

IELTS Speaking Lesson #2

7 Adaptable phrases

1. ...the one I'd like to tell you about is...
2. My favourite was...
3. I'd like to talk about...
4. Let me tell you about...
5. Personally, I would have to say...
6. ...the one who/that stands out is...
7. I'm going to tell you about...

Opening phrases

1. Describe something you do to stay healthy.

I do many things that contribute to a healthy lifestyle but **the one I'd like to tell you about is...**

2. Describe a TV programme you have watched recently.

I have watched several good TV programmes recently but **my favourite was...**

3. Describe a day out that you enjoyed.

I'd like to talk about the time I went to...

4. Describe a special friend.

Let me tell you about my friend Kia.

More examples

5. **Discuss the meaning of happiness for you.**
Personally, I would have to say that being happy...
6. **Describe the best teacher you have ever had.**
I've been lucky enough to have had several really good teachers but the one who stands out is...
7. **Describe a photograph you particularly like.**
I'm going to tell you about a photograph I took...

Extend your opening

Describe a place that is special to you.

I'd like to tell you about a field not far from where I live. **I've chosen this** place because it's where I love to walk my dog.

The topic

Topic: Describe a TV programme you have watched recently.

Opening sentence: I have watched several good TV programmes recently but my favourite was...

Paraphrase the topic sentence

Show that you are able to use your own language.

- I have ~~watched~~ **seen** several good TV programmes ~~recently~~ **in the past few weeks** but my favourite was...

Add detail

Name a type of TV programme instead of repeating 'TV programmes', e.g.

- I have seen several good documentaries / comedies / dramas in the past few weeks...

Use strong adjectives

Replace 'good' with a stronger adjective, e.g.

- I have seen several ~~good~~ **excellent** TV programmes in the past few weeks...

Examples

- I have seen several **thought-provoking** documentaries...
- I have seen several **extremely** funny comedies...
- I have seen several **exciting** dramas...

Use contractions

- Contract 'I have' seen... to 'I've' seen...
- This will give you a better score for your pronunciation.



A better sentence

Original: I have watched several good TV programmes recently but my favourite was...

Improved: I've seen several extremely funny comedies in the past few weeks but my favourite was...

The second version is a much stronger sentence.

Part 1

7 ways to develop your answers

1. Explanation
2. Combined details
3. Examples
4. Frequency
5. Contrast
6. Past comparisons
7. The future

Question & simple answer

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Simple answer: I socialise with friends several times a week.

1. Explanation

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: I socialise with friends most evenings after work and at weekends because I live on my own which often gets me down. Going out with friends or having them round means that I don't feel so lonely.

2. Combined Details

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: During the week, I generally meet up with friends two evenings after work and on Saturdays, I go shopping with my best friend. Sundays I save for seeing my family.

3. Examples

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: I usually see my closest friends several times a week. Like this week, I'm meeting my best friend for a drink this evening, then we're going to the cinema with some girls from work on Friday, and on Saturday we're all meeting up at a party.

Vocabulary of frequency

- always
- usually
- normally
- generally
- often
- frequently
- sometimes
- occasionally
- seldom
- hardly ever
- rarely
- never

4. Frequency

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: I normally see friends most days of the week, especially my best friend who I generally catch up with after work. At the weekends, a group of us often go to the park to play football or chill out.

Vocabulary of contrast

- but
- although
- however
- even though
- despite
- while



5. Contrast

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: I try to meet up with friends several times a week but rarely on a Sunday because that's when I visit my family. However, every few months I cook a barbeque Sunday lunch and invite both my friends and family around.

6. Past Comparisons

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: I used to socialise with my friends every day but I don't see them so often now that I have a baby and can't go out in the evenings so much. We probably meet up just a few times a month.

7. Future

Question: How often do you socialise with friends?

Extended answer: Currently, I hardly see my friends at all as I spend all my spare time studying for my IELTS exam. When I pass the exam, I'll meet up with my mates most evenings like I used to do and spend weekends with them as well.

Part 1: Paraphrasing the question

Paraphrase the question

- The examiner will be impressed if you're able to paraphrase their question rather than repeating the vocabulary they used.
- You don't need to do this for every question.
- Paraphrase when key words can easily be replaced with synonyms.

Which is the best answer?

Question: Have you visited any foreign countries?

Answer 1: Yes, I've visited two foreign countries, the UK and Egypt. My favourite foreign country was the UK because it's so different to my own country. Another country I want to visit is France.

Answer 2: Yes, I've been abroad a couple of times, first to the UK, then to Egypt. I particularly enjoyed the UK because it's so different to my own country. I'd also love to travel to France.

Improved fluency

Question: Have you visited any foreign countries?

Answer 1: Yes, I've visited two foreign countries, the UK and Egypt. My favourite foreign country was the UK because it's so different to my own country. Another country I want to visit is France.

Answer 2: Yes, I've been abroad a couple of times, first to the UK, then to Egypt. I particularly enjoyed the UK because it's so different to my own country. I'd also love to travel to France.