Worked Example – Sample IELTS Interview

The IELTS interview is made up of 3 parts, and in the worked examples below, the interview will be broken down into part 1 (introduction), part 2 (individual long turn), and part 3 (discussion). These are adapted from past exam papers from Cambridge IELTS Examinations.

**Theme: Friends**

**Part 1:**

**The examiner asks the candidate about him/herself, his/her home, work or studies and other familiar topics.**

**Example: Leisure Time**

Do you like to stay at home or go out when you have free time? Why?

What do you like to do in the evenings?

What is the most common pastime in your country?

How often do you travel? (Why?)

**Part 2:**

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| --- |
| Describe one of your friends.You should say:* How you met
* How long you have known each other
* How you spend time together
* And explain why you like this person.
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You will have to talk about the topic for one to two minutes. You have 1 minute to think about what you’re going to say. You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

**Part 3: Discussion Topics**

Let’s talk about the attributes of friends.

* What do you think are the most important traits for friends to have?
* Can friends be more important than family members? Why?
* What do you think causes friendships to break up?

Now let’s talk about other kinds of relationships…

* What other kinds of relationships, apart from friends and family, are important in people’s lives today?
* What has happened to the traditional relationship between neighbours in recent years?
* How important is it for people to spend time alone? (Why/why not?)

IELTS Interview Worked Example - with Advanced Explanations

In the following answers you will see color coding. I will color overview statements, keywords, sentences and stories and advanced grammar so you can see how I have used the lessons and strategies in this book in a complete sample exam. The following are the color codes:

**Color Code:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Overview Statements: Purple** | **Stories/Examples: Green** | **Concluding Sentence: Grey** |
| **Keywords: Turquoise** | **Advanced Grammar: Yellow** |  |

Part 1

**Example: Leisure Time**

***Examiner: Hello and welcome, to start off with let’s talk about leisure time for  moment. Do you like to stay at home or go out when you have free time? Why?***

Answer: I usually have free time in the evenings. I like to stay home and do things at home for a few reasons. Firstly, I love to cook, and I help my parents with the cooking sometimes. I also enjoy reading and watching movies. For me staying home is relaxing.

What do you like to do at the weekends?

Answer: At the weekend, I like to go out to do things outdoors. I enjoy hiking, and going for walks and hikes in the mountains. For example last weekend, I went to Bukhansan mountain in the southern province of South Korea. I like to go hiking almost every weekend I can because it keeps me healthy.

What is the most common pastime in your country?

Answer: In my country, the most famous pastime is soccer. Almost everybody plays from a young age in school, and most people like to support a European club team such as Manchester Utd or Barcelona.

How often do you travel? (Why?)

Answer: I love to travel, but I don’t get to travel very often. I usually go abroad once a year with my family on vacation, and we like to go to resorts where we can relax at the beach.

**Part 2 Answer**

|  |
| --- |
| Describe one of your friends.You should say:* How you met
* How long you have known each other
* How you spend time together
* And explain why you like this person.
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In Part 2 tasks, you are asked to share an opinion, describe something, tell a story, or discuss a point using your own reasoning, experiences, and knowledge to support your answer. In this example you are asked to describe one of your friends.

There are 2 pieces to this puzzle. One is the actual content and reasons and points you make. The second piece is the way you present your content, and how you introduce your points and various parts of your answer.

**Answer:** I would like to talk about my friend Eoin. I met Eoin on a college project in Ireland about 10 years ago. I was studying and completing a course in when I had to help Brian with his job on the site. We talked and we then started to have more conversations each day at work. We talked about sport, our experiences, and our hopes for the future.

I’ve known Eoin now for about 10 years. When we meet we usually go out to the restaurant, and have interesting discussions. We also travel together and go to see soccer games together. For example, we travelled to see Manchester United play Chelsea last year. Sometimes, we just like to visit each other and talk about what is happening in our lives. We enjoy listening to each other and helping each other out whenever we have problems. I guess that’s what friends are for.

I like my friend Eoin because he is a real friend. Whenever I call him he is willing to stop what he is doing and give me his full attention. He is a great listener, and whenever I talk to him, I feel that he is truly listening to me, and more often than not, I feel much better after our calls. One time, I failed an exam and felt very discouraged, and I decided to call him. He helped me realize that it was just 1 exam, and helped me to see what I could do to improve. I like him because I trust him, and he is honest with me.

**Part 3 – Discussion**

***Examiner: Let’s talk about the attributes of friends. “What do you think are the most important traits for friends to have?”***

**Answer:** That’s a really good question! That is something I have thought a lot about and I have a few ideas to share. I think there are 2 traits or qualities that friends should possess.

Firstly, friends should be kind. This is important because if your friends were not kind, they who could you rely on to be kind? Sometimes, life is hard, and people can be cold at work, on the streets especially in big cities such as where I live, and I feel it is very important for a friend to be a kind person who cares, and says uplifting things.

Secondly, a friend needs to be loyal. I believe this is important because friends know so much about you, and you need to feel safe when you are saying things to your friend. Once, in my 2nd year in secondary school when I was 14, I had a friend called Martin whom I told a lot about my family problems, and he helped me through that tough time. He was loyal and maintained confidences. If he had ever told other people about my private information, it would have ruined our friendship for sure.

So, kindness and loyalty are probably the most important traits in my opinion.

***Examiner: “Can friends be more important than family members? Why?”***

**Answer:** That question is kind of tricky! I am thinking that the answer could be yes and no. Let me explain. I think that family is always first priority in life because they are your flesh and blood. There are times however when you have family problems and then your friends are the ones whom you turn to for help. For me, however, I think family members are always more important than friends. I have 1 main reason to support this view. The reason is that family members will almost always be there for you in the worst of times. For example, last year I got into a financial problem, and my family members were the ones who gave me money to survive. My friends did not provide the money. I asked my parents and brother for help and they were happy to help me. If they had not helped me, I don’t know how I would have managed to survive.

***Examiner: “What do you think causes friendships to break up?”***

Answer: I’m not a relationship expert but I believe there are a few big causes for friends to go their separate ways. The first cause is a big disagreement about something important to either person. For example, I had a friend who I enjoyed hanging out with for a year or so, but he started influencing me to do things I didn’t agree with, and I wanted to change and improve my life. He had bad habits including drinking alcohol, and I didn’t want to get involved with that anymore. Then, we eventually stopped communicating and went our separate ways.

Another significant cause of friendships to break up is when a friend decides to break the trust in the friendship. This can happen when one friend tells other people about confidential information or private information. This happened to me in a part time job I had, working in an office as a janitor. I worked hard, but one of the low level managers said some negative things about my work, and I got upset, and I told my colleague at the office. I was surprised when he went to the top manager to tell him about my story. I didn’t want to complain or tell my story to anyone except my friend. I was disappointed that he told the top manager and that made my job awkward. In this case, however, we managed to save our friendship because we talked it over and learned from the mistake.

Overall, disagreements, and breaking trust can lead to friendships falling apart.

***Examiner: Now let’s talk about other kinds of relationships…“What other kinds of relationships, apart from friends and family, are important in people’s lives today?”***

***Answer:*** Since modern life is complex, people have more roles than they did in the past. There are many relationships to maintain at work, at home, and in the community. I’d like to discuss a couple of these. One of the most important parts of a person’s life is his or her work life, and to succeed at work, people need to build and maintain solid working and professional relationships. One reason why professional relationships matter is these people usually help you succeed on the job, and they can be a big source of finding better jobs, and promotions in the current job.

If you don’t cultivate these relationships, work will be quite a struggle, and you might find it more difficult to enjoy work or get promotions.

Other than professional relationships, it is also important to cultivate relationships with community leaders, and organizations. Such people may include your children’s coaches, environmental groups, or other organizations whose causes you admire. These people contribute to your life and your family life, either directly and indirectly. If you do not get involved in your community, you will miss out on lots of opportunities to get to know people, and miss opportunities to find out important information about your kid’s school, and teachers, and the many causes you could contribute to.

***Examiner “What has happened to the traditional relationship between neighbors in recent years?”***

**Answer:** In the past I imagine that neighbors were a lot closer and helped each other out a lot more. They depended on each other for survival in many cases. I would like to provide you with a few thoughts on this topic. Firstly, my grandmother told me that all the neighbors who lived in her village used to come together to work on each other’s farms in the summer. She said that they used to make the hay together, and then have lunch together and visit each other in the evenings after work. Nowadays, there is far less community bonding like this, and now neighbors all have their own jobs, and in addition, they do not live off the land or on farms as they did in the past.

Secondly, people have become more individualistic over recent years, and technology has led to people spending more time on Facebook than on meeting people face to face. I know people who live in the same area, and they never met, and I know people who live on different continents and they meet every day on Facebook.

***Examiner: “How important is it for people to spend time alone? (Why/why not?)”***

**Answer:** This is an important topic to me personally. I’d like to give you 2 reasons why people need to spend time alone. The first point is that people get so busy they forget about their own needs, and feelings, and they can sometimes get burned out or they can lose track of their purpose and direction in life. It is often good to spend a few minutes each day reflecting on the day’s events, and taking the time to write a few things in a diary or journal. I started this practice a few years ago, and it helped me keep my life in balance.

Secondly, spending time alone is a great time to meditate, or ponder. In most cultures, spiritual benefits come from meditation and pondering or praying. I learned to ponder and meditate when I spent some time in Korea, in Bukhansan mountain near a Buddhist Temple where I met some monks, and they showed me some interesting things about meditation. To sum up, I’d definitely recommend people to spend time alone each day, even if it is just for a few minutes.