad** public attention. For instance, videos about a group of bullying girls were so popular on the Internet that school violence became **phenomenal** in the country.

19.8. In your opinion, were the standards for judging who is famous before better than they are now?

From my personal point of view, the qualities of being famous in the past were **by far** more appropriate than they are at the present. Today, the invention of smart devices as well as social networks has made it easier to be famous. People can gain public attention just by sharing controversial photos or videos **regardless of** common sense.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **extraordinary** [adjective] very unusual, special, unexpected, or strange.
Example: She has an extraordinary memory that is able to remember small details in a novel after the first time reading it.
- ✓ **with the assistance of** [phrase] helped by something
Example: With the assistance of her private tutor, she passed the final exams with flying colors.
- ✓ **prominent** [adjective] very well known and important
Example: The shop occupies a very prominent position on the main street.
- ✓ **reputation** [noun] the positive beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something
Example: Harvard University has a worldwide reputation for quality of higher education.
- ✓ **notorious** [adjective] famous for something bad
Example: Although its dishes are delicious, the restaurant is notorious for poor customer service.
- ✓ **becoming famous overnight** [phrase]
Example: There are various ways to become famous overnight on the Internet since many people are using social networks.
- ✓ **aptitudes** [noun] a natural ability or skill
Example: Apart from her passion for swimming, this youngest swimming athlete also possesses an aptitude for this sport.
- ✓ **undergoing cosmetic surgery** [phrase]
Example: Being ashamed of her round face, Mary decided to undergo cosmetic surgery to obtain a V-line jowl.
- ✓ **at one fell swoop** [idiom] all at once.
Example: I got all my Christmas shopping done at one fell swoop.
- ✓ **Considerable** [adjective] large amount or of noticeable importance

Example: You wouldn't have failed the exam if you had put considerable effort and time into revision.

✓ **Familiar with** [phrase] Having a good knowledge of something. Example: Our English teacher tries not to use too much local idioms or slangs during lectures as other students may not familiar with the language.

✓ **phenomenal** [adjective] extremely popular or special, especially in a surprising way.

Example: His first movie was quite phenomenal which brought him two nominations for the Oscar.

✓ **by far** by a great amount

Example: She is by far the best student in the class.

✓ **Regardless of** [phrase] without being influenced by any other events or conditions.

Example: She deserved to know the truth, regardless of how desperate it was.

20. Describe an occasion you waited for someone/ something special to happen

You should say:

What you were waiting for

How you felt

What you did while waiting

Why you had waiting

Sample 1

I think during our lives, we have to wait a lot for different **purposes** but waiting for something special to us is **worth it**. Honestly, I would choose the time when I first waited for my first salary as a teacher after my **graduation**. That moment couldn't be described by any words as it made me happy all day long. I felt proud and excited as my **efforts** were **treasured** by others, which was presented by my salary. Interestingly, during that waiting, I always thought about how much I would be paid or if they checked my work correctly. Then I **took out** my notes all the time to **write down** my teaching hours and the total I guess. I treasured those notes a lot as it proved how hard I tried and how much I was waiting for this special thing. And I said it was special due to the time I had to wait for the salary. It was 2 weeks later than the **expected** time, so it made me more **curious** about my **upcoming** salary. Up to now, I still think of that time a lot which is also a motivation for me to work harder in the future.

Vocabulary

- **purpose** [n] why you do something or why something exists
- **worth it** [phrase] enjoyable enough or producing enough advantages to make the necessary effort, risk, pain, etc. seem acceptable
- **graduation** [n] when you receive your degree for finishing your education or a course of study
- **effort** [n] physical or mental activity needed to achieve something
- **treasure** [v] to take great care of something because you love it or consider it very valuable
- **take out** [phrasal verb] to remove something from somewhere
- **write down** [phrasal verb] to write something on a piece of paper so that you do not forget it
- **expected** [a] thinking that someone should behave in a particular way or do a particular thing

- **curious** [a] interested in learning about people or things around you

- **upcoming** [a] happening soon

Sample 2

I must admit that I don't like being kept waiting by anyone at all. Now I am going to talk about one such incident in which I had to wait for my brother **for ages**.

Last December, my elder brother who lives in Canada, was returning home. Before **setting off**, he asked me to **do a favor**, which was to come to ABC airport to pick him up. I was **thrilled to bits**, thinking that I could see my brother so I went to the International Airport straight away without wasting much time. However, I soon **found out** that due to **dense fog**, the flight which was to **land in** ABC was **diverted to** Mumbai.

I had no ideas **as to** what to do and I could not **have any contact with** my brother. I was not sure about his **whereabouts**. So I thought of waiting for his call to be able to discuss the next **course of action**.

I first went around the airport for some time but then sat on a sofa in one corner in a lounge. I **went through** a newspaper on the table after which I started to play a game on my mobile phone. It was only after an hour or so that my phone rang, and indeed it was my brother. He told me that he would be taking a domestic flight to ABC in the afternoon when the **weather clears up**.

At first, I didn't know what to do next, but then I decided to leave the airport premises and go to a multiplex nearby, where I quickly bought a movie ticket and spend the next three hours watching the **latest** Hollywood **blockbuster**.

Finally, after waiting for nearly 5 hours I got to see my brother. Anyways, after seeing my brother after such a long time, I forgot everything about the long wait for him that day.

Vocabulary

For ages (phrase) for a long time

Set off (phrasal verb) to start a journey, or to start going in a particular direction

Do somebody a favor (phrase) to do a kind and helpful act for (someone)

Thrilled to bits (idiom) extremely pleased; happy

Land in/on/under (verb) to come down to the ground or to a surface after moving or falling through the air

Divert someone/something to something (verb) to make something move or travel in a different direction

As to (phrase) concerning someone or something

Have contact with (phrase) have communication between people, countries, or organizations either by talking or writing

Whereabouts (noun) the place where someone or something is: can be followed by a singular or plural verb

Course of action (phrase) the things that you choose to do in a particular situation

Go through (verb) to examine or search something very carefully

Clear up (phrasal verb) if the weather clears up, the clouds or rain go away

Blockbuster (noun) something that is very successful, especially a film, show, or novel

Latest (adj) most recent, or newest

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

20.1. What are the differences between waiting for friends and a service?

What a tricky question! **To the best of my knowledge**, the main different aspect is that people tend to be given some beverages or can **entertain themselves with** the background music while waiting to be served. However, in the case of waiting for friends, people tend to be apprehensive, annoyed or **infuriated!** That is the reason why it is not uncommon to **catch sight of** some people glaring continuously at the smartphone screen for a phone call or **walking back and forth** while waiting for their beloved buddies to show up

20.2. Do you think people are not so patient due to the technology?

I suppose that there are a number of obvious **merits** of spending time outside. The most obvious one is that doing outdoor exercise is the best way to keep healthy and stay fit. For instance, if I walk, jog or cycle outdoors, I'll have to **expend** a lot of energy and burn more calories, and the fresh air outside also helps to improve the blood pressure and heart rate. Otherwise, when I stay indoors, especially when working on the computer for several hours, it's easy to get dizzy and feel **aches and pains** in my back. Another plus point is that being outdoors can greatly **boost** my mood and creativity, so everytime I feel bad or try to **come up with** a new idea, **wandering** around outside always helps.

20.3. What do people do when they are waiting?

It is an interesting question. The answer **relies on** each individual I think. But I suppose that people would prefer to **glue their eyes onto** the smartphone screen to check Facebook notifications or text-message their buddies to hurry and come. Others are more impatient and just **walk to and fro** or utter some swear words if their friends keep them waiting for too long.

20.4. Why is it difficult for children to be patient?

It is because children have a hard time controlling their actions and emotions. Also, they have a tendency to follow their interests and do whatever that comes to their mind. Therefore, being patient and waiting for things is almost out of the question for small children. For example, when watching a movie, my daughter is really **thrilled to bits** at first, but after some thirty minutes, she is **fed up with** the plot and **lends up** not seeing the whole movie.

20.5. How to teach children patience?

There are a number of ways that are available to help small children learn to become more patient and determined. The first method worth mentioning is that parents should **set an exemplary role model** for their children to follow. By that I mean, a parent should be patient like staying calm when waiting for a bus or maintaining interest when watching something so that his or her small kid could see and learn. The second approach is giving more encouragement and rewards for patient actions that the kid

do. For example, we can give our son a piece of candy if he can sweep the floor enthusiastically without complaining about feeling tired and bored.

20.6. Have you ever been late for meeting someone?

Most of the times, i am a punctual person; however, there is one occasion that showed up late at an appointment, which is my highschool class reunion. At that time, my travel was **held up** by bad traffic jams; particularly it was on the weekends so many people took their motorcycles out to hang out with their friends or sweethearts. To make matter worse, although it is a standard practice that people usually arrive 15 or 20 mins later than the agreed time, on that they everyone was so on time that I became the last to come. I ended up being in a bad mood at the party

21. Describe an advertisement you have seen

You should say:

- What is the advertisement
- When did you see it
- Why did you love it

I guess I could begin by **highlighting** the fact about what type of advertisement it is. Actually, nowadays, there is so many advertisements on **mass media** like TV, internet or radio that people just **take them for granted** in some ways. However, there are some commercials that are truly interesting, creative and meaningful. One such ads that **creates a strong impression on** me is the one regarding the great **contribution** of mothers to their children and it is broadcasted on the local channel on Mother's Day. Now going on to my next point which is what its content is. The point I like to make here is that unlike other **commercials** that are utilized to promote products and services, this one is not about any products but **dedicated to** appreciating the **huge sacrifice of** mothers. Honestly, I am not pretty sure about when I first saw it, but as far as I

remember, I **came across** this ad about two years ago and I was **totally blown away** by its creative way of telling story. And **last but not least**, I also want to talk about the reason why I love this **piece of ads**. I suppose it's really a **combination of reasons**, one of which is its meaningful story that **provokes so many emotions** about our mom. So, that's one thing, the other would be its unique way of **catching audience's entire attention** by **moving** life stories. I hope that in the future, the advertisement would be invested more **in terms of** contents, not just about **exaggerating** products.

Vocabulary

Highlight (verb) emphasize

Mass media (noun) newspapers, television, radio etc that communicate news and information to large numbers of people

Take something for granted (idiom) to expect something always to happen or exist in a particular way, and to not think about any possible problems or difficulties

Commercial (noun) An advertisement in audio or video form.

Dedicate someone or something to someone or something (phrase) to spend your time and effort doing something

Come across (phrasal verb) to meet someone or find something by chance

Be blown away (phrasal verb) to impress someone very much or make them very excited

Last but not least (phrase) used when you mention the final person or thing in a list, in order to say that they are equally important

Provoke (verb) To make someone feel a particular emotion or strong emotions

Moving (adj) making you feel emotional

Exaggerate (verb) to describe something in a way that makes it seem better, more important etc than it really is

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

21.1. What are the different kinds of advertising?

I think that there are several ways of promoting a product, of which the most **dominant** type is broadcast advertising, where the products are **publicized** through TV

commercials, radio or the Internet. Another common type of advertising is print advertising, which relies on **distributed** posters and **flyers** or advertisement columns in newspapers or magazines to boost a product's popularity. There is also outdoor advertising - advertising at outdoor events like concerts or trade shows.

Unfortunately, **surrogate** advertising exists as well, which markets banned products like alcohol or tobacco in the disguise of another product.

21.2. What kind of advertising is most common in your country?

I'm not too sure about this, but I think it's fair to say broadcast advertising and print advertising are the two most popular means of promoting products in my country. Commercials are **aired** at a high frequency, especially in the evening, when the number of viewers is considerably higher compared to that in the morning. It's also common to see flyers being given away and banners hung **on almost every corner of the street**.

21.3. What are the ways in which advertisements catch the attention of viewers?

Well, I guess it depends on the types of advertisement. With TV commercials, it's essential to have a **catchy theme tune** or a **slogan** used to identify the product, so that viewers can easily recognize it. McDonald's, for example, use 'I'm Lovin' It'. It also helps to have a celebrity who features in the commercial or **endorses** the product, this would make the product appealing to a larger number of viewers. Print advertisements, however, usually draw people's attention with their **vibrant** colors and unique graphic designs. The better the posters are, the more interest the product might attract.

21.4. Do big companies prefer to advertise on TV or in some other ways? (Why?)

In my opinion, broadcast advertising is still the most popular way for big organizations to promote their goods and services. TV has long been the most **prevalent** means of media communication, so getting a product advertised on TV equals making it known to a larger number of people. It would be even better to **secure a slot** during **prime time**, from about 8pm to 10pm, when **virtually** everyone is sitting in front of their television. Still, it's worth mentioning that online advertisements such as pop-ups are on the rise, as more and more people are spending time surfing the web.

21.5. What are the good and bad points of advertisements?

I suppose advertisements play an important role in introducing consumers to a wider variety of goods. With commercials, buyers are exposed to more options, including models, functions and prices before choosing the one product that is to their taste. On the other hand, a **well-produced** advertisement might not ensure a product of the same quality. It's not unusual to witness cases where people complain about the huge difference between what was advertised and what the product is really like. Besides, commercials can **trigger** the desire to purchase new goods, regardless of their impracticability, resulting in the waste of both time and money.

21.6. Is advertising on the internet very influential?

To be honest, I doubt the effectiveness of internet advertising. Although pop-ups are growing in popularity, most people find them rather **bothersome** and close them the moment they appear on the screen, instead of spending time reading them. Besides, **under the impression** that everything on the internet should not be trusted, people usually dismiss online advertisements as unreliable.

21.7. Are any kinds advertising in your country considered illegal?

I'm not too knowledgeable about the issue, but I guess anything that fails to **obey** the terms of advertisement laws is considered illegal. One of the most commonly seen outdoor advertisements are billboards, which are basically huge posters that are erected on main streets or on top of buildings. This is a completely legal way of advertising, if the owners are granted a valid permit and take the boards down according to the contract. However, many owners **violate** the law by missing the deadline to remove them or erect them without permission.

21.8. Do you trust advertisements? (Why?/Why not?)

Quite frankly, I rarely place my trust in advertisements. They seem untruthful to me since almost everything is exaggerated and most of the time, the products themselves don't **live up to consumers' expectations**. They claim to be the best but very often there are some kind of faults. However, I do refer to advertisements when I'm looking for a product or a service, in order to broaden my range of choices. Still, only after a long time studying the product and reading reviews will I make up my mind to purchase one.

21.9. How do you feel about false advertising?

Like most people, I feel **outraged** by **misleading** advertisements. Untruthful commercials can lead to many problems, and some can be disastrous. Cosmetics advertisements, for example, if they do not cover all necessary aspects like origin, components and potential allergic reactions on some types of skins, may cause **complexion** diseases. The same goes for medicinal products. False advertising betrays the trust of consumers and diminishes the reputation of the company itself. By creating widespread **distrust**, the advertising industry as a whole is damaged by false advertising.

VOCABULARY

✓ *Dominant* [adj]: most common

Example: TV has remained the most **dominant** means of media communication throughout the years.

✓ *Publicize* [v]: to make something known to the public

Example: He is in London to **publicize** his new book.

✓ *Distribute* (phân phối, phân phát) [v]: to give or deliver (something) to people

Example: We need to **distribute** electricity equally over the country so that everyone can enjoy the benefits.

✓ *Flyer* [n]: a small sheet of paper advertising an event or product, given to a large number of people in the street

Example: I spent the morning handing out **flyers** for the new supermarket which has just opened.

✓ *Surrogate* [n]: to put in the place of another

Example: He could not attend the meeting, so he sent his **surrogate**.

✓ *To be aired* [expression]: to be shown on the media, to be broadcasted

Example: The news program **is aired** at 7pm every day.

✓ *On almost every corner of the street* [expression]: almost everywhere

Example: Food stalls can be found **on almost every corner of the street**, so don't worry if you need to find somewhere to eat.

✓ *Catchy* [adj] pleasing and easily remembered

Example: Most popular TV series have a **catchy** theme tune to introduce the show.

✓ *Theme tune/theme song* [n]: a song that is played at the beginning and end of a television show, movie, etc or in a commercial

Example: The **theme song** of the James Bond movie 'Live and Let Die' became a hit.

✓ *Slogan* [n]: a word or phrase that is easy to remember and is used by a group or business to attract attention

Example: Within days, virtually everyone was familiar with the newest advertising **slogan** for that brand of soda.

✓ *Endorse* [v]: to publicly or officially say that you support or approve of (someone or something) OR to publicly say - in exchange for money - that you like or use (a product or service)

Example: That brand of sneaker is **endorsed** by several basketball stars.

✓ *Vibrant* [adj]: very bright and strong

Example: We painted the poster a **vibrant** blue so that it stands out.

✓ *Prevalent* [adj]: common or widespread

Example: Ripped jeans is a fashion trend that is **prevalent** among teenagers.

✓ *Secure a slot* [expression] get a position or time in a list of events

Example: She was very happy when she **secured a slot** in the big concert just before the star was due to perform.

✓ *Prime time* [expression]: a time in the evening when the largest number of people are watching television

Example: The program is popular because it is shown during **prime time**.

✓ *Virtually* [adv]: almost entirely

Example: We spent **virtually** all day shopping.

Well-produced [adj]: well-made

Example: The movie was so **well-produced** that there was nothing I could complain about.

✓ *Trigger* [v]: cause something else to happen

Example: Smoke **triggered** the fire alarm.

- ✓ *Bothersome* [adj]: causing trouble or difficulty

Example: I find my brother's habit of playing music really loudly is bothersome.

- ✓ *Under the impression* [expression]: believing – usually wrongly - that something is true

Example: I waited at the station for you, **under the impression** that you were going to travel with me.

- ✓ *Obey* [v]: to do what someone tells you to do or what a rule, law, etc., says you must do

Example: He is a good boy, he always **obeys** his parents.

- ✓ *Violate* [v]: to do something that is not allowed by (a law, rule, etc.)

Example: The company **violated** its customers' privacy.

- ✓ *Live up to one's expectation* [expression]: to be as good as good as someone thought something would be

Example: I thought the movie was going to be better than that. It totally failed to live up to my expectations.

- ✓ *Outraged* [adj]: very bad or wrong in a way that causes anger

Example: I felt outraged by her attitude! I will not put up with such treatment.

- ✓ *Misleading* [adj]: giving the wrong idea that something is true

22. Describe a website you like to visit.

Today, I am going to tell you about one website which I'm really interested in. It's name is **m.ebay.com**.

It is an **e-commerce website** used for online shopping purposes. This website advertises various items classified by categories such as fashion, electronics, and motors. It allows people to order products, and make **transactions** online.

I always **give priority to** shopping online whenever I have spare time instead of going to stores or supermarkets. So, this website is very **handy** for me as I can take advantage of

my mobile phone or computer with an Internet connection to access it and purchase what I need.

I find this website very **appealing** due to its good **layout** and attractive images of products. There is a box for me to enter what items I'm looking for so I can avoid **browsing** items unnecessarily, as I'm able to find quickly the things I need. After that the items I have bought will be delivered right to my door so I can save a lot of time. Not only that, there is always the chance to **get a good deal** and discounts as there are various promotion programs.

This website has important advantages for me, such as convenience and the benefits of saving time and money. Now it plays a useful role in my daily life. In the future I will continue to visit the site and of course recommend it to my friends.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **E-commerce:** the business of buying and selling goods and services on the internet
Example: Ebay is an **e-commerce** website used for online shopping purposes.
- ✓ **Transaction:** a piece of business that is done between people, especially an act of buying or selling
Example: You can call your bank and carry out a **transaction** using a TouchTone phone.
- ✓ **Give priority to:** something that you think is more important than other things and should be dealt with first
Example: The hospital **gives priority to** those patients who require urgent medical attention.
- ✓ **Handy:** convenient
Example: My flat is very handy for the shops and the park.
- ✓ **Appealing:** attractive or interesting
Example: Brightly colored packaging made the pens especially appealing to children.

- ✓ **Layout:** the structure of a website rather than its styling
Example: This page uses a 2 – column layout with one sidebar to the left of the main content area.
- ✓ **Browse:** the act of looking through a number of things in a book, a store or online
Example: I have only **browsed** through the new book on dinosaurs, but I intend to read it fully this weekend.
- ✓ **Get a good deal:** make a good agreement to buy or sell something
Example: I **got a good deal** on my new car – I bought it for half the price that the man was asking for it.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

22.1. What are some of the different reasons why people use the internet?

Speaking of the internet, obviously it has already surpassed newspapers and television to be the main source of information today. And that's the most common reason why people use the internet. Another reason is that people use the internet as a **superior** means of communication. We no longer require a place like cafes or offices to keep in touch with people. We can do it **literally** anywhere we happen to be with the availability of Internet access.

22.2. Some people say that different age groups have different tastes on internet content. What do you think?

I agree that how one uses the internet varies a lot by age. For example, young people rely almost entirely on search engines for information about entertainment, study materials and job opportunities, while older people prefer using the internet to get information about national and international news.

22.3. What influence can (or, does) the internet have on children? And what about teenagers?

Well, I guess most people immediately think of negative aspects when it comes to internet influence on our younger generation. For example, using the internet too much makes them socially isolated and teenagers in particular seem to spend hours on social

network sites. But actually, there are plenty of positive ones as well. The internet's wealth of information can add to the child's store of knowledge, while online games enhance their creativity and imagination.

22.4. Do you think parents should control what internet sites their children visit on the internet?

I would say yes. Because the sources of internet information are not always reliable, it's essential to judge the **suitability** of those materials. As a result, parents should **keep an eye on** their children's internet usage that until the child has learned to **discriminate** between good and bad information sources.

22.5. What (kinds of) people don't use the internet and what are the disadvantages that these people suffer because they don't use the internet?

Well, right **off the top of my head**, I can only think of older people, who are not **accustomed** to using the internet, and people whose jobs are not **relevant** to the internet.

Personally, I think inability or unwillingness to use the internet will restrict their **circle of friends** and also make it harder to access information. In some cases, they have to spend countless hours looking for some news they need through printed materials, while they can do it in a matter of seconds with search engines which are available on the internet.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Superior** [adj] better than average or better than other people or things of the same type

Example: The weapons of the government troops were **superior** to those of the enemy.

- ✓ **Literally** [adv] used to emphasize the truth of something that may seem surprising

Example: They were responsible for **literally** millions of deaths.

✓ **Suitability** [noun] the quality of being right or appropriate for a particular purpose Example: At the interview, he convinced them of his **suitability** for the job.

✓ **Keep an eye on sth** [idiom] to watch or give your attention to someone or something

Example: The mother sat by the side of the playground, **keeping an eye on** her sons as they played.

✓ **Discriminate** [verb] to treat a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc.

Example: She felt she had been **discriminated** against because of her age.

✓ **Off the top of my head** [idiom] if you say something off the top of your head, you say it without thinking about it for very long or looking at something that has been written about it

Example: Off the top of my head I could probably only name about three women artists.

✓ **Accustomed** [adj] familiar with something

Example: She quickly became **accustomed** to his messy ways.

✓ **Relevant** [adji] connected with what is happening or being discussed

Example: Education should be **relevant** to the child's needs.

✓ **Circle of friends** [expression] a group of people who like each other because they have the same interests or hobbies

Example: She is very popular and she has a wide **circle of friends**.

23. Describe a small business that you would like to open

You should say:

- What this business would be
- Where it would be located
- What people you would hire as employees

And explain why you'd like to have this small business.

It goes without saying that future is quite uncertain and almost no one can predict exactly what is waiting for them ahead, however, **to some extent** I always believe that our future **depends on** our plans and actions at present. As a **fresh graduate**, I want to become an **entrepreneur** and run a chain of boutique shops selling stylish clothing, dresses and jewelry. This is probably because ever since I was a kid, I have **had a great passion for** designing and sewing pieces of **garments**, firstly for my doll and then for real people around me. Gradually, I constantly get more insights into fashion industry and keep me posted with clothes that are in the thing. Although I am currently **majoring in** economics instead of fashion designing, I **hold a strong belief** that my **acute business sense** and a **sincere interest in** the clothing business will help me to succeed in the future. Nevertheless, I always have to remind me that opening and running an **apparel** store is serious business and that I have to **put one hundred percent effort in** leading it to success as well as **get ready to face up to** failures. I guess that's why some people around me wonder why I want to **give up** the safety of my corporate job with good **compensation package** such as **steady income**, insurance, pension plan, long vacations and the opportunity for **rapid promotion** just to become a small business owner. The answer is indeed quite simple for me, which is I want to walk **out of my comfort zone**, challenge myself in a new business and **last but not least**, give myself a chance to **fulfil my childhood dream**.

Vocabulary

Go without saying (that) to be completely obvious or true

To some/a certain/a limited extent (phrase) partly, but not completely

Entrepreneur (noun) someone who uses money to start businesses and make business deals

Garment (noun) a piece of clothing. This word is used especially when talking about the production and sale of clothes

Major in (phrase) to study something as your main subject at college or university

Acute (adj) used for describing the senses and abilities of someone who notices things very quickly and easily

Apparel (noun) a word for clothes, used especially in stores or other businesses

Face up to (something/somebody) to confront with courage someone or something representing a threat or unpleasantness.

Compensation package (phrase) the salary and other benefits that an employee receives

Comfort zone (idiom) a situation or position in which a person feels secure, comfortable, or in control

Fulfill one's dream (collocation) realize a dream, make dream come true

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

23.1. What challenges and difficulties do people face when they try to have a successful small business?

I think some of the hardships that small business owners might have to face include increasing profits and growing revenues while still paying close attention to details like client relationships. On the other hand, for many small businesses, client dependence is a huge issue. If a business depends on a single customer for more than half its income, that should raise a huge **red flag**, a situation which can threaten the businesses' growth and stability.

23.2. What should be the government's role in how small businesses are run?

I personally believe the government should create specific programs to help small businesses start and continue to grow by offering **start-up** incentives, providing loan guarantees and encouraging local banks to work with start-ups or regional businesses that wish to expand. Lowering corporate taxes and making the regulatory process simpler can also foster even more small-business growth.

23.3. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of small businesses compared to large companies?

One of the advantages of a small business is obviously the relatively low startup capital needed. Also a small establishment is easier to manage compared to a large

operation since the dealings are usually local and small scale. Keeping track of **inventory, cash flow** and transactions is easily manageable as well.

On the other hand, small businesses often lose in the competition for market share with the already established firms, as many clients would prefer to conduct their business with large firms rather than the smaller ones which are considered risky.

23.4. How can small businesses benefit the people in the community where the businesses are located?

In my view, small businesses often give a town a sense of community as they can meet with the customer more frequently and develop more of a personal relationship than a large company. In addition, shopping at small, local shops means that the customers are putting money into the pockets of local workers who may be their neighbors or even family members, thus enhancing both the town's standards of living and economic conditions.

23.5. What kinds of small business are most popular in your country?

Probably street food **vendors** and local **convenience stores**. Street food has always been a vital and vibrant part in my country, so as long as the owners can offer high food quality along with some uniqueness to set their stores apart from other competitors on the market, I believe the business will achieve at least semi-success. Meanwhile, local convenience stores are usually guaranteed a loyal **customer base** that is the local residents so I think they have a higher chance of **breaking even** and increasing the **bottom line**.

23.6. Why do some people open their own business?

In my opinion, people would rather be their own bosses, looking after themselves, instead of being observed by higher-ups. In other cases, many startup **hopefuls** may have true passion for their jobs and are confident that they know a business should be run; hence it might motivate them to go out on their own and get directly involved.

23.7. What qualities does a small business owner need to have?

I think it's crucial that small business owners maintain a positive outlook and accept 100% of the responsibility for the results of his or her business. They should also focus on making smart hires and then take the time to get to know and **cultivate** a good relationship with their staff, since employees who feel seen, respected and appreciated almost always produce more than anticipated. Being **on the lookout for** new opportunities can also help a **prospective entrepreneur** get a small business up and running.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Red flag (noun):** a sign of danger
You're not allowed to swim when the red flag is flying.
 - ✓ **Startup (noun):** a small business that has just been started
Working on a startup business can produce a real mix of emotions.
 - ✓ **Inventory (noun):** a complete list of items such as property, goods in stock, or the contents of a building
Our major customers cut back on their inventory and projections.
 - ✓ **Cash flow (noun):** the amount of money moving into and out of a business
Small traders often have short-term cash-flow problems.
 - ✓ **Vendor (noun):** a person or company offering something for sale, especially a trader in the street
She glanced around quickly, and her eyes caught a street vendor who was selling ice cream.
 - ✓ **Convenience store (noun):** a shop that sells food, drinks, etc. and is usually open until late
The biggest difference in services between a grocery and convenience store is that the latter usually sells gasoline.
 - ✓ **Customer base (noun):** the people who buy or use a particular product or service
A customer base is absolutely essential for business success.
 - ✓ **To break even:** to have no profit or loss at the end of a business activity
-

After paying for our travel costs, we barely (= only just) broke even.

- ✓ **Bottom line (noun):** the final line in the accounts of a company or organization, stating the total profit or loss that has been made

How will the rise in interest rates affect our bottom line?

- ✓ **Hopeful (noun):** a person who wants to achieve a position of power

Five presidential hopefuls were invited to speak.

- ✓ **Cultivate (verb):** try to acquire or develop

He did his job efficiently, while also cultivating friendships with many Australians.

- ✓ **Outlook (noun):** the likely future situation

The economic outlook is bleak.

- ✓ **Prospective (adj):** people who are expected to buy something, employ someone, become parents, etc.

Her father always wants to meet her prospective boyfriends.

- ✓ **Entrepreneur (noun):** someone who starts their own business, especially when this involves seeing a new opportunity

He was one of the entrepreneurs of the 80s who made their money in property.

24. Describe a time you needed to use imagination

You should say:

- what the situation was
- why you needed to use imagination
- What the difficulties were and explain how you felt about it

Honestly, I had to admit that I am quite **down-to-earth** and barely either spend time imagining or **day dreaming**. However, **every now and then** in school life, imagination is **life saver** in remembering the knowledge, especially in the subject of History.

Indeed, **envisaging** a **chain** of images and actions in side my head **based on** the story or **series of events** in the book enabled me to acquire new things **way** more efficiently. For

instance, in the time of learning about the history of chocolate, by **utilizing** the technique of imagine and envisage the image, just like **making a movie** inside my head, I could remember quickly a quite **enormous** knowledge and can still recall today. I can tell you that wild chocolate trees can grow easily in the **humid** Amazon rainforest. **Clusters of flowers** from these trees turn to seeds. Approximately 20 to 60 cacao beans, which are the **ingredient** needed to create sweet, **soothing** and delicious chocolate **treats**, can be found in the seeds. The Mayan and Aztec cultures both thought that chocolate trees are brought from paradise by God. They used the bean from this **divine** tree to create a special beverage with a very pleasant **odor**. Gradually, the treats and drinks made of these beans become **prominent** and millions of people around the world **adore** it as the most delicious sweet ever. Making my own film using the imagination in fact helps me to **obtain** knowledge like a piece of cake.

Vocabulary

Down-to-earth (adj) practical, realistic

Daydream (verb) to spend time thinking about something pleasant, especially when you should be doing something more serious

Every now and then (idiom) sometimes

Envisage (verb) to imagine something that has not happened or does not exist

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

24.1. Why do most children have a wild imagination?

Well, in my opinion, the reason for children's wild imagination is their inexperience. Obviously, children have an **insatiable** curiosity, always wondering and looking for answers. Since they have little knowledge of the real world, children have to use their imagination to come up with a explanation for their questions. It may be wrong but it's their own way of learning about the outside world.

24.2. What kinds of books can boost people's imagination?

I think any type of books can enhance creativity, but I guess the more effective **boosters** would be novels. These books usually revolve around a story and there are often a lot

of **descriptive** scenes, therefore, readers need to **let their imagination run wild** to be able to actually live in the scenes. Harry Potter, for instance, is an all-time favourite book series which falls in the fantasy categories.

24.3. Do you like to watch movies about the future?

Definitely, I have always been curious about how the world would end up, so movies about the future **never fail to** excite me. Many films have been produced based on this theme with plots varying from robots' taking over the world, to the **uprising** of animals, to **apocalypse**, all of which are so **thrilling** to watch. However, a good film depends more on the storyline, the cast acting and the quality of production rather than the genre itself. That's why not every movie of this kind has been highly rated by critics or enjoyed high **viewership**.

24.4. What can schools do for students' creativity?

Actually, there are many ways in which schools can encourage children's creative thinking. They can, for example, organise contests in writing, drawing or even handcrafting for students to compete against each other. This will not only inspire children to be inventive but also provide them with a chance to prove themselves and maybe, enlarge their **circle of friends**. Another way is to assign educational books or movies for them to enjoy instead of **overwhelming them with** a bunch of homework.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ Insatiable [adj]: not able to be satisfied
Eg: Her desire for knowledge was *insatiable*.
- ✓ Booster [n]: something that increases force, power, pressure, or effectiveness
Eg: The teacher's positive comments on my essay were a real confidence *booster*.
- ✓ Descriptive [adj]: using words to describe what someone or something is like
Eg: She gave a *descriptive* account of the journey.
- ✓ Let one's imagination run wild [expression]: to imagine freely
Eg: *Let your imagination run wild* and you can come up with the best ideas.

- ✓ Never fail to do sth [expression]: someone or something always does something that you expect them to do
Eg: You *never fail to* impress me!
- ✓ Uprising [n]: a rebellion or revolt against people in power
Eg: The *uprising* against the government has been defeated.
- ✓ Apocalypse [n]: a great disaster
Eg: His book tells of an environmental *apocalypse*.
- ✓ Thrilling [adj]: very exciting
Eg: It's *thrilling* to go on a roller-coaster.
- ✓ Viewership [n]: a television audience
Eg: 'How I met your Mother' was a TV series with very high *viewership*.
- ✓ Circle of friends [expression]: a number of close friends who usually do things together as a group
Eg: She is sociable, so she has a wide *circle of friends*.
- ✓ Overwhelm sb with sth [expression]: give a person too much of something
Eg: As a beginner, I was *overwhelmed with* the heavy workload.

25. Describe a book that you would like to read again.

You should say:

What the book is

Why you read it

Why you want to read it again

Sample 1:

Although I don't read a lot of books, I still have my favorite one. For this question, I would like to choose my English 12 **textbook** as the book I want to read again. I guess

you'll be surprised at my choice **owing to** its **content** and **cover**. This English book is the course book of grade 12. There are a variety of topics related to our daily lives with the **combination** of 4 skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing. I used to use it to study English when I was in grade 12. Interestingly, at the time, I just focused on grammar because it's the main part of the final tests, so I don't really **pay attention to** other parts, which is such a pity. Now when I have a look at it again, I realize that the reading text is quite cool and **academic** with a number of useful words and **structures**. Reading it again gives me a **chance** to **fulfill** my English knowledge more, especially reading skill and vocabulary. I guess I would spend more time re-reading and taking notes of important points in this book, which is very exciting.

Vocabulary

- **textbook** [n] a book that contains detailed information about a subject for people who are studying that subject
- **owing to** [pre] because of
- **content** [n] the ideas that are contained in a piece of writing, a speech or a film
- **cover** [n] something which is put on or over something else, usually to protect it, to keep something in, etc.
- **combination** [n] the mixture you get when two or more things are combined
- **pay attention to** [phrase] to watch, listen to, or think about something or someone carefully or with interest
- **academic** [a] relating to schools, colleges and universities, or connected with studying and thinking, not with practical skills
- **structure** [n] the way in which the parts of a system or object are arranged or organized, or a system arranged in this way
- **chance** [n] an occasion which allows something to be done; an opportunity

- fulfill [v] to do something that is expected, hoped for or promised or to cause it to happen

Sample 2:

The book I am going to describe to you is titled Da Vinci Code authored by Dan Brown, one of the most **influential** and **remarkable** bestselling American authors of all time. His numerous **bestsellers** include Digital Fortress, Angels & Demons and Deception Point. I have read them for like a hundred times but none of those could ever **top** Da Vinci Code and plus the movie starring Tom Hank was a **huge blockbuster worldwide**.

Of all the books I have ever read, Da Vinci Code was the only one that I managed to finish within two weeks and you know, the book is not just a few pages long. Anyway, the book deals **with the hunt for the truth**. Regarding the Holy Grail by **symbolist** Robert Langdon and the victim's granddaughter Sophie., they attempted to reveal the answers to mysteries like "Is Jesus God?" "Did he get married?". And if they succeed, it could possibly **shake the foundation of mankind**.

Well, my reading adventure wasn't **off to a good start, for** there were lots of Religious terms involved and **twists and turns** were so confusing that I could rarely **figure out** where the story was going. But I **kept up** reading, I was **totally into** the book and I could hardly **put it down**. **In a nutshell**, this was the best book I have ever read.

Vocabulary

Influential (adj) able to influence the way other people think or behave

Remarkable (adj) Making you feel surprised or amazed

Best-seller (noun) a book that many people buy

Top (verb) exceed something

Blockbuster (noun) something that is very successful, especially a film, show, or novel

Symbologist (noun) A person who studies or interpret symbols or symbolism.

Shake the foundation of (phrase) to cause a person or organization to question the truth of something it strongly believed

Off to a good start (phrase) to start a particular activity correctly or to have a successful beginning

For (preposition) because

Twists and turns (phrase) surprising changes

Put down (phrasal verb) to put someone or something onto a surface, especially the floor

In a nutshell (phrase) used for saying that you are going to express something in a simple direct way

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

25.1. Do people read more nowadays?

Reading can be seen a part of modern culture and has become easier than ever thanks to the advent of technology. If books and specialized documents were only available for **scholars** and those with high **social status** in the past, anyone with **curiosity** and burning desire to learn can now **get access to** such materials easily. People can read not only from printed materials such as newspaper or magazines but digital ones like eReaders or online.

Scholar (n): a person who knows a lot about a particular subject because they have studied it in detail

Social status (n): a person's standing or importance in relation to other people within a society

Curiosity (n): a strong desire to know about something

Get access to: to get the right to see

25.2. Do you read before going to bed?

I don't have a habit of reading before going to sleep but in the morning instead. I am an **early riser**, which **saves** me lots of time to **schedule** my day, starting with reading. Normally, I often exercise first, make myself breakfast before grabbing my unfinished

book. I don't have a study room in my apartment so the balcony is my favorite place to read. There's nothing I rather do than sipping a cup of coffee and **immersing** myself in a good book for hours.

Early riser (n): a person who usually gets out of bed early in the morning

Spare (v): to make something such as time or money available to somebody or for something

Schedule (v): to arrange for something to happen at a particular time

Immerse (v): to become or make somebody completely involved in something

25.3. What's the difference between films and books?

I presume it's not only me but the vast majority of avid readers are left **unsatisfied**, or more honestly, disappointed when books are **adapted** into movies since its lack of **persuasion** and significant details. Original books are always more **in-depth** with **consecutive** plot line, which makes them more fulfilling and convincing. Movies, on the other hand, tend to focus more on visual and sound effects that they fail to deliver the true message of the story. Hence, most people who have read the story find its **film adaptation unappealing**.

Unsatisfied (a): not having got what you hoped; not having had enough of something

Adapt (v): to change a book or play so that it can be made into a play, film/movie, television programme, etc.

Persuasion (n): the act of persuading somebody to do something or to believe something

In-depth (a): very thorough and detailed

Consecutive (a): following one after another in a series, without interruption

Film adaptation (n): a movie based on a book

Unappealing (a): not attractive or pleasant

25.4. How will ebooks affect paper books?

Ebooks are the **advancements** of modern technology and have rapidly becoming popular among readers, especially those who constantly **commute**. You can store hundreds of ebooks in your cellphone or eReader and read anywhere you happen to be, which is probably one of the best advantages ebooks have over paper ones. However, with those who prefer the smell of printed papers and the weight of an actual book on their hands like me, nothing can replace printed materials, not even ebooks.

Advancement (n): the process of helping something to make progress or succeed; the progress that is made

Commute (v): to travel regularly by bus, train, car, etc. between your place of work and your home

Have an advantage over something: be in a superior position to something

25.4. How often do people in your country read novels?

Personally speaking, I'm not **a fan of** novel but from my observations, only the teenagers have time to read novels. I guess for others, they have to spend time on working and studying but as far as teenage girls are concerned, I have to say that they read a great deal.

25.5. What kinds of books that old people like to read?

Since I'm not an elderly person, what I'm going to say is **just guesswork** but old people are really into novels which tell about the daily lives of ordinary citizens or those books which give them the chance to **reflect on** their life. This is because, they are at an age where **spiritual well-being** is **of more importance**, and many old citizens would choose books containing some **philosophy or moral lessons** to read. The reason I feel this way is they can not only can while away the time, they can also improve their personality and pass the experience they read onto their grandchildren.

25.6. Does reading books become a less common activity because of ebooks?

I strongly disagree with this view. Although **the advent of the internet** gives us a wide array of options when it comes to reading, like we can read ebooks on our laptop or Ipad, nothing can compare to the experience of holding a book in your own hands, and **read it from cover to cover**. Another point is that you can jump to the page you want to read by turning your fingers and browsing for the desired contents with your eyes, which is much more convenient and user-friendly than having to use a computer screen or a mouse to do the job.

25.7. What benefits do young people get from reading?

As far as I can tell, reading brings people a wide range of benefits. Firstly, I'd put it down to the fact that you can **broaden your horizons** and **improve your outlook on** life. The thing is the more you read, the more knowledge you acquire regarding the world around, and this helps you learn to accept and tolerate differences in life. The second point worth mentioning is reading can be an entertaining activity as well. Comic books are a prime example, which gives you a good time through the witty comments and funny drawings as well as a suspenseful storyline.

26. Describe a time you missed an important appointment for something

You should say:

- What is that occasion
- How important it was
- Why did you miss it

There is a saying goes "Time is what we want most, but what we use worst". I still did not understand the **message behind** this saying **to the fullest** until the time I missed a final interview for my dream job due to the lack of **time management**. After **putting so many effort into proving myself** through many **tough challenges** from the recruiter, I was selected for the final interview with the **line manager** to whom I was **supposed to**

directly report to if I was the one chosen. However, the interview **took place** at another city and I had no choice but fly there. Everything would have been perfect if I had chosen to **get on board** just one hour earlier. But things unfortunately didn't go like that. I was missed to **take** the traffic condition of that city **into serious consideration**. Although **congestion** is a **prevalent scenario** in that city, I failed to add more time for the transportation and got to the interviewing site 45 minutes late. Despite the fact that I was still given the opportunity to talk with the Recruitment board, they **in deed** didn't **show many interest in** my part and just asked some questions **for simplicity's sake**. There was absolutely no **excuse** for mistake and my dream job just **slipped away** right in front of my eyes. It took me almost a month **berating myself for** being careless in such an **integral** event. However, it also **opened my eyes to** a precious lesson in life. That is be **extra careful** whenever you do anything, the real trouble is you think you have time. Time is free for everyone but you have to use every moment in the smartest way since once it's gone, you will never be able to **take it back at any price**.

Vocabulary

To the full/fullest (phrase) To the greatest degree or extent; thoroughly.

Put effort into something (phrase) Use physical or mental energy needed to do something

Line manager (noun) a manager at a higher level than you who is in charge of the work that you do

Take place (verb) happen

Get on something (phrasal verb) to get into a bus, plane, or train

Take something into serious consideration (phrase) To think carefully or a lot about things

Prevalent (adj) very common in a particular place or among a particular group

Scenario (noun) a situation that could possibly happen

For simplicity's sake (phrase) in order to make something simpler and easier

Slip away (phrasal verb) To lose possession of something

Berate someone for something (verb) To say something, or to speak to someone in an angry way

Open one's eyes to something (phrase) to make someone understand something for the first time and know how difficult or unpleasant it is

At any price (phrase) no matter what expense, sacrifice, or difficulty is involved.

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

26.1. How often do you make appointments?

I think it depends on what I have to do at the time. For example, when I was a first year student, I didn't have a part-time job, nor did I join any clubs at university, so I didn't have to make many appointments. But 2 years later when I became a member of the Marketing Club, I had to make appointments every week for club meetings or my own department's meetings.

26.2. Is it important to be punctual in your country?

Yes, of course it is, but most of the time, people just don't realize the importance of being punctual. When someone is late for an appointment, they're hardly **judged** because it's most likely that other people are late too. And gradually, one just forgets the importance of **punctuality** and starts to think that being late is normal, until **one has a taste of one's own medicine**.

26.3. Is it easy to make an appointment in your country?

Well, it depends on the type of people you're making appointments with, and sometimes your **social class** as well. For example, if you're an ordinary person and you need to schedule an appointment with a top business executive, the process is gonna be long and hard and the chances are that you won't be able to meet him at all. Like you have to **get through to** his secretary first and that secretary will have to **squeeze you in** a time slot when the businessman has no schedule. But it's a different case if you're an important partner or major client of that company, and then of course the process will be much easier.

VOCABULARY

✓ **To judge** [v] to express a bad opinion of someone's behaviour, often because you think you are better than them:

e.g. You have no right to *judge* other people because of what they look like or what they believe.

✓ **Punctuality** [n] the fact of happening or doing something at the agreed or correct time and not being late

e.g. He insists on regular attendance and *punctuality*.

✓ **A taste of one's own medicine** [idiom] the same bad treatment that you have given to others

e.g. Let the bully have *a taste of his own medicine*.

✓ **Social class** [expression] position in the society:

e.g. People tend to judge each other based on their *social class*.

✓ **Get through (to smb)** [phrasal verb] make contact with somebody by phone:

e.g. I couldn't *get through to him*, his phone was always busy.

✓ **Squeeze smb/smt in** [phrasal verb] to give time to somebody/something, although you're very busy:

e.g. If you come this afternoon, the doctor will try to *squeeze you in*.

27. Describe a team project for study or entertainment

You should say:

- What that project was
- What was your role in that project
- Who did you do it with
- What was the result

Being a senior at university, I have to say that team working is a **commonplace** assignment that we need to complete in almost every module. Despite **doing projects**

like a thousand times, each new team working gives me various experiences and lessons. Among those, the most memorable one would be the time that I was **engaged in** during my second year at college.

I would like to start by highlighting some points about our main duty as well as the group's structure. Well, the team, which **consists of** 5 members, has to **cooperate with** a local business to research and **establish a plan** for expanding their market. The final report and presentation will be **assessed** by the company's **management board** and our professor. Since this project **accounts for** a substantial part in our final module assessment, it took us quite a great deal of time to planning and seeking for the **appropriate approach**. The very first thing we did was dividing the team into two smaller groups. We had been **delegated** to a company that manufactured **a wide range of** bicycle accessories, therefore, two members in my team would spend some time **getting an insight into** the company's activities and operation, while the other group **took charge of doing research into** market and competitors. After that, the team came together and analyzed all the info, statistic, data that we had collected **in order to come up with** a **brand-new** sales module and **promotional campaign** for the company. **In the end**, we finished our presentation **with flying colors** and it was very **well – evaluated** by the company we worked with. I have to say that the projects like this one is **precious opportunities** for me to **gain more realistic experience** and **rules of thumbs** that are usually **non – transferable** in **conventional classroom**. It also the time for us to **apply all the business theory to the real practice** of the corporate world.

Vocabulary

Commonplace (adj) not unusual

Engage in (verb) join in; participate

Account for (phrasal verb) supply or make up a specified amount or proportion of

Delegate (verb) entrust (a task or responsibility) to another person, typically one who is less senior than oneself

Take charge of (phrase) to take control and become responsible for someone or something

Get/gain an insight into something (phrase) get a chance to understand something or learn more about it

Come up with something (phrasal verb) think of something such as an idea or a plan

Brand new (phrase) completely new

Promotional campaign (noun) a campaign designed to encourage the sale of (a product) by advertising or securing financial support

In the end (phrase) finally

With flying colors (phrase) very successfully

Rule of thumb (phrase) Systems and methods for doing things

Conventional (adj) Ordinary and normal, traditional

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

27.1. What kinds of qualities does a leader need?

Well, I suppose leaders need to possess a wide range of skills. First, they have to know ways to **inspire** and motivate their followers. Second, they have to be the ones who are willing to take responsibilities and criticism. Sometimes, their ego can **hinder** them from being a great leader. Leadership skills also include their abilities to build relationships. The stronger their relationships, the better a leader they will be.

27.2. What are the reasons for the failure of teamwork?

I reckon teamwork failure depends **solely** on the failure of that team's leader. If the leader has a short vision and makes **misguided** decisions, he or she will lead the whole team into a **mess**. Moreover, the leader is the bridge between team member's relationships. Bad relationships **result in** weak communications and a lack of networking with each other. Consequently, team members cannot work effectively together. Apart from poor leadership skills, poor time management or poor budgeting may also cause the whole team to fail.

27.3. Do children need to know more about teamwork?

Of course they do. Children need instruction in effective teamwork for a wide variety of reasons. When learning about teamwork, not only are children learning to work as a

team, they're also learning to actively listen and respond in a way that makes the group effort more effective. It's beneficial for their ability to interact socially. In addition to that, working in a team helps children learn to reflect on their individual experience versus the experience of the group. They often get feedback from their instructor and other members of the group. **Self-reflection** contributes a lot to a child's development.

27.4. Is cooperation more important than competition?

Actually, I can't tell which one works better in general. On the one hand, by competing against others and comparing ourselves with one another, we learn how to improve and achieve success. On the other hand, in some cases, competition leads directly to hostility and greed, both of which are the enemies of progress. Cooperation also has certain advantages and disadvantages. The main strength is that cooperation provides the chance to help other people and let them help you in return, while the biggest weakness of cooperation is that the mass of members may lose interest and let a small clique **take over affairs** and manage things for their own benefit. So, I would say that it depends on each situation as to whether cooperation or competition is more important.

VOCABULARY

✓ **inspire:** [verb] to make someone feel that they want to do something and can do it:

Example: After her trip to Venezuela, she felt *inspired* to learn Spanish.

✓ **hinder:** [verb] to limit the ability of someone to do something, or to limit the development of something:

Example: Her progress certainly has been *hindered* by her lack of experience.

✓ **solely:** [adverb] only and not involving anyone or anything else:

Example: He's *solely* in charge of the operation.

✓ **Misguided:** [adjective] wrong, because you have judged a situation badly:

Example: Her decision to quit her job is, in my opinion, *misguided*.

✓ **Mess:** [noun] a situation that is full of problems:

Example: The economy is in a *mess* as a result of government policies.

✓ **Result in:** [phrasal verb] lead to, bring about

Example: The fire *resulted in* damage to their property.

✓ **Self-reflection:** [noun] careful thought about your own behavior and beliefs

Example: I often do some *self-reflection* when I'm alone.

✓ **Clique:** [noun] a group of people who spend their time together and exclude others:

Example: A small *clique* of corrupt politicians are running the country.

✓ **Take over:** [phrasal verb] to get control of something, or to do something instead of someone else:

Example: She *took over* management of this department last winter.

28. Describe a place in other country that you would like to work/ visit

You should say:

- What is that place
- Why do you like to go to that place
- When will you go

Honestly speaking, I have a **myriad of destinations** on my **must – visit** list around the world. However, if I have the opportunity to choose one city, I would probably pick London, which is one of the most **prominent** capitals around the globe. I guess the reason why I have a **burning desire** to visit London has something to do with the fact that ever since I was a kid, I have always been amazed by how gorgeous and unique the architects in London are. There are also some interesting facts about London that I want to witness in real life. One of them is the fact about Big Ben tower. So far, many people see the tall clock tower and think that it is Big Ben. But in fact, Big Ben is a **giant** thirteen-ton bell inside the tower that is rung every two hours by a two hundred - kilogram hammer. The real name of the Bell is the Great Bell of Westminster. Buckingham Palace is also so **appealing** to me since it is the home to the Queen of England and many tourists

to London says that enjoy watching the changing of the guard ceremony that **takes place** in front of the Palace's gate. There are many other elements that make London so **tempting** to me. Pay this amazing city a visit in the future is one of the items in my **wish – list**.

Vocabulary

a myriad of something (phrase) an extremely large number of people or things, especially one that is too large to count

Giant (adj) of very great size or force; gigantic

Appealing (adj) attractive and interesting

Tempting (adj) used for describing something that makes you feel you would like to have it or to do it

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

28.1. What kind of jobs are easy to get in a foreign country?

In today's society, thanks to the great **strides** in technology, I think that jobs related to this sector will be the easiest ones for **expatriates** to get in foreign countries.

Especially, in English-speaking countries, there are **abundant** jobs for IT employees such as computer programmers or mobile app developers, regardless of their nationalities, as long as they have sufficient qualifications and skills.

28.2. Should young adults work abroad?

Yes. It is useful for youngsters to **take up** a job abroad at least once, because they are energetic and enthusiastic enough to **experience** new things that may be **obstacles** when they get older.

Working overseas is a great opportunity for young people to meet different types of people and gain global understanding of their industry. It also provides them with experiences and skills that they would never get at home.

Not only that, most young people are energetic and **adventurous**; therefore working abroad provides them with opportunities to travel more, and **be exposed to** different cultures, which will result in higher level of knowledge and cultural **sensitivity**.

28.3. Why do many people want to work abroad?

There are various reasons behind the preference of people to work in foreign countries. Firstly, working abroad is good for their personal growth. In addition to a higher salary, moving overseas or even getting a temporary contract abroad will give people opportunities to meet potential customers or partners who will help them **further** their career.

Secondly, **expatriates** can **experience** new cultures and a greater mix of backgrounds that will give them **invaluable perspectives** in all aspects of life, including work.

VOCABULARY

✓ **Strides (noun):** advances or improvements in the way that something is developing

Example: Since I started at a new school, I have been making great **strides** in my studies.

✓ **Expatriate(s) (noun):** a person living in a country that is not their own

Example: My family lived as **expatriates** in Hong Kong before I was born

✓ **Abundant (adjective):** existing in large quantities; more than enough

Example: We have **abundant** evidence to prove his guilt.

✓ **Take up (phrasal verb):** to start or begin something such as a job

Example: He **takes up** his duties next week as the head of the department.

✓ **Experience (verb):** to have a particular situation affect you or happen to you

Example: When I lived in Japan, I **experienced** a very different way of life.

✓ **Obstacle (noun)** a situation, an event, etc. that makes it difficult for you to do or achieve something

Example: A lack of qualifications can be a major **obstacle** to finding a job.

✓ **Adventurous (adjective):** willing to take risks and try new ideas; enjoying being in new, exciting situations

Example: For the more **adventurous** tourists, there are trips into the mountains with a local guide.

✓ **Be exposed to (expression):** introduced to, not protected from

Example: I **was exposed to** a completely new culture when I first went to the USA.

✓ **Sensitivity (noun):** the ability to understand other people's feelings

Example: She pointed out with tact and **sensitivity** exactly where he had gone wrong.

✓ **Further (verb):** to help something to develop and be successful

Example: Although the salary was low, she took the job to **further** her career by learning all about the fashion industry.

✓ **Invaluable (adjective):** extremely useful Example: The research should **prove invaluable** in the study of children's language.

✓ **Perspective (noun):** a way of thinking about something

Example: The book gave me a new **perspective** on Indian culture.

29. Describe an interesting house or apartment that you visited

You should say:

When you visited this home

Where it was

Why you went there

What it looked like

Why you like it

Sample 1

One of my classmate is an exchange student from London and she has been staying in my city for 4 months in an apartment pretty near to our school all by herself. That's why we often **hang out** at her place, which I fell in love with since my first visit there.

The building was situated in a luxury **residential** area where most of the **inhabitants** were **expatriates**. It took us roughly 10 minutes to get there by taxi from school but it would be longer if we traveled during rush hours. My friend's apartment was on 10th floor and at the corner, **overlooking** a mighty river, a signature landmark of the city. We were so **overwhelmed** by its **breathtaking** view at night which could be seen from the balcony

that we decided to have a sleepover the first time we came over. The place was not exactly **spacious** but neatly organized and a true **realm** of a live-alone girl: a **king-size bed** with many stuffed animals lying around, a **make-up desk** full of **iconic** brand names, **floral wallpaper** and the like. It was also beautifully decorated with **fairy lights** that were hung around the apartment which gave every girl a **dreamy feeling**. We **threw a pajama party** that night and silently enjoyed the magical sound and view of city from above when the party was over – definitely my favorite way to spend a night.

Vocabulary

Residential (a): (of an area of a town) suitable for living in; consisting of houses rather than factories or offices

Inhabitant (n): a person that lives in a particular place

Expatriate (n): a person living in a country that is not their own

Overlook (v): if a building, etc. overlooks a place, you can see that place from the building

Overwhelm (v): to have such a strong emotional effect on somebody that it is difficult for them to resist or know how to react

Breathtaking (a): very exciting or impressive (usually in a pleasant way)

Spacious (a): large and with plenty of space for people to move around in

Realm (n): a kingdom

Iconic (a): very famous or popular, especially being considered to represent particular opinions or a particular time

Throw a party: organize a party; put on or hold a social gathering

Sample 2

Last week I had chance to visit my close friend who live in an apartment belonging to a **twenty-storey building, in a close proximity to X Road.**

I must say that that apartment is the most **magnificent** one I have ever seen. **On top of that**, the neighborhood there is really pleasant with many **amenities**, such as **convenience store**, the gym and the park.

His apartment is on the 8th floor. It is about 150 square meters with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and one living room. It has also a **comfy and cozy** dining room beside the kitchen. Opposite the living room is a spacious and **well-ventilated** area and the **rolling chair** on the balcony.

Among all the rooms in his apartment, the bedroom is my favorite. It is about 20 square meters. The window faces the south, so It can have **rich sunlight**. The most noticeable and interesting object in this bedroom is a traditional mask hanging on the wall. It is a souvenir he bought during a trip to Yunnan. It is said that it can bring good luck and happiness, which those who **pay a flying visit to** his house often **give it lots of compliment**. The bookshelves are **packed with** books of various **genres** which are **his cup of tea**.

He told me that he has lived in the apartment for nearly 5 years, which made me feel really **jealous of** his life with such a **spectacular** house. If I can **put aside** enough money **down the road**, I will definitely buy an apartment next to his.

Vocabulary

In a close proximity to (phrase) near

Amenity (noun) something that makes it comfortable or enjoyable to live or work somewhere

Comfy (adj) comfortable

Ventilated (adj) to allow fresh air to enter a room or building

Pay a flying visit to (phrase) pay a short visit to

Packed with (verb) containing a lot of something

Be one's cup of tea (idiom) be someone's favorite thing

Put aside (verb) to save an amount of money so that you can buy or pay for something in the future

Down the road (phrase) in the future

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

29.1. Would you like to live in the countryside in the future?

You know, life in rural regions seems to be morej tranquil |and less competitive than that of (vibrant) cities. Particularly, the atmosphere is ^ongenial| the air is fresh and unpolluted, and the local residents are (simple and hospitable, so I think when I get older, countryside would be an ideal spot (for me either to live in or travel to.

29.2. What's the difference between living in the city and countryside?

I think that many differences could be counted. Firstly, the infrastructure in city is significantly more modern, comprehensive and convenient for traveling than that of the countryside. Additionally, rural citizens' lifestyle is less competitive and hectic than urban counterparts. A reasonable explanation for this is that development of the economy and technology in vibrant cities is accelerating more than ever before

29.3. How are modern homes different from older homes?

I suppose there are a number of differences really. On the one hand, modern homes tend to be **equipped with** all the mod cons, ranging from **well-furnished** interior to **state-of-the-art** household appliances; you can **come across** many high-tech products in a modern house like vacuum cleaners and dishwashers. Meanwhile, older homes are usually plain in their designs with less **furnishings** and have gloomy **interior design**.

29.4. Do most people in your country live in an apartment or house?

Well, I guess it depends on the ages really. For young generation, there is a **sweeping trend** that they live more apart from their families and take out a mortgage for a rented apartment in the urban areas since they are dynamic and would love city life pretty much. For older citizens, living together with their children and grandchildren is usually the norm. As they're old and weak, a house offers them the care and affection from others, which can hardly be found in an apartment.

29.5. Do young people in your country like to live with their parents or by themselves?

From my perspective, the young generation today **has a tendency to lead an independent life** from quite early and would rather **live on their own** than with their

parents near them. The reasons for this can be that small children are educated to do things by themselves and many students often **migrate from rural areas to the urban ones to pursue tertiary education**. This is a time they have to rely on themselves by going to the market to buy foods, wash their own clothes and so on. Gradually, this **becomes a habit** and the youths no longer want to see their parents regularly.

30. Describe a decision you disagree with

You should say:

- what the decision is
- who made that decision
- if you told this person that you disagree
- why you think it was wrong decision

It was a few years back when I was still in college that I was **offered an opportunity** to go on a voluntary trip to [____], the most worth-living city in our country. I **was over the moon** when first hearing the news but all my **anticipation** and happiness fled away when my parents **flatly rejected** the idea. I was **dumbfounded** since my time and effort spent on the preparation for our project wasn't about to be **paid off**. However, I was old enough to know better than **making a fuss** about it at the moment; instead, I gave myself time and peace before **reasoning** with my parents. **It came as no surprise to me** when they took their all-time-favorite excuse that I was too immature to take care of myself and that there were plenty of **untrustworthy** people willing to take advantage of me out there when I was unaware. Much as I tried to assure them how well I would manage to stay safe and help other **underprivileged** people, I just couldn't **get through** them. As a result, I had no options but **withdrawing** from the project with regrets. However, I wasn't able **to hold a grudge against** my parents for long because I understood they were just **overprotective** and **genuinely** concerned about my well-being.

Vocabulary

Offer/ give/ provide an opportunity

Be over the moon: to be very pleased

Anticipation (n): a feeling of excitement about something (usually something good) that is going to happen

Flatly (adv): in a way that is very definite and will not be changed

Come as no surprise to someone: will not be surprising [for someone] to learn [something]

Underprivileged (a): having less money and fewer opportunities than most people in society

Get through (phrasal verb): succeed in communicating with someone in a meaningful way

Withdraw (v): to stop taking part in an activity or being a member of an organization; to stop somebody/something from doing these things

Hold a grudge against someone: to stay angry (at someone or something)

Overprotective (a): too anxious to protect somebody from being hurt, in a way that restricts their freedom

Genuinely (adv): in a sincere and honest way that can be trusted

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

30.1. What skills are necessary when making decisions?

Off the top of my head, there are quite a few skills which should be **made use of** when we make a decision. The first one is that we should **have a clear vision of** what the future is like before a decision is reached. To be precise, we must **weigh the pros and cons** as well as **the worst-case scenarios** of each option. Secondly, it ought to be noted that **judging our own ability correctly** is another skill which is usually ignored. We should be aware of our **strengths and weaknesses** before deciding whether to **take risks** or not.

30.2. Do parents in your country allow their children to make important decisions about the future?

Usually, parents are really **influential when it comes to** big decisions in a person's lifetime. Since they have previous experience, they often **impose their thinking on** their kids and sometimes urge them to follow their advice. However, the final decision usually depends on the children themselves. This is simply because they are the ones who will **take responsibility for** their actions.

30.3. Do you think that parents should make important decisions for their children?

It's true that parents **have previous experience** and they often **impose their thinking on** their kids and sometimes urge them to follow their advice. However, the final decision should **depend on** the children themselves. This is simply because they are the ones who will **take responsibility for their actions**. So, a father's or mother's role here is to **inform** the young of the **consequences they have to bear** if a certain decision is made.

30.4. How can older people (parents) help young people (their children) make their own decisions wisely?

There are a couple of methods that older people or parents can **take into account** when they want to help their grandchildren or children to have more informed decisions. The first one is that they should really give advice from their own experience rather than from **word of mouth**. Sometimes, the success of others might be one's failure. The second approach can be that adults should encourage their kids to be **on the go**, actively seeking information and experience from others rather than being passive and randomly making a decision.

31. Describe an enjoyable experience/activity you had in the countryside/ Describe an unforgettable experience you have had.

You should say:

- what the activity was
- when you did it
- who you did with it

- why it was enjoyable

Sample 1

It was two years ago when I had my very first motorbike trip with my friends to the first and most ancient village which is located in the Southern [your country]. It is an unforgettable trip that I've ever had.

Our group had 3 people, Jack, Jenny and me. We chose to visit that village because we wanted to **get away from the hustle and bustle of the city** and **get off the beaten track**. Moreover, because the village is also the **birthplace** of my grandparent, I felt really excited to visit the village and **get a closer insight into** the lifestyle of local people as well as my grandparent.

We set out for a day trip to date back to the tradition of our country really early. I'm always **a night owl**, not **an early bird**, so leaving the city at 5 a.m made me feel like I was **deprived of** sleep. However, I was **deliriously happy** shortly after **embarking on** the trip to the village. This was because on the way to get there, we **admired the breathtaking landscapes** which is totally different from the city we are currently living in. After 1 hour drive, we got to the **picturesque village** which made me feel **over the moon**. We rented some bikes to cycle around the village with a lot of small **alleyways filled with** green grass. After riding a bike to the **paddy field** to **get the vibes** of the village, we visited some 400 year old ancient house which **made of** mud and **laterite** and **had a look at communal** houses where the local people gathered for festival celebration or public meeting. After that, we had lunch with many **scrumptious** food which is locally and **organically grown**. In the afternoon, we joined a cooking class with the villagers who were extremely friendly and **clever at** making traditional cakes. The **highlight** of the trip to the village was going to the paddy fields to help the farmers **harvest** the crop. It was such an **once-in-a-lifetime experience** which I really enjoyed.

That was our first motorbike trip to the **outskirt** of the city and first time in the countryside so we really enjoyed **every single moment** there. Jenny was **like a dog with two tails** while Jack and I were also **on cloud nine**. We **relished** everything in the village

from the fresh air, cozy **ambiance** to beautiful landscapes such as small houses or paddy fields. We **very much hope** that we can **embark on** a longer trip to the countryside **down the road** if we have more spare time.

Vocabulary

Hustle and bustle (phrase) Noisy and confused activity

Off the beaten track (phrase) far away from the places that people usually visit

Get insight into (phrase)

Night owl (phrase) someone who enjoys going out at night or does not go to bed until it is late

Early bird (phrase) someone who gets up early in the morning

Deliriously happy (collocation) very very happy

Embark on (verb) to start a new project or activity, usually one that will be difficult and will take time

Breathtaking (adj) extremely impressive or beautiful

Picturesque (adj) a picturesque place or scene is attractive, especially because it is old and interesting

Over the moon (idiom) very happy

Alleyway (noun) a narrow street or passage

Feel the vibe (phrase) a general feeling that you get from a person or place

Laterite (noun) a kind of brick

Have/take a look at (phrase)

Communal (adj) relating to a particular community

Scrumptious (adj) very delicious

Once-in-a-lifetime experience (collocation) very special experience because you will probably only have it once

Sample 2

Well, I love this topic a lot because it gave me a chance to share my interesting activities in the countryside. In fact, I can't visit my father's **hometown**, Ben Tre very regularly

because of my workloads at work, so I come back to Ben Tre before Tet holiday. And last year was such a **fantastic** year to me. It was the first time that I could **travel by boat** on a big river, which is Hau river. I sat on a boat using **machine**, then going around, visiting the **floating** market and seeing people sell things for Tet. Life in that area was very happy and lively. Everyone enjoyed what they were doing. The **scenery** was just so **picturesque**. I went with my family, so nothing better can be **expressed**. Every member loved this trip so much that we took a lot of pictures and talked a lot to show our **enthusiasm**. This trip was a good **memory** to me as everything was the first time. Besides, it was Tet, so we could see the very **special features** of people's life by the river, which was simple and friendly. I wish in the future I could visit it again with my beloved family.

Vocabulary

- **hometown** [n] the town or city that a person is from, especially the one in which they were born and lived while they were young
- **fantastic** [a] extremely good
- **boat** [n] a small vehicle for travelling on water
- **machine** [n] a piece of equipment with several moving parts which uses power to do a particular type of work
- **float** [v] to stay on the surface of a liquid and not sink
- **scenery** [n] the general appearance of the natural environment, especially when it is beautiful
- **picturesque** [a] (especially of a place) attractive in appearance, especially in an old-fashioned way
- **express** [v] to show a feeling, opinion or fact
- **enthusiasm** [n] a feeling of energetic interest in a particular subject or activity and an eagerness to be involved in it
- **memory** [n] something that you remember from the past
- **special** [a] not ordinary or usual
- **feature** [n] a typical quality or an important part of something

QUESTION FOR PART 3

31.1. Do you think it is better to live in the countryside or in the city?

As often as this question is raised, I believe it remains a tough decision to make **when it comes to** choosing between living in the countryside and living in the city. Many people have been attracted to live and work in big cities because of better **employment opportunities** and higher **living standards**. This massive **rural-to-urban** migration has, however, led to **increase in** environmental pollution, traffic and social issues in urban areas. It would be a better idea for people to live in the suburb and travel into the city to work every day so that they can enjoy **the best of both worlds**.

31.2. What are some of the challenges facing towns and cities?

I suppose **traffic congestion** is the first and most serious problem most people choosing to live in the cities have to **deal with**. During the **peak hours**, there are an **influx** of people on the roads while the **infrastructure** can't furnish people enough space for driving their own cars. Besides, the **marked increase** in **out-of-town** supermarkets and retail parks mean lots of town centre shops are closing down. I think these are the major challenges.

31.3. What are the advantages of living in the countryside?

Living in the countryside can definitely benefit people in **a wide range of** ways. For one thing, living in the countryside is better for one's **health condition** thanks to significantly lower levels of **air pollution**. It is undeniable that, air quality in big cities is so bad that **long-term exposure to** it may cause **respiratory diseases** and other health problems. Besides, the cost of living in rural areas is likely to be lower than that in cities. Although people in the city tend to make more money than people in the countryside do, they have to spend more on food, accommodation and transportation. Therefore, one can actually save more money by living in the countryside without working as hard.

31.4. Do you think that people should have permission to build houses in the countryside?

I certainly think people should be encouraged to build houses in less developed areas. This is because house prices in big cities have become unaffordable for the masses while it costs much less to purchase land and build houses in the countryside. By making more land in the countryside available for building on, the government can attract people to live and work in the countryside, which will not only benefit the economy but also help to reduce burdens on big cities.

32. Describe a well-paid job you would like to do/you will be good at in the future

It's difficult to predict the future **as to** what job will **dominate the labor market**, but I'm pretty sure that teaching English as a foreign language **stands a good chance** of being one of the hottest professions in the **upcoming** years. And, to be honest, I'm **working hard on** enhancing my English teaching ability to **prepare myself** properly for this **golden opportunity** and become an IELTS examiner **down the road**.

Teaching English requires patience and **perseverance** and if you're **an impetuous** and **bad-tempered** person, then this noble profession is not **cut out** for you. In this job, I will have to **get exposed to** people of different educational and **cultural backgrounds**, some of them might be too **stubborn** to be a good listener or simply they're too lazy to **acquire any knowledge**. The two qualities I have mentioned is my **strong suit** actually. I have been employed as an English teacher and somehow learnt about the art of **imparting knowledge** and encourage students to **actively participate in** the lessons without being **fed up with** the students, I think this **characteristic** can be **tackled over time** and that being not too **lenient with** the students means I care for them pretty much.

At the moment, teaching social subjects like Literature or History admittedly doesn't guarantee a **lucrative income**. Yet it's not the same for English as it's an international language and is a **prerequisite** for international students or those working in multinational corporations. So, I speculate that **in the foreseeable future** the job as an IELTS examiner will promise a bright future.

Vocabulary

As to (phrase) concerning someone or something

Labor market (phrase) the number of people who are available to work, considered together with all the available jobs

Stand a chance (phrase) to be likely to achieve something

Down the road (idiom) in the future

Impetuous (adj) done quickly, without thinking about what the effects will be

Bad –tempered (adj) angry, irritable, or ungracious

Cut out for someone (phrasal verb) to be the right type of person to do something

Impart (verb) To pass on; transmit

Be fed up with (phrasal verb) be bored with something/somebody

Lenient with someone (adj) if a person or system is lenient, they punish someone less severely than they could

QUESTION PART 3

32.1. What kinds of jobs are well-paid in your country?

As in other nations, how high a person's salary is is determined by their time and efforts. It is not unrealistic that doctors or CEOs of certain corporations receive significantly higher incomes compared to other professions because they have to spend years

improving their skills and accumulating **hands-on experience** before practicing their career. Besides, celebrities like MCs or comedians also have a **handsome salary** since they **contribute greatly to** our lives. Just imagine how life would be if there are no comedy shows or reality programmes.

32.2. What kinds of jobs are poorly-paid in your country?

Obviously, **manual workers** receive the lowest income in my country; they work hard physically but with no good pay. Some of these occupations don't require much brain work and usually include factory workers, street cleaners or caretakers. Somehow; it is proportional to the efforts and time they spend when they were young.

32.3. Do people who have different levels of income feel happy about how much they earn?

This is a fascinating question, really. The **discrepancy** in income levels generally reflects the degree of happiness a person may feel. This is due to the fact that when people have the means, they can easily afford **high-quality services** and **enjoy their life** better. They can go to the cinema with their buddies to watch a **blockbuster** or hang out at some coffee shops. These things make people satisfied in life. On the contrary, if people can't **take their mind off** stuff like how to **earn a living** to support their family financially, definitely they sense no happiness in this life.

32.4. Do you think it is good to change jobs frequently?

If i have to choose, the answer would be no. Instead of **job-hopping** in a frequent basis, it would be better if we **reflect on** our interests or make greater efforts and determination in what we are doing. This helps us to have an overall picture of our genuine abilities and better adapt to an environment for longer stay. Another plus point is the promotion prospects are more promising if we **set our heart on** staying at the same place because the more we work, the more **hands-on experience** we gain. This makes us qualified for a pay rise or a good promotion.

33. Describe a quiet place you visit/like

You should say:

- where it is
- how often you go there
- what you do there
- why you like this place

Waking up to a **daily nine to five job** and dealing with all kinds of **irksome** issues everyday will surely **drive you insane** someday unless having a healthy way to **relieve** stress and boredom. Fortunately, I have my own cure – a retreat to ABC, a mountainous area – which I have taken **every once in a while** whenever life is giving me a hard time.

ABC is located roughly 300 km to the northeast of my city and about 1,500 m above sea level, which is well-known for its year-round cool weather. Even though it is one of the most popular tourist attractions, there are plenty of **remote** areas where people looking for a **tranquil** and nature place **to get away from** their **tight schedules**. Since it's not very far from the city center, only half an hour if traveling by plane, I go there quite often, around 4 times per year. And every trip holds its own **fascination** depending on what activities I participate in. Normally, I would go trekking **into the wild** to **burn up my energy** and enjoy the feeling of sweat soaking my clothes and being physically **exhausted**. It makes me feel alive and **rejuvenated** again. Sometimes when I feel like **pushing myself to the limit**, **extreme sports** such as water sliding or cliff jumping are my favorites. Those kinds of entertainment require good health condition and **adventurous** spirit, hence, they're not for everyone. I usually spend 3 days in ABC everytime I visit it and although it's only a short time, I do feel some of the **burdens** I shoulder are **swept away** and am prepared to face whatever comes next.

Vocabulary

Nine to five job (phrase) a job with normal daytime hours

Irksome (a): annoying or irritating

Drive someone insane/ crazy: to make you upset; to annoy or irritate someone

Every once in a while: sometimes, but not regularly

Remote (a): far away from places where other people live

Tranquil (a): quiet and peaceful

Fascination (n): a very strong attraction, that makes something very interesting

Rejuvenate (v): make (someone or something) look or feel younger, fresher, or more lively

Exhausted (a): very tired

Extreme sports (n): sports that are extremely exciting to do and often dangerous, for example skydiving and bungee jumping

Adventurous (a): (of a person) willing to take risks and try new ideas; enjoying being in new, exciting situations

Burden (n): a duty, responsibility, etc. that causes worry, difficulty or hard work

QUESTIONS FOR PART 3

33.1. Are there many quiet places in your city?

I reckon there aren't many **tranquil** places in our city unless you wander around the **border** to the countryside. I suppose any **cosmopolitan** city is as crowded and active as mine so it's quite **tricky** to find a **peaceful** spot to escape just for a while. Nevertheless, if you don't mind an hour riding to the edge of the city, you will be **hypnotized** by many endless **paddy fields** and colorful flying kites.

Tranquil (a): peaceful

Border (n): the line that divides two countries or areas; the land near this line

Cosmopolitan (a): containing people of different types or from different countries, and influenced by their culture

Tricky (a): difficult to do or deal with

Hypnotize (v): to interest somebody so much that they can think of nothing else

Paddy field (n): a field planted with rice growing in water

33.2. Why do people sometimes prefer to be alone?

I don't think there is a simple explanation for why people sometimes **seek solitude** to enjoy life by themselves. It has happened to me a few times as well when I feel **suffocated** by a **bustle and hustle** of city life. You have to spend two-third of your day being surrounded by all kinds of people and work that you barely have time for yourself and things you love, which is physically and emotionally **detrimental**. Therefore, in order to **balance** their personal lives, people often try to **minimize** contacts with outside world to find their inner peace when possible.

Seek (v): to look for

Solitude (n): the state of being alone, especially when you find this pleasant

Suffocate (v): feel or cause to feel trapped and oppressed

Bustle and hustle: busy and noisy activity

Detrimental (a): harmful

Balance (v): keep or put (something) in a steady position so that it does not fall

Minimize (v): to reduce something, especially something bad, to the lowest possible level

33.3. Is there much noise around your home?

My house is far from the city center, so the neighborhood is quite peaceful and **livable**. I can hardly imagine myself living elsewhere, especially the urban center due to its **noise pollution** and terrible **congestions** during rush hours. Admittedly, there are certain advantages when living there: short-distance **commute**, fabulous restaurants, various entertainment facilities and so on, which is pretty **tempting**. However, I am a **social butterfly** and prefer a good book to any meeting, hence, I love my tranquil place now.

Livable (a): (of life) worth living

Noise pollution (n): harmful or annoying levels of noise, as from airplanes, industry, etc.

Congestion (n): the state of being crowded and full of traffic

Commute (v): a regular journey of some distance to and from one's place of work

Tempting (a): something that is tempting is attractive, and makes people want to have it, do it, etc.

Social butterfly (n): a very sociable person who flits from one social event to another

33.4. Does this noise affect you in any way?

Since my neighborhood is relatively **restful**, I am not often **disturbed** by noises. Yet, every once in a while when some neighbor throws a party or has their house **refurbished**, I tend to get **distracted**. I don't work well under stress or any kind of **distractions** since it makes me unfocused. Even if it's a bit loud, I don't want to complain since most of the time they are incredible **well-behaved**. Hence, I choose to do my chores or hang out with some friends instead to make my time useful.

Restful (a): that makes you feel relaxed and peaceful

Disturb (v): to interrupt somebody when they are trying to work, sleep, etc.

Refurbish (v): to clean and decorate a room, building, etc. in order to make it more attractive, more useful, etc.

Distract (v): to take somebody's attention away from what they are trying to do

Distraction (n): a thing that takes your attention away from what you are doing or thinking about

Well-behaved (a): behaving in a way that other people think is polite or correct

33.5. How do you think noise in cities could be reduced?

It will **take great effort to** be able to reduce noise pollution in cities and everybody will need to join hand. Firstly, **turn off** your electronics when you're out of home or office. It may sound unnecessary and **trivial** but imagine the whole neighborhood let the music play all night long, it would be a nightmare. Secondly, **put on** your earphones in public places. Nobody wants to know your music taste or to be disturbed when trying to focus on their reading. Besides, encourage your friends and family do the same. The more participants, the less noise population.

Take effort to: to do something even though you do not want to or you find it difficult

Turn off (phrasal verb): to stop the flow of electricity, gas, water, etc. by moving a switch, button, etc.

Trivial (a): not important or serious; not worth considering

Put on (phrasal verb): to wear

33.6. Is there a completely quiet place?

What a fascinating question! My personal thought is that there's virtually no absolutely peaceful and quiet spot in modern society. At least there's some soft background noise or music to make the air **less dull and heavy**. Having said this, at night, we can catch sight of many parts of the town noiseless and **dead quiet**, which can be explained by the fact that most people might have **fallen into a sound sleep**.

33.7. Do you feel like listening to music over and over again?

To be honest with you, I'd say that I don't have a habit of replaying any song on my Ipod, the main reason of which is that I've been always interested in novel stuff and repeating the same thing for me seems **redundant and mundane**, so I'd rather put on different song and experience different feelings and emotions.

33.8. Where do young people usually meet in your city?

Well, it's difficult to say because there are many good meeting places in my city, like cafes, cinemas or parks. As far as I am concerned, I usually meet my friends in the cafes. They have comfortable seats and pleasant background music. We can chat without being disturbed while enjoying a cup of coffee or juice. If the weather is fine we will go to the parks. It is agreeable to sit on the bench near the lake, enjoying the pleasant scenery far away.

33.9. What types of noises do you come across in your daily life? Do any noise bother you?

I usually hear the noises of traffic, music played aloud to attract more customers at the shops as well as the noise of construction. Most of the times, I get sickened by the high level of noise. Noises from traffic or construction sites bother me a lot. Anyway, I feel irritated at any kind of noise.

33.10. What are some of the advantages of quiet places?

There are many advantages that being in a **tranquil** and **serene** place can give us. The first plus point is that it's easier to concentrate, to think logically and rationally. In a word, it's good for my mind work. Also, quiet places enable people to feel relaxed and **light-hearted** or whatever type of positive feeling human has.

33.11. What kinds of places do people want to go to when they want to be alone?

Honestly speaking, **city dwellers** often try to manage a trip to the countryside, where the atmosphere is **tranquil and serene**, away from the **hustle and bustle** of city life. Some others who are **preoccupied with** their work tend to **make an escape** to a **secluded** lake or park where they spend time reading a book or **pursuing other hobbies** like drawing. Also, some people would rather just stay at home, in their room listening to music or doing other trivial stuff.

34. Describe a popular place where people go swimming

You should say:

- where this place is
- what kinds of people go there
- why people choose to go to this place instead of other places
- what facilities it has

Sample 1

I don't usually **wander** far from my neighborhood when I am not at work, hence, I tend to find a local place if I need to catch up with some friends or simply, exercise. And lucky for me, we do have a **recreation center** only 10 minutes away which has been attracting plenty of sporty people since its opening in 2014.

This recreation center can be considered a symbol of the town, **showcasing** local **sportsmanship** and **unification**. It was built to replace the old stadium which was barely used by nearby residents and has become unexpectedly **well-liked** thanks to its wide range of facilities and **modernity**. The center has a large football field, 5 tennis courts, 3 swimming pools and many other rooms for different purposes. With people who enjoy swimming like me, this is an ideal place where all necessary facilities are provided: 3 pools with 2 indoors and 1 indoor, saunas, water slides, shower areas as well as a cafeteria by the pool, which are all neatly clean and nicely designed. As a result, it's quite **self-explanatory** why people prefer this center and the number of visitors is increasing every month. Soon, anyone living in the area who wishes to exercise different kinds of sports is going to gather here due to its convenience and outstanding **infrastructure**.

Vocabulary

Wander (v): to walk slowly around or to a place, often without any particular sense of purpose or direction

Recreation center (n): a facility open to the public for leisure and recreation activities

Showcase (v): to present somebody's abilities or the good qualities of something in an attractive way

Sportsmanship (n): fair, generous and polite behaviour, especially when playing a sport or game

Unification (n): the act or process of joining people, things, parts of a country, etc. together so that they can form a single unit

Modernity (n): the condition of being new and modern

Self-explanatory (a): easy to understand and not needing any more explanation

Infrastructure (n): the basic systems and services that are necessary for a country or an organization to run smoothly, for example buildings, transport and water and power supplies

Sample 2

Our neighborhood has a community swimming pool. Lots of people go there during hot summer days. Some of them go to this swimming pool to **cool off** or just to **hang out** while others go there to **work out**. You know, swimming is probably one of the best **all-around** exercises in the world coz it **keeps you fit** and your body **in shape**.

The water in the swimming pool is treated by **ultraviolet technology** which benefits the quality of the water. It is safe there as full time **lifeguards** are supervising **all the time**. The pool is able to **cater for** not only swimming itself, but also for swimming lessons and even birthday parties.

But honestly, not all the people there can swim well. Yes, there are folks who swim like fish but some others just splash water around or even have a hard time doing the doggy-paddle.

On any hot day in July, the pool is **buzzing with kids**. There're even instructors giving swimming lessons to them. Enjoy the sun and get paid is a pretty good idea, right? And,

you know, I don't have a girlfriend/boyfriend. So who knows? Maybe this pool'll give me a chance.

QUESTION FOR PART 3

34.1. Should swimming pools be free?

Even though it would be ideal to have swimming pools or any other sport facilities provided for free, I still think people should be charged upon entering. If we don't pay when using swimming pools, the authority will have to **rely on public spending** to cover **labor costs, renovation** and so on, which can be used in more meaningful activities such as helping the **underprivileged** or building a new medical center. And anyway, entrance ticket to the pool is not that pricey that people cannot afford.

Rely (+on) (v): to need or depend on somebody/something

Public spending (n): money spent by the state; government expenditure

Labor cost (n): the sum of all wages paid to employees

Renovation (n): the act or process of repairing and painting an old building, piece of furniture, etc. so that it is in good condition again

Underprivileged (a): having less money and fewer opportunities than most people in society => the underprivileged (n): people who are underprivileged

34.2. If one is scared of water should they keep learning how to swim?

We have **witnessed** many amazing stories in which people do not let fear **conquer** them but keep doing what they want. I personally believe that if people can **overcome** their fear and learn to swim, it's incredible, otherwise, they're not **cowards**, either because everybody is scared of something for a reason. If someone **has a thing against** being in water, he might have been **traumatized** by an incident or sometimes, was born with it. Whichever is the case, it's their call to learn or not.

Witness (v): see something

Conquer (v): to succeed in dealing with or controlling something

Coward (n): a person who is not brave or who does not have the courage to do things that other people do not think are especially difficult

Have a thing against: to have a special fear or dislike of someone or something

Traumatize (v): to shock and upset somebody very much, often making them unable to think or work normally

34.3. Why do some people like water sports?

Obviously, some like the youths are extremely into **aquatic sports**. This can easily be understood because they are **dynamic and adventurous** so they are pretty **drawn by** water polo, surfing, snorkeling **to name but a few**. Some sports like those tend to be risky so it can be a time for the young guys to **challenge themselves** and **test their own limit**, which can give them **more confidence** in life.

34.4. What's the difference between swimming in the pool and swimming in the sea?

It's a dilemma. I like swimming in the ocean because it makes me feel **close to the nature** and there's more space for me to **stretch my arms and legs**. However, if I have my private swimming pool, I'd love to swim in it because the water is fresh and shallow so I can enjoy my time without worrying about being drowned or swallowing the salty water.

34.5. Is it important to learn swimming?

Swimming is not only one of the necessary **survival** skills but a great **leisure** activity, hence, it would be both beneficial and **pleasurable** to know how to swim. Every year, there are many **heartbreaking** accidents related to water incidents and most of the victims cannot swim or are not good swimmers. Thus, in order to **ensure** their own safety and help those in need, people should be able to swim well.

Survival skills (n): techniques that a person may use in order to sustain life in any type of natural environment

Leisure (n): free time

Pleasurable (a): enjoyable

Heartbreaking (a): extremely sad

Ensure (v): to make sure that something happens or is definite

34.6. Who is the perfect person to teach people how to swim?

The ones who know how the **techniques** and are able to swim well, of course. A swimming athlete would be much better, but I doubt we can find one easily. Swimming is a sport which means it has some risky **elements** that need **taken into consideration**. Therefore, to be able to handle unexpected situations such as **cramps** or **drowning**, a teacher should be trained about medical **in advance** and **improvise** quickly upon **emergency**.

Technique (n): a particular way of doing something, especially one in which you have to learn special skills

Element (n): a small amount of a quality or feeling

Take into consideration = take into account: to think about and include a particular thing or fact when you are forming an opinion or making a decision

Cramp (n): a sudden pain that you get when the muscles in a particular part of your body contract, usually caused by cold or too much exercise

Drowning (n): the process of dying because of being underwater and unable to breathe for too long; an act of dying in this way

In advance: before the time that is expected; before something happens

Improvise (v): to make or do something using whatever is available, usually because you do not have what you really need

Emergency (n): a sudden serious and dangerous event or situation which needs immediate action to deal with it

34.7. Do you think the government should invest money in developing facilities for water sports?

Not necessarily I reckon. This is because governments should rather provide more **essential services** for its citizens like **improving healthcare** or **education**. The task of

upgrading and expanding water sports facilities should (rest with the clubs that **do business** in these areas Besides, not many people are into water sports these days since they even can't **find time to** go to somewhere with water during the whole year.

34.8. Where do people in your country like to go swimming?

People usually swim at the swimming pools or go to the beach. But I guess most people prefer to go swimming in the sea. The feeling is totally different. I bet no one can **resist the temptation** from the blue sky, the white clouds, the unbroken coastline and the cozy sea breeze.

35. Describe a café or restaurant you enjoy.

You should say:

Where it is

How often you go there

When you usually go there

Why you like to visit this café

Sample 1

I'm an **introvert** and not really keen on **socializing with** others, so I often find a noiseless spot to **frequent to** every time I'm **stressed out** from work study. It is the small and **cozy** café within a walking distance from my house.

Unlike other coffee shops **in the vicinity of** my neighborhood, the atmosphere here is extremely **tranquil and serene**, which greatly **lives up to my expectation**. As a person with heavy amounts of daily workload. The café gives me a certain degree of peacefulness and calmness, especially during **nerve-racking times** like final exams when I am **up to ears in** assignments.

What **leaves the most profound impression** on me is the complete silence in the café as the shop owner fortunately is not interested in music of any kind, so no background music is expected when you come here. I can **increase my concentration span** while reading a book or other materials and finish work with great productivity, **compared to** when I'm at home, surrounded by many disturbances like babies crying and neighbors arguing. One bonus point is that the coffee there is **second to none** which **caters to** my unique tastes! The foods are really **scrumptious, giving me great refreshing energy** when suffering from **fatigue and stress** I have to admit.

Vocabulary

Introvert (noun) someone who tends to concentrate on their own thoughts and feelings rather than communicating with other people

Frequent (verb) to visit or go to (a place) often

Stressed out (adj) affected by stress

In the vicinity of (phrase) in the area that is close to

Tranquil (adj) quiet

Serene (adj) calm and peaceful

Live up to one's expectation (phrase) to be as good as good as someone thought something would be

Nerve-racking (adj) making you very nervous or worried

Up to ears/neck in something (idiom) busy doing something

Leave/create/make an impression on somebody (phrase) to produce a positive memorable effect on someone

Second to none (adj) as good as or better than all others

Scrumptious (adj) very delicious

Fatigue (noun) a feeling of being extremely tired, either physically or mentally

QUESTION FOR PART 3

35.1. What do old people like to eat?

Personally speaking, the elderly are more into vegetables and fruits rather than meat. As they have grown old, the **fiber** and vitamins obtained from the **intake** of salads, tomatos, bananas **and so on** are particularly good for their health. **By contrast**, meat **does harm to** their **digestive system**. It's also worth mentioning that the older citizens can't chew thick pieces of meat, so they'd rather eat fish, which is softer and can be easily digested.

Intake (noun) the amount of a chemical or another substance that enters your body

And so on (phrase) etc; (used instead of mentioning more of a similar type of thing that has already been mentioned)

By/in contrast (phrase) used when you are comparing two things or people and saying that the second one is very different from the first

Do harm to somebody/something (phrase) cause physical or psychological damage or injury

Digestive system (noun) a group of organs working together to convert food into energy and basic nutrients to feed the entire body.

35.2. How important is it for a country to be able to grow all the food it needs, without importing any from other countries?

In recent times it hasn't been that important as it's been easy enough to import anything that was required. Maybe in the future there will be more **emphasis on** being independent in terms of food production, as well as other essential resources such as energy and fuel, it looks like there are going to be some major changes which could

affect everyone in terms of how we look at our ability to survive in the event of another world conflict where food and possibly water become scarce.

36. Describe a kind of foreign food you tried/would like to have

Well, I spent 2 weeks of the summer vacation in Malaysia to visit my friends thus had chances to try a lot of local foods. However, the food that I miss most since I cannot find it in my hometown is called 'Roti Susu'.

Indian food in Malaysia is highly diversified, yet my favorite one is this food. Basically, in Malaysian, 'Roti' means 'bread' and 'susu' means 'milk'. We can add some curry sauce for more flavors. Because of such simple ingredients, this food can be found in any Indian restaurants in Malaysia.

My friends who were studying in Malaysia were also big fans of 'roti susu' so they introduced me this food on the first day I came to visit them. Because it is sold by an Indian food court on campus, they could have it most of the time. I prefer having it without the sauce and usually it's my everyday-favorite. Probably as the soft bread with sweet condensed milk has often been my breakfast when I'm in my hometown, the taste of 'roti susu' seems **familiar to** me.

In the future, I would love to return to Malaysia someday to enjoy 'roti susu' again.

Vocabulary

To be familiar with Sth/SO (adj): to know SO or Sth well

QUESTION FOR PART 3

36.1. Why do some people taste change?

Well as we grow older, our tastes are also likely to change as well. The reason for this can be we don't have time for a decent meal as most family members are **on the go**, meaning that the father and mother have to work longer hours to **make ends meet**, whereas the students must attend extra classes to **keep up with** their peers at school.

So, we **end up** eating fast foods or **take-aways** and become used to it. The second reason is when we grow older, for health protection, we force ourselves to **refrain from** certain types of foods, like meat or fast food because they contain many health hazards.

36.2. Which are more popular in your country: fast food restaurants or traditional restaurants?

They're both popular, but in different ways and for different reasons. I think fast food restaurants are popular for **grabbing a quick bite** or snack, as they are fast and you can usually find one nearby. Traditional restaurants are more popular for special occasions or going out for lunch or dinner at the weekend when people have more time to sit and enjoy the food and the **ambience or atmosphere** of the place. They usually cost more too, so maybe people don't go as often, but they're still popular. I don't think anyone would consider going to a fast food place for a special occasion - unless it was a kid's birthday party or something similar, in which case **it makes a lot of sense**, as some of these places **cater specially for** such events.

36.3. Do you think there will be a greater choice of food available in shops in the future, or will there be less choice?

That's hard to say, but I think that due to the fact that most industries are becoming more and more **consolidated** and there are less and less independent producers of anything, you could safely say that the choice will probably be less, as it will be **dictated** by only one or two **giant global conglomerates** in the food industry.

36.4. Some people say that food in an expensive restaurant is always better than food in a cheap restaurant - would you agree?

In my experience it's not that simple. I've had some amazingly good food in cheap restaurants and some disgustingly bad food in a **supposedly classy** and expensive place. I think that's why **'word of mouth'** advertising is so important in the restaurant business. You simply can't guarantee that a place that looks expensive and charges a lot of money will indeed offer a better dining experience than a cheaper restaurant with fewer **frills**. The service can be just the same and the quality of food the same too - it might only be the surroundings that are more **upmarket** in reality.

37. Describe an occasion that you received a good service from a company or shop

What company or business it was and what this company does

What the service was

Who helped you

Where you received this good service

Why you think it was good service

Well, I think this topic is a hot one because good service is a hot **trend** these days. A Paradise shop near my house is my first choice because of its **undeniable pleasant staff**. That shop mainly sells cellphones and laptops which require the staff very good general knowledge and IT skills. However, they **conduct** it very well. I went there 1 month ago to buy a new Samsung cellphone for my younger sister. The first thing that really impressed me was their welcome. The customers weren't **discriminated**, based on their **social status** or their **appearance**. Their **customer** service **meets the requirements** both of the buyers and the visitors. Since I wanted to buy a cellphone, an **expert** in cellphones came and **consulted** with me a suitable style and color for my sister. This point was good as they understand what the customers would need. Every step, every stage is taken care of very well. I would like to come back this shop just because I was **treated fairly** and carefully, which made me feel happy and comfortable. I love this shop a lot.

Vocabulary

- **trend** [n] a general development or change in a situation or in the way that people are behaving
- **undeniable** [a] certainly true
- **pleasant** [a] enjoyable, attractive, friendly, or easy to like
- **staff** [n] the group of people who work for an organization

- **conduct** [v] to organize and perform a particular activity
- **discriminate** [v] to treat a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, religion, sex, etc.
- **social status** [phrase] an accepted or official position, especially in a social group
- **appearance** [n] the way a person or thing looks to other people
- **customer** [n] a person who buys goods or a service
- **requirement** [n] something that you must do, or something you need
- **expert** [v] a person with a high level of knowledge or skill; a specialist
- **consult** [v] to get information or advice from a person, book, etc. with special knowledge on a particular subject
- **treat** [v] to behave towards someone or deal with something in a particular way
- **fairly** [adv] If you do something fairly, you do it in a way which is right and reasonable and treats people equally

QUESTION FOR PART 3

37.1. Is service better in large shops or in small shops?

From my experience, services provided by large shops with certain amount of **reputation** are often more professional and **consistent** than smaller ones. The reason can be that larger stores have already had their own system and **procedures** on how to treat customers and **handle** complaints and they even have budget for training newbies. Meanwhile, smaller stores tend to pay less attention to service but sales. Still, there are also exceptions.

Reputation (n): the opinion that people have about what somebody/something is like, based on what has happened in the past

Consistent (a): always behaving in the same way, or having the same opinions, standards, etc.

Procedure (n): the official or formal order or way of doing something, especially in business, law or politics

Handle (v): to deal with a situation, a person, an area of work or a strong emotion

Budget (n): the money that is available to a person or an organization and a plan of how it will be spent over a period of time

37.2. If customers feel difficult in the shops, who will they ask?

Not surprisingly, there's always someone for you to **make enquiries** in case you want for more information on a particular item. The shop assistant would just be pleased to **show you around**, explain the features and functions of something for you. **A prime example** is when I went to purchase a smartphone, I met a nice shop assistant who instructed me in detail about different brands, and I **ended up** picking the most suitable one.

37.3. What would you do if you receive a bad service?

Let me see. Different people have different **reactions** towards poor services, I suppose and it also depends on how service providers handle their customers' complaints. A waiter makes mistakes while serving a table, for example, ordering a wrong dish, a guest can **overlook** the **incident** if that waiter genuinely apologizes and cleverly offers some free drink or dessert as a **subtle** win-back manner. In contrast, if he insists on blaming the guest, the restaurant will end up having an angry customer.

Reaction (n): what you do, say or think as a result of something that has happened

Overlook (v): to see something wrong or bad but decide to ignore it

Incident (n): something that happens, especially something unusual or unpleasant

Subtle (a): behaving in a clever way, and using indirect methods, in order to achieve something

Or:

There can be a number of courses of actions I can consider when an item I bought fails to **live up to my expectations**. The first thing I would do in this case is to **note down** the address of the store owner and go directly there to ask him. This is simple because the sellers must have the responsibility if they provide products that don't **meet the standards** and fix them if there are any technical problems. Another thing I **would take into account** is that I would go to some local authorities and **claim my rights** if the seller refuses to repair the item; change another one or have a refund.

37.4. What qualities do the staff need? Why?

As far as I'm concerned, staff need to equip themselves with certain virtues and knowledge in **handling** with customers' enquiries and complaints. One thing is that they must really be patient and try their best to be a good listener, understanding the situation and **coming up with** proper measures to **sort the problems out** once and for all. Without this quality, everything will **be in a mess**, and no agreement will be reached between both parties. The second quality is a good ability to explain. From my experience, I see some staff **stammering or confused** and unable to answer the questions of the consumers. Such incompetence and lack of knowledge will prove a disadvantage in doing business with others.

37.7. Do you think it's important for a company to provide after-sales service?

After-sales service can be a plus point that **distinguishes** one company from another. Therefore, I believe it would be **beneficial** for any company to provide and **upgrade** the quality of after-sales service. It's not surprising if you treat your customers well when they are considering whether to buy your products or services. It will be **spectacular** if you take care of them with the same **dedication** after you already close the deal and that would make them feel important and **boost** their **loyalty** to your brand.

Distinguish (something from something else) (v): to recognize the difference between two people or things

Beneficial (a): improving a situation; having a helpful or useful effect

Upgrade (v): to improve the condition of something

Spectacular (a): very impressive

Dedication (n): the hard work and effort that somebody puts into an activity or a purpose because they think it is important

Boost (v): to make something increase, or become better or more successful

Loyalty (n): the quality of being faithful in your support of somebody/something

37.6. What's an example of a difficult situation involving the public that an employee might need to deal with?

A common **undesirable** situation that no company or employee wants to face is a negative feedback which is posted publicly for everyone to see, especially your **potential** customers. If it is not carefully dealt with, a company's reputation and image will have to **suffer severely**.

Undesirable (a): not wanted or approved of; likely to cause trouble or problems

Potential (a): that can develop into something or be developed in the future

Suffer (v): to experience something unpleasant, such as injury, defeat or loss

Severely (adv): very badly or seriously

38. Describe an interesting talk or speech you heard recently

You should say

Where you heard it

Who the speaker was

What the talk or speech was about

Why you think it was interesting

Sample 1

Well, to be honest, there aren't really that many speeches I've heard which I can remember in much detail, you know, I tend to forget most talks pretty much as soon as I've finished listening to them! But one talk that did **leave a particularly deep impression** on me was by X, who I'm not sure if you've heard of before, but he's one of the most accomplished and respected people here in my country, which is why I **made the effort** to listen to what he had to say.

But anyway, **as for** what his speech was about, well it was **quite a while** ago when I listened to it, so I can only remember bits of it, but **in a nutshell**, it was basically about success and how we can **go about** achieving it. And so in his speech, he outlined a few things that we can do if we want to **lead a successful and fulfilling life**, which most of us do of course. So for example, one thing he **touched upon** was how we should all **follow our dreams**, instead of simply doing what other people expect of us. And listening to this from X himself really made me believe in the truth of that statement because he's speaking from experience. And he also went on to explain that many other successful people also attribute their success to the fact that they **pursued their dreams**.

But anyway, finally, **with regard to** what I thought of the talk, well to put it simply, I thought it was really informative and so I was able to learn a **tremendous** amount from it, such as, you know, how to **succeed in** what we do, and also what values we should live our lives by.

Another thing that made his talk especially interesting was the fact that he used a lot of stories. So I mean, even though his talk went on for over an hour or so, I didn't feel bored at all listening to it, and in fact I even made a mental note that, if I ever have to do any public speaking myself in the future, I'll also try to include a few stories, like X did.

 Vocabulary

Leave/make/create an impression on somebody (collocation) to provide a lasting memory for someone after one has left.

As for (phrase) considering or speaking about

Quite a while (phrase) a long time

In a nutshell (phrase) very briefly

Go about (phrasal verb) to do something

Touch upon (phrasal verb) to mention something when you are talking or writing

Pursue (verb) to try to achieve something

With regard to (phrase) concerning a particular subject

Tremendous (adj) extremely great, important, or strong

Sample 2

Uhm, this is my favorite topic. When I was a student, I wasn't very interested in any speech or talks. However, since I started my job as a teacher, I have enjoyed these talks a lot. I did hear a talk from a **lecturer** who comes from ERC University. He is a TESOL teacher, so the way he gave the talk really **impressed** me. Sitting in a big hall and listening to a talk actually isn't a boring thing. The lecture **presented** different **methodology** in teaching English for high school students. Then, the talk visualized a variety of games to **motivate** students' interests, such as snakes, battleships or puzzles. I have to **admit** that they are very **creative** and funny. Moreover, I did learn a lot from this talk, especially the games since I've never thought that games are really **effective** in class but they **proved** me wrong. The students like them a lot, which makes me believe in those new teaching methods. I think I will listen to these talks more when I have time.

Vocabulary

- **lecturer** [n] someone who teaches at a college or university

- **impress** [v] to cause someone to admire or respect you because of something that you have done or said
- **admit** [v] to agree that something is true, especially unwillingly
- **present** [v] to give, provide or make known
- **methodology** [n] a system of ways of doing, teaching or studying something
- **motivate** [v] to make someone want to do something well
- **creative** [a] producing or using original and unusual ideas
- **effective** [a] successful or achieving the results that you want
- **prove** [v] to show that something is true

QUESTION PART 3

38.1. Why do people feel nervous when they are giving a speech to others?

Public speaking has always been one of the **utmost** challenges for anyone, especially those lacking practices. Like any interpersonal skills, being able to deliver a thorough, yet **captivating** speech to a group of strangers requires certain factors. Reasons why most people fail, for me, fall into two main categories: the fear of audience's reaction and the topic itself. People are **judgmental** creatures and can **cast aspersions on** almost everything; therefore, presenters may suffer from the pressure of perfecting every detail. In addition, if someone is going to talk about topic that is unfamiliar to him or too **sophisticated** for listeners, it is possibly not as **well-received** as the one he knows more about.

Utmost (a): greatest; most extreme

Captivating (a): taking all your attention; very attractive and interesting

Judgmental (a): judging people and criticizing them too quickly

Cast aspersions on: to criticize someone or someone's character

Sophisticated (a): complicated

Well-received (a): getting a good reaction from people

38.2. How can people improve their public speaking skills?

Thanks to the Internet, information is now **disseminated** worldwide and easily **accessible** that you can get help from anyone about anything, including public speaking. There are several means to **acquire** and **harness** such skill as long as people are willing to such as enrolling in an online course or participating in forum where people with the same goal gather and share their experience. This is quite effective, flexible and most importantly, free of charge. If you want something more official and academic, talk to some experts in public speaking at some conferences or workshops. They will provide you more insights and tips to begin. Last but not least, **practice makes perfect**.

Disseminate (v): to spread information, knowledge, etc. so that it reaches many people

Accessible (a): that can be reached, entered, used, seen, etc.

Acquire (v): to gain something by your own efforts, ability or behaviour

Harness (v): to control and use the force or strength of something to produce power or to achieve something

Practice makes perfect: a way of encouraging people by telling them that if you do an activity regularly and try to improve your skill, you will become very good at it

38.3. Can you suggest any methods that would help reduce nervousness?

Each of us will surely experience at least once in our lifetime the feeling of anxiety. It can be before our job interview or big presentation, when meeting your family-in-law for the first time and so on. **Nervousness** could be a good sign since it shows that we care. However, to better perform at such **life-changing** events, you should control your feelings. Firstly, take a deep breath. You can't be at your best without breathing easily. Second, don't try convince yourself that you're not anxious. Accept it just like any other

feelings then you don't have to keep reminding yourself to ignore it. Lastly, use positive self-talk. Encourage yourself and remember that you are in this place for a reason.

Nervousness (n): the feeling of being anxious about something or afraid of something

Life-changing (a): having an effect that is strong enough to change someone's life

38.4. Is it good for people to visit schools and give a talk to children about different things?

As far as I'm concerned, it would be a **valuable** experience for children to hear real-life stories and personal insights from their **predecessors** who have been through **ups and downs** for useful lessons and advice. Nowadays, many schools have already invited some guests that could be their **alumni** or **influential** local figures to talk to students. A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves a mark. Therefore, the sooner we sow a good seed and inspire them, the better they will grow.

Valuable (a): very useful or important

Predecessor (n): a person who did a job before somebody else

Ups and downs: the mixture of good and bad things in life or in a particular situation or relationship

Alumni (n): the former male and female students of a school, college or university

Influential (a) having a lot of influence on somebody/something

38.5. What type of person is best suited to give a talk to a group of students?

Well, I see no special talents are needed to be able to deliver a highly **motivating** and **inspiring** speech to students as long as their experiences and messages are **relevant** and meaningful. Hence, people who could **grab students' attention** and make them question their goals and purposes are those leading an eventful life. And by this, I mean someone who has related experiences and been through ups and downs during his career to reach success. This is because I believe that if one has never tasted failures and

disappointments, he can't realize his inner strength to overcome **setbacks** and truly appreciate his success, which is what students should think about when they're still in school.

Motivate (v): to be the reason why somebody does something or behaves in a particular way

Inspiring (a): exciting and encouraging you to do or feel something

Relevant (a): having ideas that are valuable and useful to people in their lives and work

Setback (n): a difficulty or problem that delays or prevents something, or makes a situation worse

Grab someone's attention: to draw or attract someone's attention

38.6. When you give your speech, you encounter any problems? Do you think some adults feel tension when they are giving a speech?

If you ask me, I would have to say that I often **come up against** some obstacles when preparing my speech as well as when the speech is in progress of being delivered to others. In the process of preparation, I often have a hard time picking the topic that is relevant and can capture the interest of the audience. If you don't, they might get fed up with the speech and you end up conveying no messages at all to others. As for while I'm giving a talk, I usually stammer and feel **at a loss** for words at times, which is a weakness that I'm trying to **get over**.

38.7. What are the benefits of public speaking?

When a person successfully **delivers a good speech**, it gives a **sense of self-worthiness**. A positive response from the audience can help a person feel more confident. Thus, it can bring about a lot of improvement in one's overall personality. Last but not least, the art of public speaking improves relationships. Once a person develops good public speaking skills, a marked improvement can be seen in his interpersonal skills **which in turn**, will help him **maintain a healthy relationship** with his friends and family. Even in one's

professional life, an effective interaction with one's [boss, clients or subordinates can help a person Enhance the possibility of advancement in his chosen profession.

38.8. Do you think college or high school should ask some celebrities to communicate with the students?

If you ask me, I would frankly say that there should be times when public figures are invited to speak in front of students in the schools. What I'm trying to say is that via their **inspirational speeches**, the youths can **change their frame of mind** for the simple reason that they are [pretty impressionable |by their idols. I recall a time when M.r X, [a celebrated top figure in my country, volunteered to **give a brief lecture** at my university. Hundreds of students **turned out** to see him and moved by the stories that he shared.

39. Describe a big company that you would like to work in.

It's every girl's wish to be surrounded by beautiful clothes and latest shoes of the season, especially with recognized fashion brands, which is why I've always dreamed of working in a fashion company, Nasty Gal in particular, where my creativity and passion in contributing to women's image could be fulfilled.

Nasty Gal has been one of the fastest growing retailers in fashion over the past 10 years and its founder – Sophia Amoruso is also a heroine in my heart. I am deeply impressed by how she started the company and build up her reputation. She even has her own podcast called #GirlBoss where she interviews other **entrepreneurial** women who are also successful and true feminists on how and what they do to be at where they are today. With such an **inspirational** and **quintessential** girl boss like Amoruso, there's no reason any girl wouldn't want to be at Nasty Gal. In addition, the said fashion empire is also renowned for its trendy, sexy yet classy and total badass collection at the same time, which is also my style when choosing clothing.

However, everything always has two sides. Working in fashion industry would be tough and stressful due to its **competitiveness** and **supreme** fast-paced characteristics. You are required to have a fine taste in fashion and **a keen eye for** what's popular or what's potential to become popular to ride the fashion trend and wouldn't get lagged behind. Creativity and personal touch are just as important to deliver not only qualified but unique products as well. Therefore, those who crave challenges and love to push themselves to the limit like me are best suited for this kind of job and the like. Hopefully, when Nasty Gal is officially launched in my country that would be where I work and **pursue my dream**.

Entrepreneurial (adj) willing to work hard and take risks in order to build up a business; enterprising

Example: We must reinvigorate the entrepreneurial spirit of America.

Inspirational (adj) giving you the enthusiasm to do or create something

Example: Obama's speech was really inspirational to listen to.

Competitiveness (noun) a competitive activity is one in which companies or teams are competing against each other

Supreme (adj) very great

Example: Television exposure is of supreme importance in American politics.

A keen eye for (phrase) an ability to notice and recognize something

Example: My friend's a tireless shopper with a keen eye for a bargain.

QUESTION PART 3

39.1. What are the differences between big companies and small companies?

There are many noteworthy things to notice between large and small companies. First thing first, the scale and structure can be considerably distinct. While large corporates operate with various departments and hundreds of employees, small companies don't

have that scale and **hierarchy**, which can be seen clearly in startups' structure. In startups and small companies, one person can take on various positions and their work arrangements can be fairly flexible. For instance, you can be a founder as well as finance director and sometimes when the company is running low on **manpower**, you can also jump in to help with designing.

Hierarchy (noun) a series of things arranged according to their importance

Manpower (noun) all the people who are available to do a particular job or to work in a particular place

39.2. Are there many big companies in your country?

Absolutely. Some of them are **state-owned**, some are incorporated between the state and foreign companies, and others are multinational companies. These corporates are doing business in various sectors including FMCG, real estates, and electronics **and so on**. Prominent brands that are widely known to customers and users are Unilever, P&G, Sam Sung and many more.

State-owned (adj) belonging to, funded by, and controlled by the government.

And so on (phrase) etc; continuing in the same way

39.3. What are the good things about working for a big company?

One of the biggest advantages when working for those **recognized brand names** is if you apply for another job at a different company, it will probably a plus point when a big name is written on your employee record. Recruiters would regard you with certain interest and respect if you've already proven your ability at some **high-profile** corporate. Furthermore, high reputation comes with high demand in employees as well as **reputable** training processes. Therefore, once you are an employee, there will be so much things to learn and many opportunities to develop yourself, both professionally and personally.

High profile (noun) a position attracting much attention and publicity

Reputable (noun) generally considered to be honest and reliable

39.4. How can a small company grow big?

I guess it would have to go through various stages as any big corporate does before reaching that level. There are many ways to **scale up** a company and depending on what industries of the business, people prefer different **tactics**. Traditionally, it could be a **merger and acquisition** in which a company can expand their scale, and market shares. Today, a small company could **go public** on stock markets to sell its shares. Take many startups for instance. This digital era can be seen as a breeding ground for startups to **proliferate**, especially in technology and innovation. The usual road many startups take to grow bigger is to attract investors via many funding rounds or attending **pitch competition** to get money and reputation. Then, after they reach a certain level, they are ready to exit, which is where entrepreneurs become rich when startups go public or being **acquired** by some big company.

Scale up (phrasal verb) to make something larger in size, amount etc than it used to be

Tactic (noun) A plan or action for achieving a goal; a maneuver

Go public (phrase) the act or process of a company selling stock in itself when it moves from private ownership to public trade.

Proliferate (verb) to increase or spread at a rapid rate

Merger and acquisition (phrase) the buying, selling, dividing and combining of different companies and similar entities that can help an enterprise grow rapidly in its sector or location of origin

Pitch competition (phrase) seminars created for entrepreneurs with new business ideas who are in need of seed money

39.5. Should big companies donate more to charities?

Undoubtedly. As a part of **corporate social responsibilities**, **profitable** companies should be encouraged to **contribute** more to social development as well as human well-beings. Such activities not only greatly benefit the community but also **enhance** the company's image and values. Some common ways to join hands in **charitable** acts that big companies can consider are sponsoring for several events about social and environmental issues, raising awareness of gender equality or the importance of education and so on. Additionally, these **humanitarian aids** might also help bonding employees through meaningful charity trips.

Corporate social responsibilities (phrase) the belief that a company should consider the social and environmental effects of its activities on its employees and the community around it

39.6. Should big companies be punished more seriously if they break the law?

Since large corporates have larger budgets and a whole legal department, they should know better than **contravening** the law. As a result, should any **illegitimate** act be conducted, such companies need to receive strict punishments, either financially or with business-related fines. There might be possibilities that employees of these companies will be badly affected by the fines imposed, therefore, it's worth carrying out in-depth investigations to **hold the right people accountable for the misconducts**.

Contravene (verb) to do something that is not allowed by a rule, law, or agreement

Illegitimate (adj) not allowed by the rules or laws; illegal

40. Describe a kind of weather you like

What kind of weather it is

What you usually do during this weather

How this weather affects your mood

Why you like this type of weather

Sample 1

My favorite pattern of weather is a warm day full of sunlight, which is typical of the summer, and I can't wait till it starts. Yes, it sometimes gets very **hot and sultry**. But I don't care. At least I don't have to fight with **bulky overcoats** or **down jackets**.

Summery days mean blue sky, gentle **breeze**, white beaches, and green trees. I love the warmth, the plenty of sunshine it brings and the sun tanned people. On those days, girls wear cute skirts and lovely **sun bonnets**. All the beautiful colors **go around, capturing our attention** and being so **eye-pleasing**. And you can **feel the longing** to go outdoors and experience an adventure.

It is the ice cream time as well as of a variety of fruits, such as peaches, strawberries and watermelons. I love those after going swimming or hiking. Plus, it is also a time of great relaxation. You'll always **marvel at** how much fun and entertainment can be **squeezed into** sunny days. There is the time of rest, swimming, surfing, picnics, fishing and boating. There is always something going on and there are always people enjoying nature. I love this type of weather because it is linked to most of my best memories and it never fails to **trigger my passion** in life.

Vocabulary

Sultry (adj) sultry weather is unpleasant because the air is hot and slightly wet

Bulky (adj) big and thick

Overcoat (noun) a long warm coat that you wear in cold weather

Down jacket (noun) a warm jacket filled with the soft feathers of a duck or a goose

Breeze (adj) a light wind

Sun bonnet (noun) a cotton hat for babies that protects the baby's head and face from the sun

Eye-pleasing (adj) pleasing to the eye (visually)

Longing (noun) a strong feeling of wanting someone or something

Marvel at (verb) to show or feel surprise or admiration

Squeeze in/into (phrasal verb) to be able to do something, even though you do not have much time

Trigger (verb) to cause someone to have a particular feeling or memory

Sample 2

Oh, this is also my favorite topic, too. Well, I enjoy cold weather which is always such a rare event in my city, you know since our city is near the **equator**, so it's hot and **humid** during a year. Therefore, I always **look forward to** December when the weather is cool and a little bit cold with wind. It's my time; then during this weather, I usually prefer lying on the bench in my garden, watching the sky and **sipping** my hot coffee with **joy** and pleasure. As I can do what I can't in the dry season, so I'm always like **on cloud nine** whenever this cold comes. I enjoy doing all the things under this kind of weather, especially with my mother, such as planting the trees, looking at the sky and going out without having to wear any jackets. I think I never **get bored with** the cold weather due to the fact that it's very comfortable to work and study. Besides, when this type of weather **turns up**, it means that an interesting **series** of holidays may **come around** soon like Christmas and New Year, which are the time for family and for you.

Vocabulary

- **equator** [n] an imaginary line drawn around the middle of the Earth an equal distance from the North Pole and the South Pole

- **humid** [a] (of air and weather conditions) containing extremely small drops of water in the air

- **look forward to** [phrasal verb] to feel pleased and excited about something that is going to happen

- **sip** [v] to drink, taking only a very small amount at a time
- **on cloud nine** [idiom] to be extremely happy and excited
- **be/get bored with** [phrase] feel tired and unhappy because something is not interesting or because you have nothing to do
- **turn up** (somewhere) [phrasal verb] to arrive or appear somewhere, usually unexpectedly or in a way that was not planned
- **series** [n] a number of similar or related events or things, one following another
- **come around** [phrasal verb] If an event that happens regularly comes round/around, it happens at its usual time

SPEAKING PART 3

40.1. What's the difference between 'season' and 'weather'?

Well the difference is basically that seasons are a time of the year, whereas weather refers to **atmospheric conditions** such as wind, rain, snow and sun. So it's a pretty big difference.

40.2. In general, do you think people prefer to live in very hot places or very cold places?

That's a good question, and I'm not all that sure, but I suppose most people probably prefer to live in very hot places, because for example, if you compare the number of people living in the far north of the country, where it gets extremely cold, to the southernmost part of the country, where it gets really hot, a lot more people live down south, at least as far as I know anyway. So I think this kind of shows that most people would rather choose a very hot place to live in **as opposed to** a cold place.

40.3. In the future, what do you think will be some of the effects of global warming?

Well, from what I've seen and read, I think one of the likely effects will be a rise in sea-levels, due to **the melting of the polar ice caps**. Although I have no idea of how much they will actually rise - hopefully not a lot! So that's one thing, and as well as this, I think what will also happen is that more rivers and lakes will dry up as a result of global warming, and this has already started happening in many parts of the world. So unfortunately, it looks like the effects will all be pretty adverse.

40.4. What do people do on rainy days and sunny days?

Actually it depends greatly on people's interests. However, generally speaking, people would choose to stay at home and enjoy a good movie if it's **raining cats and dogs** outside. **On the contrary**, they tend to ask their friends and organize a small camping trip or go out and participate in some outdoor activities if there is plenty of sunshine out there.

40.5. Has climate change affected your country?

Yes, it has. Recently people have been going through **erratic weather patterns** over the last few decades. There are **infrequent heatwaves** and **unpredictable floods**, which have caused a great deal of damage to people in the central areas of the country. Besides, **global warming** is **having its influence on** my country as well. The temperature is getting higher thus decreasing the **quality of lives** of many people, especially those living in the South as it's sometimes **scorching hot** that all people want to do is to stay home and **turn on the air- conditioner**.

41. Describe a polite person you met

You should say:

- who this person is
- how you know this person

- why you think this person is polite

Sample 1

Courtesy seems to be one of the most basic **social etiquettes** that anyone should master and fully apply in their daily **interaction** with others. If you ask me who I am most impressed by their manners, I reckon that it would be my supervisor – Mrs. White – who I have been working with for the last 4 months.

Mrs. White is my team leader and the one I directly report to. And whoever has worked with her appreciates her **can-do attitude**, leadership, kindness as well as polite behavior which is shown in even the smallest deeds. For example, although I was just an intern when starting working on a project led by Mrs. White, she had never ignored me but always encouraged me to speak up and share my ideas, which made me feel more involved and **acknowledged**. When she spends time with you, she's actually with you. By this I mean you have her **undivided** attention. Unlike those who fake enthusiasm when talking to people, Mrs. White is really concerned about what's happening not only in the office but things that trouble her colleagues if they're willing to share, a **virtue** which is hard to find in this **materialistic** life. Plus, you would never be offended by her since no matter how bad the situation might get, she always chooses her words carefully rather than attacking her **subordinates** with inappropriate languages. A quintessentially lady in blood.

Vocabulary

Courtesy (n): polite behaviour that shows respect for other people

Etiquette (n): the customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession or group

Interaction (n): the act of communicating with somebody, especially while you work, play or spend time with them

Can-do (a): having a willingness to tackle a job and get it done

Acknowledged (a): recognized as being good or important

Undivided (a): total; complete; not divided

Virtue (n): behaviour or attitudes that show high moral standards

Materialistic (a): caring more about money and possessions than anything else

Subordinate (n): a person who has a position with less authority and power than somebody else in an organization

SPEAKING PART 3

41.1. Are people more polite with non-family members than they are with their parents?

I cannot tell for sure but that's usually the case, especially with some of the youngsters nowadays, they even show more respect to others than their own parents, which seems like an act of **hypocrisy** to me. Fortunately, those are just minority in the society full of **decent** people. Sometimes, you may have a feeling that people behave to strangers in more polite manners than their own people, which can be because they don't want to be **misunderstood** or **cast judgement on** easily if they act carelessly during their short interaction.

Hypocrisy (n): behaviour in which somebody pretends to have moral standards or opinions that they do not actually have

Decent (a): honest and fair; treating people with respect

Misunderstand (v): to fail to understand somebody/something correctly

Cast judgement on: to judge

41.2. Are people today as polite as people were in the past?

Compared to the old times, I believe our **ancestors** were far more **considerate** in terms of social **etiquettes** and customs. Although we still have our set of rules and taboos about how to interact and behave in proper manners, the sophistication of such behaviors has been **drastically simplified**. For instance, in the past, when greeting someone, particularly the other gender, people used to bend their knees and bow their heads, which has been replaced by a friendly handshake or swift greeting kisses on both cheeks in modern culture.

Ancestor (n): a person related to you who lived a long time ago

Considerate (a): always thinking of other people's wishes and feelings; careful not to hurt or upset others

Sophistication (n): the quality of being sophisticated; complication

Drastically (adv): in an extreme way that has a sudden, serious or violent effect on something

Simplify (v): to make something easier to do or understand

Do you think politeness is different in different countries and parts of the world?

I suppose there's little doubt about that. Every part of the world has its own culture and unique way to **express** their respect and politeness towards others. I've recently run through an article about how people in Japan treat their **senior citizens**. The picture of an old lady standing in a subway while other young men sitting nearby **caught me by surprise**. It was only after reading the article did I understand that Japanese elders would get **offended** if the youngsters give them their seats because it makes them feel older and useless. However, if any **adolescence** in my country do the same, he will be considered **disrespectful** or **uneducated**.

Express (v): to show or make known a feeling, an opinion, etc. by words, looks or actions

Senior citizen (n) an elderly person, especially one who is retired and living on a pension

Catch someone by surprise: to surprise someone with something unexpected

Offend (v): to make somebody feel upset because of something you say or do that is rude or embarrassing

Adolescence (n): the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult

Disrespectful (a): showing a lack of respect for somebody/something

Uneducated (a): having had little or no formal education at a school; showing a lack of education

41.3. Why is it important to show respect to others?

Being acknowledged and respected is one of the most basic needs of **human nature**. People want to feel that they matter and so do their opinions, which is why to build and maintain a healthy relationship, you have to show them respect. Respect can be understood simply as politeness. Acknowledge their presence by saying “hello”, express your **gratitude** by saying “thank you” are some of the smallest deeds anybody can do to **communicate** their **appreciation**.

Human nature (n): the general psychological characteristics, feelings, and behavioral traits of humankind, regarded as shared by all humans.

Gratitude (n): the feeling of being grateful and wanting to express your thanks

Communicate (v): to make your ideas, feelings, thoughts, etc. known to other people so that they understand them

Appreciation (n): the feeling of being grateful for something

41.4. How do people show politeness in your country?

Just like other parts of the world, we practice some standard manners to show **courtesy**. When first **encounter** someone, we do proper introduction as well as handshake to catch each other’s name and go on with our conversation. During our exchange, we try

to maintain **eye-contact** and **pay undivided attention to** the other person to let them now they're being heard. And most importantly, we keep a genuine smile **lingering** on our faces to make people feel welcomed and relaxed, otherwise, things might get awkward.

Courtesy (n): polite behaviour that shows respect for other people

Encounter (v): to meet somebody, or discover or experience something, especially somebody/something new, unusual or unexpected

Eye-contact (n): the act of looking directly into one another's eyes

Linger (v): to continue to exist for longer than expected

41.5. Are there any differences between urban and rural people concerning politeness?

People living in different parts of the country usually act **accordingly** to their local customs and their concept of politeness, as a result, varies, too. Those who live in rural areas tend to be more friendly, **outspoken** and **straightforward**, which is why they often find themselves in awkward situations when **conversing** with city people. If anyone who isn't familiar with their relatively **explicit** style of talking, he will probably think they're impolite but they just do it **out of good will**. In contrast, urban residents always weight their words before speaking to avoid **conflicts** and misunderstandings.

Accordingly (adv): in a way that is appropriate to what has been done or said in a particular situation

Outspoken (a): saying exactly what you think, even if this shocks or offends people

Straightforward (a): honest and open; not trying to trick somebody or hide something

Converse (v): to have a conversation with somebody

Explicit (a): saying something clearly, exactly and openly

Goodwill (n): friendly, helpful, or cooperative feelings or attitude

Conflict (n): a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument

41.5. How do you deal with impolite people?

To my mind, when someone is acting impolitely, it's best that we should remind them of their misbehavior so that they have time to modify it in a timely manner. If they refuse to listen to our **constructive advice**, we can **raise our voice** to show our disagreement or even teach them some moral lessons at that moment. Having said this, it would be a nightmare if adults misbehave, in which cases, I guess it would be most reasonable to stay away from them, or (ask the favor of the elderly so as to help them rectify their bad **code of conduct**).

41.6. What kinds of behavior are not polite?

I'm of the opinion that it depends on the age groups. As for children or teenagers, disobeying their parents or not listening to **constructive advice** from surrounding people can be seen as a misbehavior. All I'm saying is that their ego is too big and so reluctant to correct their way of behaving in public places. One instance is that a teenager refuses to **refrain from** smoking in parks, even if told by adults or older people around. As for the adults, some tend to lack education, and this is hard to expect any polite acts from them. Such people can **resort to swearwords**, spit in the streets or klrming recklessly which often **causes a big nuisance** to others.

42. Describe a time you were not allowed to use your mobile phone

You should say:

- what you did
- when it was
- where it was

- why you were not allowed to use a mobile phone

One of the most **controversial** issues in my high school when I was a senior was the “No-cellphone-allowed” rule under any circumstances. It has been five years when the rule first **came into force** and until now, the majority of students have still been **demonstrating against** it and personally, I believe the board of the school should reconsider their decision.

During my time, cellphone was not as popular as they are today mainly because of their **exorbitant** prices; therefore, only those with money were able to afford them. I, on the other hand, still managed to get one since my house was extremely far from my school and my parents wanted me to be able to contact them in case of emergency. However, considering its negative impacts on students’ performance in school, our principal decided to have it banned on our campus. She was convinced that such device continuously **distracted** students during class, making them lose their focus and accordingly, **discouraging** their learning spirit. Unfortunately, reality wasn’t far from her **assumption**. Take my class for instance, a few classmates of mine who owned a mobile phone could hardly **pay full attention** as they were constantly checking their phones for messages and the like. As a result, our teachers found it **worrisome** and **disturbing** when students using phones in their class and we ended up not being able to bring cellphones to school at all. If anyone needed to call their parents, they were allowed to use the telephone in a supervisor’s room anytime.

Vocabulary

Controversial (a): causing a lot of angry public discussion and disagreement

Come into force: to become valid, effective, or operable

Demonstrate (+against): to take part in a public meeting or march, usually as a protest or to show support for something

Exorbitant (a): (of a price) much too high

Distract (v): to take somebody's attention away from what they are trying to do

Discourage (v): to make somebody feel less confident or enthusiastic about doing something

Assumption (n): a belief or feeling that something is true or that something will happen, although there is no proof

Worrisome (a): that makes you worry

Disturbing (a): making you feel anxious and upset or shocked

QUESTION FOR PART 3

42.1. Do young and old people use phones in the same way?

There's a **distinct discrepancy** about how youngsters and the elders use their cellphones in term of purposes and **frequency**. It is obvious that mobile phones are **indispensable** hi-tech **gadgets** for the majority of young generation. They attach to their phones every second for not only calling and texting but other usages. This is because smartphones nowadays are extremely helpful in one's personal life: taking photos, setting up meeting, recording and so on. However, the old generation don't find cellphones that necessary as they often use them for calling anyway.

Distinct (a): easily or clearly heard, seen, felt, etc.

Discrepancy (n): a difference between two or more things

Frequency (n): the rate at which something happens or is repeated

Indispensable (a): too important to be without

Gadget (n): a small tool or device that does something useful

42.2. What are the differences between writing a letter and writing a text message on a cell phone?

Well, those are two completely different concepts, I believe. Producing a formal or semi-formal piece of writing like letter **requires** certain amount of time and effort. You have to consider the language as well as **punctuation** to make your message clear and decent enough for receivers to read. People often assess a person through official papers like letters. Text messages, on the other hand, are usually exchanged among **well-acquainted** people or for **swift** response, therefore, people don't **place emphasis on** grammar or vocab errors as long as they can understand the main point.

Require (v): to need something; to depend on somebody/something

Punctuation (n): the marks used in writing that divide sentences and phrases; the system of using these marks

Well-acquainted (a): having a good knowledge or understanding of someone or something

Swift (a): happening or done quickly and immediately; doing something quickly

Place/ put emphasis on: emphasize

42.3. Many people think mobile phones can be annoying at times. Can you give any examples of that?

Honestly, I am one of those people who find mobile phones **irritating** sometimes. I have been in many situations where I didn't **appreciate** the presence of this hi-tech device. One of the things I hate most is people keep checking their phones during their conversation with others and many of my clients have done the same. I felt a little **offended** since that person didn't give me his full attention and sometimes got lost for a few minutes to answer his calls. Another example you may have experienced is somebody's phone rings off in the middle of the meeting, which is unprofessional and **disturbing** at the same time.

Irritating (a): annoying, especially because of something somebody continuously does or something that continuously happens

Appreciate (v): to be grateful for something that somebody has done; to welcome something

Offend (v): to make somebody feel upset because of something you say or do that is rude or embarrassing

Disturbing (a): making you feel anxious and upset or shocked

42.4. Do you prefer face-to-face conversations or conversations by phone?

I prefer **face-to-face conversations** because I think it's more personal when I talk in this way. Nowadays, the telephone is getting more and more popular. Sometimes, people would spend hours on their phones but neglect the people who live with them. I think it's not a good phenomenon. We should treasure face-to-face talking opportunities and spend more time with our family members.

42.5. Do you think cell phones ever cause problems for people?

Yes, of course. Some children bring cell phones to school and it really distracts them from studies. Now I know a lot of schools have strict rules to forbid students to bring cell phones to school. We also know the radiation problems of cell phone. Although we don't know exactly how serious it might be, it still makes us feel uncomfortable if we're on the phone for a long time.

42.5. Do you think people should turn their cell phones off (or turn them to "silent ringing") when they are in a cinema or similar places?

Absolutely. It is absolutely one of the rudest things for people to talk on their cell phones near others because every word out of their mouth goes right into our ears. If this happens in the cinema, it'll almost be impossible for us to appreciate the films and we have to be forced to listen to a conversation that we're not interested in. I think the cinemas and movie production companies really should spend some time putting

together the announcements about turning the cell phone ringer off so that we can enjoy the films better.

42.6. What's the disadvantage of communicating through the phone?

There're some disadvantages of talking on the phone. When we use the phone, we usually can't see each other's facial expressions, so we might have misunderstandings in phone conversations. Also, cell phones have radiation problems and it's not good for our health if we talk on the phone for a very long time. One more thing is that when we talk on the phone, we're not actually facing other people, so if there are other distractions, we might be distracted easily compared to face to face conversations.

42.7. What're the advantages and disadvantages of the cell phone?

The cell phone is one of the biggest inventions in this modern world. Because of the cell phone, we can communicate with others when we don't have the opportunities to talk to them face to face. We can chat with friends and family members who live far away from us and when we have emergencies, we can always press the buttons to call for help. However, there're also some disadvantages. As we all know, radiation problem of the cell phone is serious. Also, when we use cell phones, we literally don't have any privacy because people can find us no matter where we are.

43. Describe a family member who you are proud of/ Describe an influential family member

Well the family member that first **comes to my mind** is my mom. I'm not sure about others' but for me, I become closer to my mom as I grow up.

The first thing of my mom that I'm proud of is her beautiful appearance. I was quite surprised when I took a look at the photos when she was at her 20s. Her beauty is traditional and Asian with **straight-edged** nose, round brown eyes, thin lips and **straight**

long black hair. She's not very tall yet she is slim and white. In addition, she has a soft-but-firm voice, which reminds me of the news reporters on TV. Although she's getting older and **aging** can be seen clearly, I must say her beauty remains the first thing that not only me but the whole family can be proud of.

The next thing I must highlight is her personalities. My mom is a strict and thoughtful person when it comes to educating her children. She tries her best to become a good role model that me and my younger brother could **look up to**. We learned cooking, doing household chores and **taking care of** ourselves, which not only would us be able to live independently in the future, but we also can help her after her long day at work. What makes me **adore** my mom more is that she is also a knowledgeable person. Her general knowledge amazes us all the time. Besides, how she manages her work and her daily life is such a value of maturation that I desire.

During the time I studied abroad, the one I shared a lot of ups and downs with is her. I hope that as I grow up, I could become as mature as her.

Vocabulary

To adore SO (v): to give SO a lot of love and respect

To admire/look up to SO (v): to respect and approve SO's behaviors

To take care of [SO/Sth]/look after SO (v): to protect someone or something and provide the things that that person or thing needs

Aging (n): visual signs of getting older

Grammar

**Order of adjectives*

Adjectives usually come in this order:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
General opinion (describing all kinds of nouns) <i>Ex:</i> good, bad, lovely, beautiful, awful,...)	Specific opinion (describing a particular kind of noun) <i>Ex:</i> Food-tasty/delicious Furniture, buildings-comfortable/uncomfortable	Size	Shape	Age	Colour	Nationality	Material

(Source: British Council [online])

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/english-grammar/adjectives/order-adjectives>)

Speaking Part 3

43.1. In a typical family, who plays the leading role?

Well, the stereotype is that the father is the **breadwinner!** Of the family, the person who makes the decisions and **takes responsibility for** the whole family. This can be understandable because the father tends to occupy high positions in society while the mother tends to be housewife or only gets involved in some [trivial work like cleaning or babysitting. However, this is not really the case in modern society where freedom and equality is being **put a higher emphasis on**. Women are as successful as men and are no longer in charge of the **monotonous household chores** like they were in the past

43.2. In your country, what kinds of family members usually live together?

Well, **to the best of my knowledge**, despite the increasing popularity of **nuclear families**, extended ones still exist in Vietnamese society. Usually both parents and one, two or three kids would **live together under the same roof**. In other cases, a grandmother or grandmother joins them to take care of the small kids while the parents are away for work, for example. Other less common situations are many generations reside in the same house, usually a multi-story house. Families like these often consist of an uncle, aunt, and their families and so on. Typically, many problems occur when a great many members are in a similar place

43.3. Do young and middle-age people live with old people?

Frankly speaking, unlike in Western countries where it is common to send older grandparents to nursing homes, most people are bound by their duty, which means that they should or, in another sense, have to **pay back** what their parents have given them. As a consequence, the young generations and **middle-aged** people tend to share the same house with older people. This can be beneficial since small children can receive special care from their grandparents, obtain invaluable hands-on experience and tend to develop a good code of conduct later on.

43.4. What would children do to make their parents proud?

I guess kids can have good performances at school and behave well to their teachers and the elders. Parents usually take a great pride in their kids if their children get a good score at school, or when others tell them that their kids are nice people. As well as this, I deem it a necessity if children help their parents out with mundane tasks ground the house like sweeping the floor, or washing the dishes.

44. Describe two people who you know from the same family

You should say:

- who these two people are
-

- how much these two people have similar personalities
- how much they look similar
- how well the two people get along with each other

I have been friends with my high school bestie – Alex for more than ten years and thanks to her, I have met several amazing people who are **indeed** good friend materials, including her younger sister – Lisa. There's not much age gap between us since Lisa is only two years younger, therefore, we always include her in our **social gatherings** and shopping trips.

Maybe since they are siblings, the two **resemble** each other in more than their appearance. They both **inherit** their mother's **delicate** features with small faces and big brown eyes that I am always jealous of. Despite their **feminine** looks, Alex and Lisa are true **embodiments** of modern women: independent, **determined**, smart yet playful. They don't hesitate to **voice out their opinions** or have no interest in **beating around the bush**; instead, they prefer to **confront** the problem **head-on**. Usually, you may find a good and an evil sister between the two, however, in this case, they're **partners in crime**. Most of the **pranks** they played on friends and family are planned by Alex and **executed** by Lisa so I doubt that there would be anything those two would not **have each other's back**.

Vocabulary

Indeed (adv): used to emphasize a positive statement or answer

Social gathering (n): a gathering for the purpose of promoting fellowship

Resemble (v): to look like or be similar to another person or thing

Inherit (v): to have qualities, physical features, etc. that are similar to those of your parents, grandparents, etc.

Delicate (a): small and having a beautiful shape or appearance

Embodiment (n): a person or thing that represents or is a typical example of an idea or a quality

Voice out (v): speak out

Beat around the bush: approach indirectly, in a roundabout way, or too cautiously

Confront (v): to deal with a problem or difficult situation

Head-on: directly; head to head

Partners in crime: good friends who get in trouble together

Prank (n): a trick that is played on somebody as a joke

Execute (v): to do a piece of work, perform a duty, put a plan into action, etc.

QUESTION FOR PART 3

44.1. Do you live in a nuclear family or an extended family?

Once I lived in a nuclear family, but now I live in an extended family. I live with my grandpa and grandma. In fact, they treat me very well. My grandpa will buy me tasty snacks and cook foods that I am fond of, and my grandma will help me do the housework. I like living with them together.

44.2. Which do you prefer to live in, a nuclear family or an extended family?

If I were to **take a pick**, I would go for extended families for the compelling reason that **the more, the merrier**. For example, if my father and mother and I cook a dinner at home, we cannot eat many dishes. However, with my grandpa and grandma, we will always eat more than our imagination. On top of all this, it is more fun than fewer people when we have some activities such as playing pokers.

44.3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in an extended family?

The plus sides of many members living under the same roof are that it is much more cheerful and fun when living with more people. For example, if my father and mother and I cook a dinner at home, we cannot eat many dishes. But with my grandpa and grandma, we will always eat more than our imagination. Even so, it's not all it's **cracked up** to be the drawbacks of many generations living together is that it may **restrain your**

privacy. Put it simply, your grandmother might call you out to help her with the dish-washing or the noise of conversations will **get on your nerves** once in a while, I guess.

44.4. What is the generation gap between the old and the young?

Nowadays, more and more people care about the gap between young people and the old generation today. A prime example can be elderly members are hooked on traditional movies while the young are more into the fashion ones. It's also worth pointing out that the old care more about the family, the harmony of the family, while the young tend to think much about their own interests.

45. Describe a sport you would like to try

When it comes to sports, I have to admit that I am not very **sporty** and do not usually **devote** my time to exercise. However, there is one sport that I really want to give a go whenever I have chance, which is curling, a **prevalent** sport in Canada. I guess I can start sharing about curling by pointing out some fact about its rules. Curling is a group sport and is played on ice. Each team has four members, each member has two tries, to **slide** the stone close on the circle on the ice. The circle is about fifteen meters away from the start line. The stones are found with a flat base and have a handle on top. The team uses a **brush** to **swift** the ice when the stone is sliding to the circle. They do this to make the ice smooth so that the stone will not stop and go straight. The team tries to slide the stone to hit the other team's stone and push them away. The winner is the team with the stone that is closest to the circle. In fact the reason why I am **desired** to try curling has something to do with the fact that I am a huge fan of ice skating and the idea of combining ice skating and competing with other team in curling is truly **amazing**. On top of that, curling is not **exorbitant** at all, therefore, playing this sport certainly will not **cost me an arm and a leg**. I have to say that paying Canada a visit and try playing Curling is one of my intentions in the near future.

SPEAKING PART 3

45.1. What sports are popular in your country?

Well, football tops the list of famous sports without a doubt. But what's amazing is, I suppose something called 'dancesport' comes close behind. In the early mornings, dancesport enthusiasts gather in parks or public places to practice. Dancesport has been spreading rapidly because it allows dancers to improve physical fitness and **mental** well-being and it is suitable for people of all ages, shapes, and sizes. Apart from them, volleyball, tennis, badminton are also **fashionable** in our country.

45.2. What are the benefits of playing a sport?

I believe engaging in sporting activities helps the players to improve their physical and spiritual health. For example, dancing helps older people improve their physical health and memory. The dancers have to count their steps and remember the moves. In addition to that, playing sports brings us a **reasonable** chance of **enhancing** our relationships with other people when playing together.

45.3. Do you think the types of sport that are popular will change in the future?

Personally, I think there will be a considerable change in the types of popular sports. People will opt for virtual games and sports rather than sports outdoors such as football, cycling, etc. Thanks to high tech development, virtual sports will be able to bring excitement like you're playing with real life opponents while you are actually in front of your computer and doing nothing. I suppose this popularity will encourage a **sedentary** lifestyle, especially among young people.

45.4. How can sports bring people from different countries closer together?

Sports can play a role in bringing communities together in countless ways. For example, sports break barriers and boundaries between cultures. No matter who you are, what the colour of your skin is, as long as we enjoy the same sport, we can understand fulfillment, hopes, or even disappointment that sport brings us. Second, team sports encourage us to be willing to take responsibility and value diversity. As a result, it can help establish more cohesive, tolerant and **inclusive** communities.

45.5. What are the major differences between extreme sports and ordinary sports?

Well, the distinction between an extreme sport and a conventional one is the level of danger involved. Extreme sports refer to certain activities having a high level of **inherent** danger. Another one is the difference in judgement. In traditional sports, performance is judged on the basis of some quantitative approaches such as distance, time and speed, whereas in extreme sports the performance is evaluated on the basis of qualitative criteria such as innovative methods to complete the task.

45.6. What do you think of expensive sports?

Actually, I can think of nothing special about those kinds of sports. I find them ordinary like other sports – they're also joyful, exciting, they keep the players healthy and they are good for the mind as well. If you're capable of playing them, then there's nothing more to say. If I had a chance, I would like to try doing equestrian events, or a sport involving, riding and running with horses.

45.7. Why do you think some people strongly dislike playing sports?

Well, there are a wide array of reasons why certain people are anti-sports. Maybe they are far more attracted to inactive activities such as reading books or drawing or something like that. Maybe they don't want to communicate with other people. Another reason is maybe sports can remind people of childhood trauma such as being ridiculed or **bullied** while playing sports. If you have had a bad experience with them, then it's natural to hate them.

45.8. Would you like to do a rather dangerous sporting activity?

No. Definitely no. Some people may find it fantastic but I'm the inactive type and am a **bookworm**, I just try to do sport like cycling or basketball once in a while to improve my health. Nothing more, nothing less. I will opt for my favorite books to find fulfillment rather than doing that kind of stuff.

45.9. Why do you think some people like to do these dangerous activities?

I don't know for sure because I'm not really into those kinds of activities. But I guess the motivation behind practicing extreme sports is the satisfaction they get out of challenging themselves and being victorious in the end. Besides being physically challenging, extreme sports are also very mentally demanding, because one needs to fight their fear to be able to do these dangerous activities. You know, nothing can compare with the feelings when you are able to **surpass** yourself.

VOCABULARY

- ✓ **Mental** [adj] relating to the mind, or involving the process of thinking

Example: A doctor was asked about the mental state of the prisoner.

- Fashionable** [adj] popular at a particular time

Example: She spends the summer jet-setting around the fashionable European resorts.

- ✓ **Reasonable** [adj] based on or using good judgment and therefore fair and practical

Example: He went free because the jury decided there was a reasonable doubt about his guilt.

- ✓ **Enhance** [verb] to improve the quality, amount, or strength of something

Example: These scandals will not enhance the organization's reputation.

- ✓ **Sedentary** [adj] involving little exercise or physical activity

Example: My doctor says I should start playing sport because my lifestyle is too sedentary.

- ✓ **Inclusive** [adj] An inclusive price or amount includes everything

Example: My doctor says I should start playing sport because my lifestyle is too sedentary

- ✓ **Inherent** [adj] existing as a natural or basic part of something

Example: I have an inherent distrust of lawyers.

- ✓ **Bully** [noun] someone who hurts or frightens someone who is smaller or less powerful, often forcing them to do something that they do not want to do

Example: It takes courage to stand up to a bully.

- ✓ **Bookworm** [noun] a person who reads a lot

Example: Although Mohammed was a charismatic and influential leader, he was not much of a bookworm.

- ✓ **Surpass** [verb] to do or be better than

Example: The book's success has surpassed everyone's expectations.

46. Describe a wedding that you have attended.

I am at the age when each of my friends started to **tie the knot** with their beloved ones, which reminds me how **grown up** we all are but at the same time is a true **blessing**. Weddings have always made me dreamy because you can feel that love is **in the air**. One of the most beautiful and **intimate** weddings I've ever attended was Anna's, my classmate in high school.

The Anna I knew from high school was a true **embodiment** of traditional women: **feminine, delicate**, caring and **wholeheartedly devoted** and I had no doubt her wedding would be the same the minute I received the invitation. It **came as no surprise** that the reception hall **was completed covered with** the pastel pink color, from many **bouquets** of roses, balloons, table cloths and other decorations. It should have looked like a 6-year-old birthday party, **on the contrary**, that light and feminine color surprisingly created a delightful and **congenial** atmosphere for the wedding. There were not too many people at the wedding because the groom and bride wanted to **keep it simple**, yet intimate and meaningful, which I **couldn't agree more**. The ceremony was so emotional when the couple **took an oath** and exchanged wedding rings that I could have sworn I saw **tears shined in their eyes**. The whole ballroom **erupted** in **endless applause** and whistles when the groom **landed a passionate kiss on** his woman's lips as the pastor announced them as husband and wife – one of the most magnificent moments I've ever witnessed and Anna could easily be the most beautiful and happiest bride I've ever seen

in a **glamorous baby pink gown** and **bohemian hairstyle**. I also met a couple of friends in high school which made me feel like we were **having a reunion** and it was great to know after all those years, we could still talk and share this special moment together.

Tie the knot (idiom) get married

Blessing (noun) something good that you feel very grateful or lucky to have

In the air (idiom) noticeable all around; becoming prevalent

Bouquet (noun) a collection of flowers, cut and tied together in an attractive way

Congenial (adj) pleasant, friendly, and enjoyable

Erupt (verb) suddenly explode with a lot of noise as people start laughing/shouting

QUESTION FOR PART 3

46.1. Do you often attend weddings?

Not really at the moment since I've recently graduated and most of my friends are at the same age as me. However, some has already married and I was also invited once or twice. As a romantic person, weddings always make me nervous and exciting at the same time since you can feel love is in the air.

46.2. How do you think of the perfect age for marriage?

I have had countless **debates** with my friends and we have different ideas regarding when is the ideal age to **get settled**. I, together with some girls, agree that it should be above 30 for both men and women while others flatly contradict us by saying people should get married as soon as possible even though they have nothing. Some may find it too late to **tie a knot** at the age of 30 but I cannot see the point of living together with more bills to pay and more mouths to feed without having a career and stable income, which is one of the most common reason for separation among married couples.

Settled (adj) if you have a settled way of life, you stay permanently in one place or job or with one person

46.3. Do women prefer to be single or to be married?

Women nowadays have a more advanced mindset than they used to a few decades ago, which is why not so many left still bother about being single anymore. Instead, they enjoy their single lives and **pamper** themselves with great food and fine clothes. Modern women don't need a man to be her anchor anymore since they are independent and confident enough to take on the world herself. They go out and make money instead of staying at home knowing nothing but taking care of their kids and depending on their husband.

Pamper (verb) to look after someone very well, especially by making them feel very comfortable or by giving them nice things

46.8. Why has the divorce rate increased over time in modern life?

It's noteworthy that that divorce rate in modern life is far higher than they used to, which is not a positive trend to look forward for. Reasons for such separations vary depending on **irreconcilable** families' issues which could be financial problem, disagreement on how to raise their children or worse, infidelity.

Irreconcilable (adj) can't find a way to become friendly again after disagreement.

47. Describe a shop just opened in your hometown

You should say

where the shop is

what items it sells

how often you go there

why you go there

Sample 1

Well, I'm not a **shopaholic**, so there's no particular shop that has **made a special impression on** me. There's only one exception – that's a shop called ABC which was opened in my hometown 2 months ago.

The shop is located at one of the **prime** spots for **retailing**. It is located right beside my previous primary school, which is only 1km away from my house. I have to say that this shop **makes its mission to satisfy all customers' needs** anytime, anywhere. As well as **meeting the customers' demand** for necessary **daily goods** like other shops, it also supplies **fresh vegetables**, fruit and meat of a **high quality** at **reasonable prices**. These products have **clearly-marked sources of origin** and are **strictly controlled** under the general process of the entire system.

This shop is in a chain of retail shops under XYZ, which is recognized as one of the most dynamic and successful companies in my country, **well-positioned** for **international integration** and comparable to the best regional and global competitors. Therefore, I suppose there's no doubt about its quality. Actually, **quality assurance** is the most important benefit of shopping here. And the quality of service is excellent as well. To the best of my recollection, 2 weeks ago, when I came to buy some snacks, I met a **middle-aged** woman with her son there. She said to the staff that she only went **window shopping** to **pamper** her son, who always liked visiting supermarkets and shops to see things. The staff were very **welcoming** and gave her son a candy as a gift. I could see that her son was **over the moon**. That left me with a **lasting and positive impression about ABC**.

Vocabulary

- ✓ Shopaholic [noun]: a person who enjoys shopping very much and does it a lot
 - Eg: A self-confessed **shopaholic**, Diane loved looking for new clothes with her two daughters.
- ✓ Prime [adj]: main or most important

- Eg: Though I'd like to know more about Spanish culture, this was not my **prime** motivation for doing the course.
- ✓ Retailing [noun]: the business of selling goods to the public
 - Eg: There are good career opportunities in **retailing** if you enjoy dealing with customers.
- ✓ Integration [noun]: the process of combining two or more things into one
 - Eg: One of the company's weaknesses is poor **integration** of business processes with information systems.
- ✓ Competitor [noun]: an organization that competes against another, especially in business.
 - Eg: The business is successful because it sells better-quality goods than its **competitors**.
- ✓ Window shopping [expression]: the activity of spending time looking at the goods on sale in shop windows without intending to buy any of them
 - Eg: The office workers go **window-shopping** in their lunch hour, looking for things to buy when they get paid.
- ✓ Pamper [verb]: to give someone special treatment, making that person as comfortable as possible and giving them whatever they want
 - Eg: Why not **pamper** yourself after a hard day with a hot bath scented with oils?
- ✓ Welcoming [adjective]: friendly to someone who is visiting or arriving
 - Eg: The hotel has a good reputation for being very **welcoming** to guests.
- ✓ Over the moon [idiom]: extremely happy
 - Eg: Sarah was **over the moon** when she found out she'd got the job.
- ✓ Lasting [adjective]: continuing to exist or have an effect for a long time.
 - Eg: I formed many **lasting** friendships at university and I often visit many of these old friends.

Sample 2

Well, a new shop in my city? I think I would choose "ABC", which was just opened 2 months ago near my house. Though it's still new to the **citizens** in the area, a lot of people visit it all the weekends. This shop mainly focuses on a **variety** of **household appliances** which are a **necessity** for everyone. Therefore, it usually sells TV, washing machine, refrigerators and other cooking machine like ovens, cookers or stoves. Since the day it was opened, life in my **neighborhood** has been very joyful. People don't have to travel for a long way to buy TV or cookers anymore since there is a very big shop which offers them a lot of good electronic devices. Besides, this shop, which can **seat** up to 1000 people, is very spacious and modern with **well-trained** staff and good service. Hence, these are also some reasons why I enjoy this new shop a lot as there is no need to wasting time on travelling to a faraway place.

Vocabulary

- **citizen** [n] a person who is a member of a particular country and who has rights because of being born there or because of being given rights, or a person who lives in a particular town or city
- **variety** [n] many different types of things or people
- **household appliance** [phrase] a machine that is designed to do a particular thing in the home, such as preparing food, heating or cleaning
- **necessity** [n] something that you need, especially in order to live
- **neighborhood** [n] the area of a town that surrounds someone's home, or the people who live in this area
- **seat** [v] (of a building, room, table or vehicle) to have enough seats for
- **well-trained** [a] having the qualities that you connect with trained and skilled people, such as effectiveness, skill, organization and seriousness of manner

QUESTION FOR PART 3

47.1. What type(s) of shop would you recommend a visitor to your country should go to? (Why?)

If travelers ever want to have an **authentic** and unforgettable experience during their journey, I would highly recommend they **pay a visit to** traditional markets or food stands on the street to have a taste of true street foods, which are **diverse** in types and flavors. Street vendors will also offer visitors a wide range of delicious dishes and true dining experience.

Vocabulary:

Authentic (adj) genuine

47.2. Do you ever buy anything on the internet?

I reckon that most of clothing items I have ever bought are from ABC, an online fashion shop where you can find basically everything you need to become a stylish lady. From sexy little black dresses for partying to formal blouses for day life at office, ABC won't **let you down**. Since **e-commerce** and online shopping has become a trend thanks to its convenience and **optimal** user experience, I no longer spend 30 minutes driving to any clothing shops and another 2 hours choosing and trying on everything. In fact, with only my laptop and a cup of coffee, I can easily **shop from home** with even more choices. Internet really works magic.

Vocabulary:

Let you down (phrasal verb) disappoint somebody

E-commerce (noun) the buying and selling of goods and services via the internet

Optimal (adj) best or most favorable

47.3. What do you think are the advantages of buying things on the internet?

Online shopping has been **prevalent** in a past few years for reasons. **First and foremost**, buying online is incredibly **time-saving**. Well, obviously, time is considered the most precious **asset** that everyone has but many have **taken it for granted**. Instead of

spending hours driving to your favorite malls to get some new clothes of the latest collection, your problem can be solved with only Internet connections and, of course, your fine taste **in fashion**. No energy is needed, either. Secondly, you always have best deals when subscribing to any online stores, which can save you tons of money that you even notice. Some shops even offer exclusive promotions for loyal customers, therefore, get ready for special treats. Lastly, you can easily switch **from site to site** to have even more choices without moving anything but your fingers. How awesome is that.

Vocabulary:

Prevalent (adj) Predominant; powerful

First and foremost (phrase) most importantly

Taken it for granted (idiom) Fail to properly appreciate (someone or something)

47.4. Are there any disadvantages (or dangers) of buying on the internet? (What?)

Every cloud has a silver lightning. Online shopping, in particular and e-commerce in general are true advancement in modern world, however, their drawbacks couldn't be overlooked. It is widely known that there is no such thing as 100% nowadays, **cyber security** included. No less than once or twice have I heard about users' information has been leaked, which can cause a serious threat to customers who are using that company's products or services. Another concern should also be **taken into account** is overspending due to constant exposure to products of preference. By this I mean technology has advanced to the point that any shopping sites, especially social media, all have **algorithm** that can **track your shopping habits** and keep reminding you not to miss their latest items that might attract you. What a clever, yet annoying tool at the same time.

Vocabulary:

Every cloud has a silver lightning (idiom)

something good even in an unpleasant situation

Cyber security (phrase) the body of technologies, processes and practices designed to protect networks, computers, programs and data from attack, damage or unauthorized access

Take something into account (phrase) to consider something to be an important factor in some decision

Algorithm (noun) a process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations

47.5. Do you like window shopping? (Why?/Why not?)

I must say I am not a **big fan of window shopping** no matter how **shopaholic** I am. Window shopping can only **worsen my financial status** rather than helping. Admittedly, it **pleases your eyes** when looking at gorgeous clothing and fancy handbags, yet, it's too much a temptation that not anyone can resist. As a result, you **end up** being **drown in debt** just because the urge to become a trendy lady **gets a better hold of** you than your modest budget. Hence, as I know myself well enough to understand that would be my reaction towards anything that is pretty, I would rather stay home than window shopping.

Vocabulary:

A (big) fan of (phrase) an enthusiastic devotee or admirer of something or somebody

Window shopping (phrase) the activity of going to a store or website to look at goods rather than to buy anything

Shopaholic (noun) a person considered to be addicted to shopping

Get hold of (phrase) To gain control of

End up (phrasal verb) finish, result in

47.6. In your country, how has shopping changed in the past few decades?

Just like any other parts of the world, Singapore has experienced dramatic changes in customers' behavior **when it comes to** shopping. One of the striking features of shopping habits these days is people tend to buy things online and get them delivered to their houses, **regardless of** what kinds of items. It could be pizzas, clothing or kitchen appliances. Besides, international trade has afforded customers easy access to a wider

range of products and services which are not only from domestic suppliers but foreign ones as well. Lots of items have been imported to meet the demand of users within the country, ranging from food and beverage, cosmetics, cars **and so on**.

Vocabulary:

When it comes to Ving (expression) as for something; speaking about something

Regardless of (conjunction) without considering something

And so on (phrase) et cetera (etc)

47.7. Do you think people spend too much time (or money) on shopping? (Why?/Why not?)

I can't tell **for sure** because the amount of time spent on shopping varies among different people. Nevertheless, thanks to the advent of Internet and online shopping, that amount might be relatively less than it used to be. Besides, people seem to be busier and their schedules get tighter with much more important tasks other than shopping itself. Therefore, I don't think shopping is people's priority or anything more than a necessary deed to **get on with** life.

Vocabulary:

Get on with (phrasal verb) to give your time to something and make progress with it

47.8. What kinds of people spend an excessive amount of time or money on shopping?

There is no doubt that people who spend an excessive amount of time or money on shopping are those with purchasing power and time to spare. In other words, they are of **high-income class** and love to **pamper themselves with** qualified products and premium services. They, regardless of gender, are people with fine taste and know what they want. They can sacrifice hours just to choose a dress or suit, which can **cost a fortune** just to attend an opening party.

Vocabulary:

Pamper with (verb) to treat somebody/something with extreme or excessive care and attention

Cost a fortune (idiom) to cost a lot of money