

IELTS speaking test prep

Practice Tips for part 2

Preparation: Take 1 minute to prepare. Jot down key points using the sub-points as a guide.

Speaking: Speak for up to 2 minutes. Make sure to cover all the sub-points.
Practice Regularly: Use different cue cards to practice frequently and get comfortable with various topics.

Record Yourself: Listen to your recordings to identify areas for improvement in fluency, coherence, grammar, and pronunciation.

Practicing with these cue cards will help you build confidence and improve your ability to speak fluently and coherently on a variety of topics.

1. Introduction

Start by introducing the main topic, mentioning what you will be talking about.

2. Body

Address each bullet point from the task card, providing details and examples for each.

3. Conclusion

Wrap up your response by summarizing your main points or giving a final thought or personal reflection.

After practicing, you can compare your responses to the sample responses at the bottom.

cue card topics

Describe a memorable trip you have taken.

Where you went

Who you went with

What you did there

Why it was memorable

Describe a person who has influenced you the most.

Who the person is

How you know this person

How they have influenced you

Why this person is important to you

Describe a book you recently read.

What the book is about

Why you chose to read it
What you learned from it
How you felt about it

Describe a skill you have learned that you think is very useful.

What the skill is
How you learned it
Why you think it is useful
How it has helped you

Describe a piece of technology that you find very useful.

What the technology is
How you use it
Why you find it useful
How it has changed your life

Describe a special meal you have had.

Where you had the meal

Who you were with

What you ate

Why it was special

Describe an interesting tradition in your country.

What the tradition is

How it is celebrated

Why it is important

How you feel about it

Describe a hobby you enjoy.

What the hobby is

How you started doing it

Why you enjoy it

How it benefits you

Describe a film you watched recently.

What the film is

What it is about

Why you chose to watch it

How you felt about it

Describe a time when you helped someone.

Who you helped

How you helped them

Why they needed help

How helping them made you feel

list of useful cohesive devices you can use in speeches or responses:

Cohesive devices like "such as," "one of the key takeaways," and "overall"

1. Adding Information

Moreover

Furthermore

In addition

Also

Additionally

Not only... but also

Example: "The book provides practical advice on communication. Moreover, it offers insights into emotional intelligence."

2. Sequencing Ideas

First of all

Firstly, Secondly, Thirdly

Then

After that

Finally

In the first place... in the second place

Example: "Firstly, the book teaches you how to listen actively. Secondly, it emphasizes the importance of empathy."

3. Giving Examples

For example

For instance

Such as

Namely

To illustrate

Example: "There are many ways to show interest in others, for example, by asking open-ended questions."

4. Showing Contrast

However

On the other hand

Nevertheless

In contrast

Although

Even though

Whereas

Example: "Although the book is quite old, its advice remains relevant today."

5. Showing Cause and Effect

As a result

Therefore

Consequently

Because

Due to

Thus

Example: "Because I implemented these techniques, I noticed a significant improvement in my social interactions."

6. Clarifying or Explaining

In other words

That is to say

To put it another way

Namely

In fact

Example: "In other words, the book emphasizes the importance of treating others with respect."

7. Emphasizing a Point

Indeed

In fact

Undoubtedly

Obviously

Clearly

As a matter of fact

Example: "Indeed, the advice in the book has stood the test of time."

8. Summarizing

In conclusion

To sum up

In summary

Overall

All in all

To conclude

Example: "To sum up, this book is a must-read for anyone looking to improve their communication skills."

9. Comparing Ideas

Similarly

Likewise

In the same way

Just as

Equally

Example: "Similarly, the next chapter discusses the importance of empathy."

10. Giving an Opinion

In my opinion

Personally

I believe

It seems to me

As far as I'm concerned

Example: "Personally, I found the book to be very insightful and practical."

Incorporating these cohesive devices can help you organize your ideas logically, making your speech or writing clearer and more persuasive.

Sample responses

Describe a memorable trip you have taken.

Where you went

Who you went with

What you did there

Why it was memorable

One of the most memorable trips I've taken was to Kyoto, Japan, with two of my closest friends. We went during the cherry blossom season, which made everything even more beautiful.

We spent most of our time exploring Kyoto's famous temples and gardens. One of the highlights was visiting the Fushimi Inari Shrine, known for its thousands of red torii gates. Walking through them felt like entering another world. We also visited the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, which was incredibly peaceful and stunning.

In the evenings, we tried traditional Japanese food, like kaiseki, a multi-course meal that was not only delicious but also beautifully presented. The combination of the culture, the scenery, and the cherry blossoms in full bloom made the trip unforgettable.

This trip was particularly memorable because it was my first time in Japan, and experiencing it with close friends made it even more special. We took lots of photos, shared many laughs, and created memories that I'll always cherish.

Overall, the trip to Kyoto was unforgettable because of the beauty of the place and the joy of sharing it with friends. I hope to visit Japan again one day.

Grade - 7

Why This Response is Band 7

The sample response provided would likely score around a Band 7 on the IELTS Speaking test for several reasons:

Fluency and Coherence:

The response flows smoothly with clear and logical connections between ideas. The speaker describes the trip in a structured way, covering where they went, who they went with, what they did, and why it was memorable. There is a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, with the speaker effectively managing the 2-minute time frame.

Lexical Resource:

The vocabulary used is varied and appropriate for the topic. Phrases like "cherry blossom season," "multi-course meal," and "breathtaking" show a good range of vocabulary.

The speaker uses less common words and expressions (e.g., "kaiseki," "torii gates," "peaceful and stunning") accurately and naturally, which is key for achieving a Band 7.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy:

The speaker demonstrates a range of grammatical structures, including complex sentences (e.g., "Walking through them felt like entering another world").

While the response is not overly complex, it shows control over sentence structures, including the correct use of tenses and conjunctions.

Pronunciation:

The pronunciation is clear and understandable. The speaker uses intonation and stress effectively to convey meaning, such as emphasizing key points like "unforgettable" and "beautifully presented."

There might be some minor pronunciation issues, but nothing that significantly hinders understanding, which is acceptable for a Band 7.

How to Achieve a Band 7

To achieve a Band 7 on the IELTS Speaking test, focus on the following areas:

Develop Fluency and Coherence:

Practice speaking on a variety of topics to improve the flow of your speech. Aim to speak at a natural pace without too many pauses or hesitations. Organize your thoughts before speaking. Structuring your response into clear parts (introduction, main points, conclusion) will help maintain coherence.

Expand Your Vocabulary:

Learn and practice using a range of vocabulary related to common IELTS topics (e.g., travel, work, environment, education). Focus on both everyday words and less common vocabulary.

Practice paraphrasing—expressing the same idea in different ways—to avoid repetition and demonstrate lexical flexibility.

Improve Grammatical Range and Accuracy:

Work on using a variety of sentence structures, including complex and compound sentences. For example, practice using relative clauses, conditionals, and different tenses.

Pay attention to common grammatical mistakes, such as subject-verb agreement, prepositions, and article usage. Accurate grammar is essential for a higher score.

Enhance Pronunciation:

Practice your pronunciation, focusing on clear articulation, proper intonation, and word stress. Recording yourself and listening back can help identify areas for improvement.

It's important to be understood easily, so work on any specific sounds or intonation patterns that are challenging for you.

Practice Under Test Conditions:

Simulate the speaking test by practicing with a timer. This will help you get comfortable with the 2-minute timeframe for Part 2 and ensure you can deliver a complete response.

Engage in conversations with native speakers or practice with a tutor to get feedback and improve your speaking skills in real-time.

By focusing on these areas, you can work towards achieving a Band 7 or higher in the IELTS Speaking test.

Describe a person who has influenced you the most.

Who the person is

How you know this person

How they have influenced you

Why this person is important to you

One person who has influenced me the most is my high school English teacher, Mrs. Davis. I first met her when I was in the 10th grade, and she quickly became one of my favorite teachers.

Mrs. Davis had a passion for literature that really inspired me. She introduced me to a variety of books, from classic novels to modern poetry, and her enthusiasm made learning enjoyable. But what made her truly influential was how she encouraged me to think critically and express my ideas. She would push me to go beyond just understanding the material and to form my own opinions.

One way she had a big impact on me was by encouraging my writing. I used to be shy about sharing my work, but Mrs. Davis always gave me positive feedback and constructive criticism, which boosted my confidence. Because of her, I started participating in writing competitions and even got some of my pieces published in the school magazine.

Mrs. Davis is important to me because she believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. Her support helped shape who I am today, and I'm very grateful for her influence on my life.

Grade - 7

Describe a book you recently read.

What the book is about

Why you chose to read it

What you learned from it

How you felt about it

One book I recently read is "Atomic Habits" by James Clear. It's a self-help book that focuses on how small, consistent changes in behavior can lead to significant improvements in our lives. The author explains how habits are formed and provides practical strategies for building good habits and breaking bad ones.

I chose to read this book because I wanted to improve my daily routine and become more productive. I had heard a lot of positive reviews about it, and the idea of making small changes to achieve big results really appealed to me.

From the book, I learned the importance of starting small and focusing on making 1% improvements every day. The concept of "habit stacking," where you link a new habit to an existing one, was particularly useful for me. It helped me incorporate new habits into my routine more easily.

Overall, I felt really inspired after reading "Atomic Habits". The strategies are practical and easy to apply, and I've already started seeing positive changes in my daily life. The book made me realize that even small efforts can lead to big results over time, and it has motivated me to keep working on my personal growth.

Grade - 7

Why This Response is Band 7

Fluency and Coherence:

The response is well-organized, with a clear structure that addresses all the points in the prompt. The ideas are connected logically, making the response easy to follow.

Lexical Resource:

The vocabulary used is appropriate and varied, with terms like “consistent changes,” “habit stacking,” and “personal growth” showing a good range of language.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy:

The response includes a mix of simple and complex sentences, with accurate use of tenses and grammatical structures. For example, “I chose to read this book because...” and “The concept of ‘habit stacking,’ where you link a new habit to an existing one...” demonstrate grammatical control.

Pronunciation:

Although not directly assessable in this written format, a Band 7 response would feature clear pronunciation with appropriate stress and intonation, ensuring the message is easy to understand.

This response is concise yet covers all the necessary points, making it a strong Band 7-level answer within the 2-minute limit.

Describe a special meal you have had.

Where you had the meal

Who you were with

What you ate

Why it was special

One special meal I had was at a small Italian restaurant in Rome during a vacation last year. I was with my family, and we were celebrating my parents' wedding anniversary, which made the occasion even more meaningful.

The restaurant was cozy and had a warm, welcoming atmosphere. We started the meal with some fresh bruschetta topped with tomatoes and basil. For the main course, I had a delicious plate of homemade pasta with truffle sauce, which was rich and full of flavor. We also shared a margherita pizza, which had the perfect balance of cheese and tomato. To finish, we enjoyed a classic tiramisu for dessert, which was creamy and just the right amount of sweet.

What made this meal so special was not just the food, but the entire experience. Being in Rome, surrounded by my family, and celebrating such an important occasion made it unforgettable. The food was incredible, but it was the company and the significance of the day that really made it stand out. It was a perfect evening that I'll always remember.

Grade - 7

Describe a hobby you enjoy.

What the hobby is

How you started doing it

Why you enjoy it

How it benefits you

One hobby I really enjoy is photography. I first got into it a few years ago when I received a camera as a birthday gift. At first, I just took pictures casually, but over time, I became more interested in learning about different techniques, like how to use lighting and composition to create better photos.

I enjoy photography because it allows me to capture moments and see the world in a new way. Whether I'm photographing landscapes, people, or everyday objects, it feels like I'm telling a story through my pictures. It's also very relaxing and helps me to unwind after a busy day.

Photography has benefited me in several ways. It has improved my attention to detail and my creativity. Plus, it gives me a sense of accomplishment when I look at my photos and see how much I've improved. It's also a great way to connect with others who share the same interest. Overall, photography is a hobby that brings me a lot of joy and personal growth.

Grade - 7

Describe a film you watched recently.

What the film is

What it is about

Why you chose to watch it

How you felt about it

One film I watched recently is *"Inception,"* directed by Christopher Nolan. It's a science fiction movie that explores the concept of entering and manipulating people's dreams. The story follows a skilled thief, played by

Leonardo DiCaprio, who is hired to plant an idea in someone's mind through their dreams. The film is full of twists and turns, with a complex plot that keeps you guessing until the very end.

I chose to watch this film because I had heard a lot of great things about it and was intrigued by the idea of a movie about dreams within dreams. I've always enjoyed movies that make you think, and *"Inception"* is definitely one of those.

After watching it, I felt really impressed. The film's visuals were stunning, and the concept was unlike anything I'd seen before. It was a bit challenging to follow at times, but that's what made it so engaging. Overall, I thought it was a brilliant film that left me thinking about it long after it ended.

Grade - 7

Additional tips

Here are some tips for each part of the IELTS exam, along with general advice to help you achieve a higher score:

1. Listening

Practice Active Listening: Regularly listen to English podcasts, news, and TED Talks to improve your ability to understand different accents and speeds.

Understand the Question Types: Familiarize yourself with the different question types (e.g., multiple choice, matching, note completion) so you know what to expect.

Preview Questions: Use the time given before each section to read through the questions. This helps you focus on the specific information you need to listen for.

Write While Listening: Note down keywords or short answers as you listen. You can refine your answers later when you transfer them to the answer sheet.

Check Spelling and Grammar: Spelling mistakes and grammatical errors can cost you marks, so double-check your answers before submitting them.

2. Reading

Skim and Scan: Practice skimming (reading quickly to get the main idea) and scanning (looking for specific information) to save time during the test.

Identify Keywords: Focus on keywords in the questions and locate them or their synonyms in the passage. This will guide you to the correct answer.

Practice with Timed Tests: Time management is crucial in the Reading section. Practice under timed conditions to improve your speed and accuracy.

Understand Question Types: Familiarize yourself with different question types, such as True/False/Not Given, matching headings, and summary completion.

Don't Overthink Answers: Sometimes, the most straightforward answer is the correct one. Avoid overanalyzing or second-guessing yourself too much.

3. Writing

Understand the Task Requirements: Make sure you fully understand what is required for both Task 1 (e.g., describing data, processes, or maps) and Task 2 (essay writing).

Plan Before Writing: Spend a few minutes planning your response. This will help you organize your ideas logically and ensure that you address all parts of the question.

Use a Variety of Sentence Structures: Demonstrate your ability to use a range of grammatical structures (simple, compound, and complex sentences) accurately.

Focus on Coherence and Cohesion: Ensure your ideas flow logically from one to the next. Use linking words (e.g., however, furthermore, in addition) to connect your ideas.

Review Your Work: If time allows, review your writing for any mistakes in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Even a quick review can catch simple errors.

4. Speaking

Practice Speaking Regularly: Engage in English conversations as much as possible. This will help you become more fluent and confident.

Expand Your Answers: In the Speaking test, give full answers with explanations or examples, rather than short, one-sentence replies.

Stay on Topic: Make sure you address the specific question asked. It's fine to add details, but ensure they are relevant to the topic.

Use a Range of Vocabulary: Try to use a mix of common and less common vocabulary accurately. Avoid repeating the same words and phrases.

Pronunciation and Intonation: Speak clearly and at a natural pace. Pay attention to your intonation, which can help convey meaning and emotion.

General Tips:

Practice with Real IELTS Materials: Use official IELTS practice tests and materials to get familiar with the test format and question types.

Manage Your Time: Time management is crucial in all parts of the IELTS test. Practice completing sections within the allotted time to improve your pacing.

Work on Weak Areas: Identify your weak areas (e.g., listening to specific accents, writing complex sentences) and focus on improving them.

Stay Calm and Focused: On test day, stay calm and focused. Take deep breaths if you feel anxious, and remember that you've prepared for this.

Take Care of Yourself: Get a good night's sleep before the test and eat a healthy meal. Being well-rested and nourished will help you perform your best.

By following these tips and regularly practicing, you can improve your chances of achieving a high score on the IELTS exam.

