

Speaking practice B1 - B2

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• Eve Pauff • Evelyn Mourelatou • Bruce Henderson • Jean Vinten

PART 1. INTRODUCTIONS: Education

Model

Read the Model Question and Answer.

➤ **Model Question:** What do you like doing in your free time?

Opening Phrases

What I really love doing is ...
I like reading because ...
I also enjoy ...

Hobbies

- read books
- learn about things
- enrich vocabulary
- outdoor sports
- exercise and keep fit

Ideas to Use

➤ **Model Answer**

What I really love doing is reading books. The reason I like reading books is because I can learn about a lot of things. I also enjoy outdoor sports, such as playing volleyball because I can exercise and keep fit. I'd like to be a member of a team, but unfortunately I don't have much free time to do that. However whenever I have free time, I take advantage of it and do the things I like.

Questions

Answer the questions below using the ideas given and add any other ideas you wish.

1. Do you think that surfing on the Net is a waste of time?

Opening Phrases

I wouldn't say that ...
Besides ...
The best thing, of course, ...

Ideas to Use

The Benefits of the Net

- a variety of sites to visit
- play on-line games
- can communicate with other young people
- cheap entertainment
- in the comfort of your own home
- download songs and movies

2. Why is it important to belong to a team?



It's important for several reasons.
First of all, ...
Secondly, ...
And thirdly ...

Benefits of Team sports



- learn how to cooperate
- develop social skills
- have a sense of belonging
- more facilities available
- special rates to use facilities
- improve skills

3. What are the facilities for young people like in your neighbourhood?



I'd say quite good ...
Unfortunately, ...

Facilities



- youth club
- special prices for students
- public library
- borrow books
- two cinemas, an Internet café
- no museums or art galleries

4. Do you prefer watching a film at home or at the cinema?



Although some people prefer...
I believe that...is better because...
Also,...

Home

- cost less
- feel more comfortable
- zap from channel to channel
- choose programme I like

Cinema

- discuss it with friends
- listen to other people's comments
- be with other people
- get out of the house
- bigger screen/better sound



Unaided Questions

Answer the questions below using your own ideas.

1. Do you think it's important to have a hobby?
2. Why are computer games so popular with young people?
3. Do you find surfing on the Net a waste of time?
4. Do your parents allow you to spend a lot of time playing computer games? Why? Why not?
5. How important are toys for children?
6. Did you have a special toy when you were very young?
7. Do you like playing alone or with friends? Why?
8. Are there any youth clubs in your area?
9. Would you enjoy yourself at an Amusement Park?
10. How do you like celebrating special occasions such as your birthday?

PART 2. INDIVIDUAL TALKS: Entertainment

Read the Model Prompts and Answers.

Model Prompt for Student A: Is it important to have a computer at home these days?



As far as I'm concerned, it is. First of all, ...
Secondly, ...
And more importantly, ...



Advantages of Computers at Home

- surf the Net
- get up-to-date information about everything
- provides entertainment
- play games with friends or alone
- chat with people from all over the world
- become familiar with information technology

Model Answer Student A:

As far as I'm concerned, yes it is. First of all, we can surf on the Net and get up-to-date information about anything we want. Secondly, it provides entertainment. We can play games with friends, or alone, or chat with people from all over the world. And more importantly, having a computer means that we become familiar with information technology.

Teacher to Student B: What's your opinion?



I'm not sure if I agree.
Having a computer might have advantages, but what about the disadvantages?
Moreover, ...
In my opinion,...



Disadvantages of Computers at Home

- children usually play alone
- not socialise with other children
- better to play outdoor games
- team sports

Model Answer Student B:

I'm not sure if I agree. Having a computer at home might have advantages, but what about the disadvantages? It can be addictive and some sites are dangerous for children. Moreover, children usually play alone and don't socialise with other children. In my opinion, it would be better to play outdoor games or team sports such as basketball with other children.

PART 1. INTRODUCTIONS: Celebrations and Festivals

Model

Read the Model Question and Answer.

Model Question: Which is your favourite celebration and what do you like most about it?

Opening Phrases

Well, I have to say Christmas.
What I like most about Christmas is ...

Christmas

Ideas to Use

- special day
- happy atmosphere
- Christmas tree
- relatives get together
- exchange presents
- enjoy traditional food

Model Answer

Well, I have to say Christmas. It's a very special day because we celebrate the birth of Christ. What I like most about this celebration is that there is a happy atmosphere everywhere. There is a Christmas tree in every house with a lot of presents under it. Relatives get together, exchange presents and wishes, listen to music and enjoy traditional food.

Questions

Answer the questions below using the ideas given and add any other ideas you wish.

1. How do you like to celebrate your birthday?

Opening Phrases

When I was younger I used to...
But now, I'd rather...

Ideas to Use

Birthday Celebration

- party at home
- receive presents
- listen to music and dance
- take best friends to Fun Park
- treat friends to pizza or hamburger

2. Are there any unusual celebrations in your country?



Yes! In my mother's hometown ...
What I'm really fond of is the ...

Carnival in January



- spectacular firework display
- colourful costumes
- dance on the street
- take part in parade

3. Where do you like to celebrate Easter?



Definitely, in the village.
What my family and I usually do is...
The best day, of course, is...
because we...

Easter Celebration



- go to church during Holy Week
- dye eggs red on Good Thursday
- follow the Epitaph on Good Friday
- happy ringing of bells on Saturday night
- roast lambs on Easter Sunday

4. Would you like to have a traditional religious wedding or a civil one?



To tell you the truth, I've never thought about it.
On the one hand...
On the other hand ...

Religious Wedding

- more fun
- bride in white wedding dress
- groom in dark suit
- friends, relatives attend ceremony
- dance at wedding reception
- long time to prepare
- too expensive

Civil Wedding

- privacy for couple
- costs less
- less stressful
- not as special a day



Unaided Questions

Answer the questions below using your own ideas.

1. What kind of celebrations do you like the most? Why?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of celebrating an important occasion such as an anniversary at home?
3. Do you think that religious celebrations are important? Why?
4. How do you celebrate the First Day of Lent?
5. Would you like to celebrate Christmas in another country?

VOCABULARY BANK

Different Kinds of Celebrations

birthdays
namedays
baptisms
weddings
anniversaries
graduations
Christmas
Easter
First Day of Lent
May 1st
Carnival
National Holidays

The Importance of Culture

know about the past
study ancient and modern civilizations
link the present with the past
compare the past with the present
honour heroes
feel proud of one's own culture
preserve national identity
respect customs and values
follow tradition
avoid racism
understand social changes
adopt new ideas
express ideas through art

Ways to Celebrate

have/throw a party
take part in festive activities
join a carnival parade
wear costumes
enjoy traditional dishes
listen to music and dance

Cultural Events

art exhibitions
book exhibitions
concerts
food festival
visits to museums

ELT PUBLISHING

Extra practice for B1

1. Talking about holidays

1 Look at the three five-day package holidays and compare and contrast what they offer.



Turkish Delights

Price: £300 per person

Means of Transport: Train

Accommodation: 5 star (includes breakfast)

Visits included in price: Hagia Sophia
Blue Mosque
Bosphorus Cruise

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

I'd prefer ... because ...

On the one hand ..., but on the other ...

(A) includes while (B & C) include...

(A) offers ... However, (B & C) offer ...

..... is more/less than



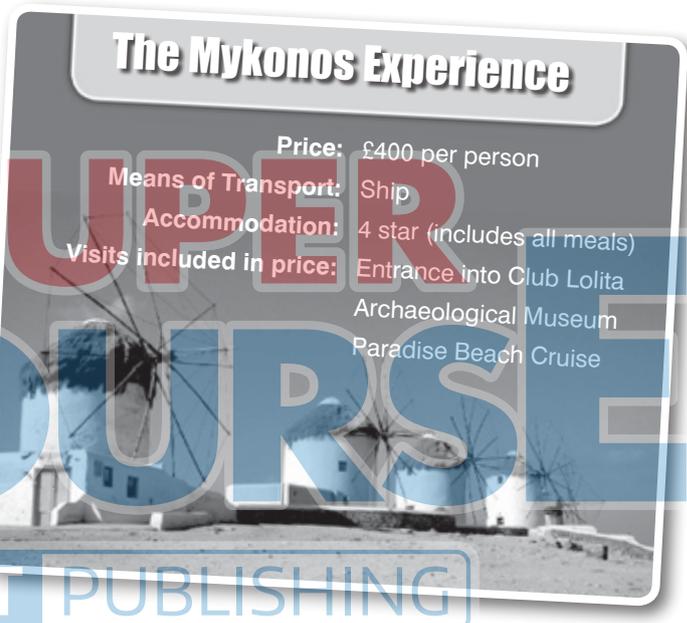
fabulous Paris

Price: £500 per person

Means of Transport: Plane

Accommodation: 3 star (includes breakfast, lunch)

Visits included in price: Louvre Museum
Eiffel Tower
One day in Disneyland



The Mykonos Experience

Price: £400 per person

Means of Transport: Ship

Accommodation: 4 star (includes all meals)

Visits included in price: Entrance into Club Lolita
Archaeological Museum
Paradise Beach Cruise

2 Answer the following questions.

- Which of the three holidays do you find most interesting? Give at least three reasons.
- Which of the three holidays do you find least interesting? Give at least three reasons.

3 Role Play Activity.

Candidate A chooses one of the holidays while candidate B chooses another. Try to convince your partner that your choice is better than his/hers.

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Well, after a lot of thought, I think ...

Firstly/Secondly/Furthermore, ...

The main advantage/benefit of ...

I believe that is the best/worst because ...

.....

Last but not least, is (not)

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

I disagree with you because I believe that ...

You may have a point, but I'd like to say that ...

I (don't) agree with you about ...

Yes, but don't forget that ...

What you are saying may be true, but ...

Don't you think that is important?

Vocabulary Bank

- package holiday = οργανωμένη εκδρομή
- contrast = αντιπαραβάλλω
- means of transport = μεταφορικά μέσα
- accommodation = στέγαση
- fabulous = έξοχος
- entrance = είσοδος
- convince = πείθω
- on the one hand... on the other (hand) = από τη μια πλευρά..., από την άλλη...
- furthermore = επιπλέον

Practice tests for B1

Test 1. A mock interview

*Practise the following mock interview with your teacher.
Your teacher will take on the role of the interviewer.*

Stage 1: Breaking the Ice

(approximately 2 minutes)

- Can you tell me a little about the village/town/city you live in?
- Tell me something about the weather in your country.
- What can you tell me about your school?
- Can you tell me how you enjoy spending your free time?
- Tell me something about the kinds of foods you like and dislike.
- What can you tell me about your family?

*Choose one or two
questions per student.*

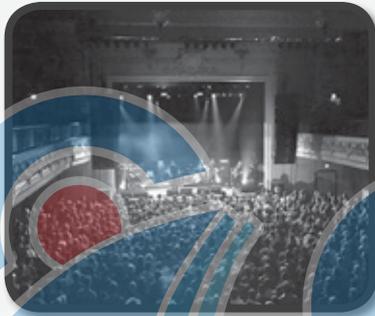
Stage 2: Picture Description

(approximately 2 minutes)

1. Here's a picture of a live music performance. Please tell me what you can see in the picture.

2. Here's a picture of people shopping. Please tell me what you can see in the picture.

3. Here's a picture of some children. Please tell me what you can see in the picture.



Please tell me how the people in your picture feel or what they are thinking. What you think is going to happen next /has just happened?

*Choose one picture
per student*

Stage 3: Comparing and Contrasting

(approximately 3 minutes)

Now we are going to discuss something together.

1. I'd like you to tell me if you would rather go to a live music performance or watch one on TV, and why.
2. I'd like you to tell me if it is better to shop in small shops or in shopping centres, and why.
3. I'd like you to tell me if you prefer playing video games or reading books, and why.

*Choose the
question that
corresponds to
the picture*

What makes you say that? Is there another advantage/disadvantage you can think of? Do you have anything else to add?

Stage 4: Role Play

(approximately 3 minutes)

Now we are going to take part in a role play. Here is a card with a situation on it..

Choose one card per student

Card 1

You are chatting to your online friend (the interviewer) on Facebook.

- Greet him/her appropriately
- Ask him/her what he/she did today
- Tell him/her about your plans for the holidays
- Invite him/her to join you and tell him/her what you will do together
- End the conversation appropriately

Card 2

You are being invited by your friend (the interviewer) to dinner.

- Greet him/her appropriately
- Ask him/her why you are being invited
- Find out what he/she will cook
- Tell him what type of food you enjoy
- End the conversation appropriately

Card 3

You are interviewing someone (the interviewer) for the job of salesperson.

- Greet him/her appropriately
- Ask him/her why he/she is interested in this job
- Tell him/her what type of person the job requires
- Find out if he/she has the necessary qualifications and experience
- Tell him/her what salary he/she will earn
- End the interview appropriately

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Extra practice for B2

1. Family relationships

1. Look at the photographs and say how they illustrate the changes that have taken place in family life and relationships over the past 50 years.



2. In pairs, ask and answer the following questions:

- What do parents and children disagree about most? What about friends?
- Would you rather spend time with your family or with your friends? Why?
- How important is it to follow rules at home? Give an example to support your opinion.
- How would you classify a true friend? Do you know such a person?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of being an only child?
- Should parents be stricter with their children nowadays? Why? / Why not?

2. City or village?

1. Look at the photographs below and describe them briefly. If you could live in one of these places, which one would you choose and why? Why would you not live in the other places?



2. Situation:

Your parents are about to retire. They have been working in the city for many years. Discuss with your partner whether they should remain in the city for the rest of their lives or move to the countryside.

Student 1 asks:

1. what they like doing in their free time
2. where their children / relatives / friends live
3. what the advantages and disadvantages of staying in the city are
4. what the advantages and disadvantages of moving to the country are

Student 2 answers:

1. reading, going for long walks, gardening, going to the theatre
2. children and friends live in the city, relatives in the country
3. near loved ones, doctors / hospitals nearby, libraries / theatres # noise, pollution, traffic, crime
4. healthier lifestyle, lower cost of living, no noise / pollution, relaxed way of life, able to grow vegetables, have pets, etc. # lack of facilities / doctors, loved ones far away

Student 1:

When you have all the information you need, explain which place they should choose and why. Be ready to explain why they shouldn't choose the other option.

Follow-up questions:

- Should elderly people live with their children? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
- How can older people contribute when living with their family?
- What are some of the activities senior citizens can do?

Practice tests for B2

Test 1.

Part One: Introductions (3 minutes)

The interlocutor elicits personal information. The candidates respond to the interlocutor and not to each other.

- What would you do with your friends to celebrate a special occasion, such as a birthday?
- What are the problems of having a pet in a city flat?
- Are you a slave to fashion, or do you dress to suit yourself?
- Do you think there are good quality programs on the TV at this time? What kinds of programs are good?

Topic: Lifestyles

The interlocutor introduces the topic for the main part of the interview.

Part Two: Interactive Discussion (4 minutes)

Candidates discuss a topic based on two prompts provided by the interlocutor. The interlocutor does not take part in the discussion.

Candidate A and B

- Have you ever seen a crime being committed?
- Do you think the police do a good job in Greece?

Part Three: Responding To Questions (5 minutes)

A three-way discussion between the interlocutor and candidates based on the interview topic. The interlocutor leads the discussion by selecting questions. The interlocutor should encourage the candidates to react to each other.

- Describe a theatrical performance or music concert you have been to.
- How do most young people spend their free time?
- What is your favourite way of spending an evening out? Why?
- Do you prefer to spend your time alone or in company? Why?