

IELTS Speaking topic – Home and hometown #2

This is a sample response for IELTS Speaking Part 2 and 3. In addition to the model answer there are highlighted words and phrases. **Teal** is for vocabulary relating to this topic, **yellow** is for generally useful words and phrases.

IELTS Speaking Part 2

Talk about a place in your town or city you often visit

You should say:

- what the place is
- where it is located
- why you visit it

and say whether it is popular with other people.

Model answer

A place I'm really fond of and which I frequent is the historical centre of our town. The sidewalk is cobbled, the streets are lined with upmarket shops and the area is mostly car-free as parking is prohibited there. There is plenty of vegetation so it feels cool even on hotter days. Because the traffic is very low there it is rather quiet despite many outdoor cafes.

As I have just said it is more or less in the centre. The main reason I go there is neither to shop nor to eat, but simply to take in the atmosphere of the older days. Meticulously restored historical buildings of merchants and other well-off citizens create a unique sensation of being the past. It is an experience worth having, and I don't seem to be alone in this opinion. The place is quite a hit with tourists despite there not being any actual museums or galleries.

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Home and hometown

What is the best age for young people to start living away from their parents?

This will vary wildly, there is no one-size-fits-all solution I believe. People mature at their own pace - some will have formed will in character in their teens, others might take much, much longer, so called late bloomers. Culturally there are evidences of wildly different ages seen as normal to live with one's parents. It is not unusual for Italian men in their thirties to live with their mom and dad. Personally I think once you have landed a job that you can pay the bills with it's time to move out.

How can people make their neighbourhoods a better place to live?

One should not litter, be friendly to their neighbours, respect others' personal space and their right to peace and quiet - these all sound quite ordinary. A less obvious thing is to do your best to cultivate a sense of community. People who know and trust one another organically create a space where everyone feels welcomed and comfortable.

What factors do people take into account when choosing a town or a city to live in?

First of all the matter of employment prospects is considered because if you can't find a well-compensated position you simply won't be able to pay the bills. Secondly, developed infrastructure is a big factor - the variety and quality of shops, whether there are any decent schools, kindergartens, gyms and hospitals. Finally, the place has to have a developed public transport system as relying on your car alone can be selfish and myopic.

IELTS Speaking topic – Home and hometown #2

Cities now and then

How has life in the city changed over the past decade?

I am pleased to say that the changes have been mostly positive. Public transport has been slowly getting more attention with funds funneled into this vital part of urban life to innovate and improve. The programme of short-term bike renting is picking up steam - one can now use a rental bike to cover small distances either for commuting or recreation, all at a very low price. Many cities are experiencing an increase in green spaces with the current trend moving away from long stretches of tarmac and pavement in favour of more natural materials.

Is it a good or a bad thing that nowadays people leave smaller towns to live in bigger cities?

It all started with industrialisation some hundred years ago and has been so since then. All businesses and industries are normally located in major metropolitan centres with most lucrative employment opportunities there. It might not be a very positive development, but it is a natural one. So even though centralisation of talent is not very desirable, it shouldn't be too concerning either.

Home and hometown vocabulary

Cobbled (adj) - if a road or sidewalk is cobbled, big rounded stones are used to surface it

Lined with upmarket shops - full of high-end, expensive shops

Mature (v) - to become more adult either physically or mentally

Litter (v) - to throw trash on the street rather than to designated bins

Cultivate a sense of community - to create and support the feeling of belonging to a group

General vocabulary

Frequent (v) - to go somewhere often. Note that last syllable should be stressed - frequent

Take in the atmosphere - to open yourself psychologically and emotionally to understand what a place feels like

Meticulously (adv) - in a very careful manner with great attention to detail

To be a hit with somebody - to be very popular with a particular group of people

One-size-fits-all - an approach that aims to apply the same rule to everybody despite people not being the same, i.e. people like different things and have different experiences.

Late bloomer - a person who achieves success later in their life

Land a job (informal) - to get a job, to be taken on by a company

Employment prospects - one's chances to get/land a job. *Larger cities naturally have better employment prospects than smaller towns*

Well-compensated - another way of saying "well-paid" when talking about salary

Myopic (adj) - used figuratively here, it means "short-sighted" - not seeing future consequences of their actions

Funnel (v) - to direct something such as money or resources to one place or cause

Pick up steam - to increase in speed, usually used figuratively to talk about some process such as business

Some (adj) - here used in the meaning "one" or "about"

Lucrative (adj) - financially attractive or advantageous