

Proficiency Level Speaking

TOPICS

1. STYLE / FASHION

- Is it Important to keep up with the latest trends in fashion? To be stylish?
- How would you define your own style? trendy, hip-hop, classic, indifferent?
- If you could decorate your home or apartment in any style what would you choose? modern, classic, Greek traditional, minimalist
- What's your view on designer clothes?

2. CELL PHONES -TECHNOLOGY

- what is your view on people talking on cell phones in public places, such as restaurants or movie theaters or at seminars? When driving a car?
- What influence do you think messaging on a cell phone might have on language and spelling in the future?
- In what instances of emergency would a cell phone be useful?
- What other functions do cell phones perform? mp3 player, surf the internet, send messages, check e-mail, camera, etc
- factories, space exploration, medicine. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the advances of modern science and technology?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using computers/robots instead of people? (more reliable, no strikes, no labor cost, computers don't get tired or sick / computers may malfunction, a virus may cause serious problems, humans are able to take decisions when facing entirely new situations)
- How do you respond to new technologies? (immediately accept, reject, with reluctance)
- Are newer technologies always better? (sometimes too costly for widespread use or they may require some new skill in order to use them)

3. SPORTS - COMPETITION

- Do you participate in any competitive sports?
- How do you think performance enhancing drugs (doping) ruin the competitive spirit in sports, such as during the Olympic Games?
- Why should we exercise? (sedentary life leads to obesity and various health problems)
- Do you feel competitive with the other students in class? Do you try to get the highest marks?

- competitive spirit versus team spirit
- Do professional sports people deserve the amounts of money they earn?
- Why do some people enjoy doing extreme or dangerous sports?

4. CHARITY

- Do you support any particular charity, such as the Greenpeace or the World Wild Life Fund? Would you volunteer your time to help any such charity?
- Do you ever give money to beggars in the street?
- Are street musicians a charity case or do they provide a service?
- Children exploitation - How can it be stopped?

5. THE MEDIA - ADVERTISING

- Are you satisfied with the reporting you get on the news? Is it accurate? Does it give you the full story?
- How do you keep in touch with what's happening in the world?
- Are newspapers, TV channels biased towards certain political parties?
- What is your view on journalists interviewing people who have just suffered a great tragedy? Are they intruding on their lives?
- Should the media cover the private lives of celebrities?
- Reality shows. Would you appear in any?
- Advantages and disadvantages of talent reality shows (give young people a chance to prove themselves, prove that talent and hard work are important / songs and music of low quality, emphasis given to good looks and not to talent, sometimes competitions not genuine: winners are decided by producers and not TV audience, sometimes questionable role-models are presented to younger viewers, may show very selfish behaviour)
- Are you influenced by advertising? How do you decide which products to buy?
- Which medium is the most effective for advertising products?

6. EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE

- What kind of people are exceptional? Talented, with high I.Q, those who volunteer their time and expertise to helping others, movie stars, rich people?
- What person in the history of Greece has been the most exceptional?

7. TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS, CELEBRATIONS

- What is the biggest celebration in your country? Your favourite celebration or **festival**?
- What happens during **carnival** in your country? (people **dress up**, a **procession through the streets**, parties,)
- Is it important to **maintain national customs** and **traditions**?

8. FAMILY - RELATIONSHIPS - OLD PEOPLE

- What effects do **the pressures of modern life** have upon the average family?
- Is it difficult to be **a single parent**?
- What **qualities** do you look for in a friend?
- Why do some people have **difficulty in forming relationships**?
- What **role** should **grandparents play** in bringing up their grandchildren?
- Why do some older people **disapprove of the younger generation's habits and interests**?
- Problems of old age.
- What makes people happy?
- What are the best ways to find out about other people's character?

9. JOBS - UNEMPLOYMENT

- Would you prefer to **work on your own** or with other people? To **be self employed (run a business) or be employed by someone else?** (work longer hours, never relaxed, responsible for everything / do things your way, nobody tells you what to do, get pleasure from what you do, nobody's telling you what to do)
- What qualities are important for someone who wants to be self-employed? (necessary knowledge, **self-disciplined**, not being afraid of
- **taking risks, a circle of acquaintances, a good location, having the necessary cash**)
- Apart from money, what is important in a job?
- What jobs are more useful to society?
- What is **the employment situation** in your country?
- How important is the choice of our profession for our life, for **personal satisfaction and psychological balance?**
- Should everybody **retire** at a certain age?

10. SOCIAL PROBLEMS

- What problems affect society as a whole? (**unemployment, racial or sex discrimination, poverty, information divide, social divide, illiteracy, traffic jam, nutrition, crime**)
- What can governments do to help **relieve social problems** in general?

11. **VACATION AND TRAVEL**
- Do you prefer quiet, relaxed places for vacation or places with a lot of action and nightlife?
 - Do you prefer going with other people or alone?
 - What can you learn from traveling to other countries?
 - What problems can you have when you travel abroad?
 - What positive or negative effects can tourism have on a country?
 - What would you recommend visitors to your country to see and do?
12. **CHILDREN AND PLAYING**
- Why is it important for children to play? Which games are important (board games, video games, team games, indoor games, outdoor games, sports, in the garden, in the street, construction toys)
 - Do children have free time to do what they like nowadays?
13. **CITY LIFE - COUNTRY LIFE**
- What features would help a city become a capital of culture?
 - Is it nice to live away from everybody
 - Advantages - disadvantages of city life / country life
14. **EDUCATION**
- Are you happy with your education? (school facilities - books - teachers)
 - How strict should teachers be?
 - Why is a good education necessary? (correlation between level of education and income - understanding of the issues affecting society - be able to exploit information technology and the internet - more ways to spend your free time like greater varieties for music, reading for pleasure etc)
 - traditional class setting: students sit in rows, disciplined, the teacher is the source of all information / modern teaching: students more involved in their learning, more relaxed, more motivated, teacher provides support / Which would you prefer?
15. **CHEATING ON EXAMS**
- a. How? (exchanging notes, via cell phone, copying from another student)
 - b. Why is it bad? (fulfilling potential impossible, don't learn to face challenges, leads to cheating on other things, do not get ahead in life, it is like stealing)

16. SHOPPING

- a. How can one be a wise consumer, careful when shopping? (compare price and quality, make a list beforehand and stick to it, be careful with credit cards)
- b. Why are some people "shopaholics"? (insecure, they alleviate insecurity with shopping, extremely materialistic giving themselves happiness buying things, extremely lonely go out to communicate with others)

17. POLLUTION - ENVIRONMENT - LITTER

- a. What can we personally do so that we can be more ecologically responsible? (reduce consumption of water and electricity, recycle, buy things in bulk, cut down on driving, cultivate crops that require less water and fewer pesticides, use air-conditioning less, install solar water heater, not let water run when taking a shower, wash dishes manually)
- b. How could an anti-litter programme be effective? (education: courses in schools, a publicly funded ad campaign / enforcement: police should give on-the-spot fines to people who litter/ efficient collection of litter: local authorities should increase garbage collection, citizens should volunteer their time to clean their neighborhood streets)

18. HEALTHY EATING

- a. Why are so many obese children? (young children prefer food with a lot of fat and sugar, parents too busy to prepare meals, parents who suffered from hunger as children tend to feed their own children more, parents not properly informed with regards to proper nutrition)
- b. Why is it important for children to learn to eat healthy food? (bad nutrition habits learned young persist into adulthood, most snacks include chemicals with bad long-term effects.)

19. CRIME

- How can young people be encouraged to resist the temptations of crime? (good upbringing, moral values, keeping the right company, hobbies, sports)
- How should young offenders be dealt with? (alternative punishments such as probation, suspended sentences, community service, along with counseling)
- What social factors contribute to rising crime rates? (unemployment, materialism, fewer deterrents)
- What different kinds of crime do you know? (fraud, forgery, drug trafficking, burglary, armed robbery, mugging, rape, murder, hijacking, kidnapping, shop lifting, drunk-driving)
- Do you believe that capital punishment could act as a deterrent to a would be murderer?

20. PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

-How can people with psychological problems be helped?

(Anything that **affects our state of mind** is a psychological problem.

Minor psychological disorders like being a little **depressed, anxious** or **over tired: talk your problem through with somebody**, make lifestyle changes, relax, **avoid stressful situations** / Severe cases though, like **severe depression** or **schizophrenia**: medication and professional help required.

- What problems is a person suffering from a psychological disorder likely to encounter? (considered mad, crazy / be **isolated** / **be pitied** rather than helped / **turn to drugs** or alcohol / **shut themselves away**)

21. ROAD ACCIDENTS

- What are the main causes of road accidents?

(**careless driving, exceeding the speed limit, inexperience, drunk-driving**, bad condition of roads)

- How can we **prevent** road accidents?

(provide better **road facilities** such as **road signs** / **stricter traffic laws** / more difficult **driving test**)

- What might be the results of a road accident?

(people **disabled/crippled**, children **orphaned**, terrible feelings of guilt)

22. TOURISM

- One of the most important **industries** here.

- What are **the main attractions** for tourists? (climate, beaches, **historical ruins, archaeological sites**, museums)

- Are there disadvantages associated with the large number of tourists coming to a country? (people **adopt** different habits and ways of life, **lose their sense of national identity, too much litter on the beaches**, some parts of the country are **"dead" out of season**)

- What are the advantages? (**bring money** to areas with little other local industry, **great annual influx of foreign currency**, the country's image abroad is exported,)

- What are the reasons for traveling abroad?

(**broaden your horizons, get a different outlook on life**, visit places of **cultural interest**, experience different ways of living, food, drink, people)

23. STRESS

- What are the causes of stress?

(**urban life**, working conditions, **the rat race** of contemporary society, no **job satisfaction**, life is demanding, no free time to enjoy life, unemployment and other **social problems**)

- What are the results of stress?
(people become violent at home, with family/ aggressive in their jobs, / people feel exhausted in the evening, heart attacks, people less tolerant of other people)
- How can we fight stress?
(regular exercise build up our immune system, helps us relax / improve working conditions, less emphasis on material possessions, relaxing techniques)

24. THE DISABLED

- Are there adequate facilities for the disabled in your country? (ramps, lifts)
- How do the disabled feel? (a burden to their parents and to others, inferior, appreciate life more, want to be treated as normal, be integrated into society)
- Types of disabilities (paralysed from the waist down, paralysed down one side -often from a stroke- lame in one leg, deaf and dumb, strong speech impediment, maimed , disfigured, mentally disabled)
- What's your reaction when you see someone on a wheelchair
(embarrassed, try to look away, grateful for your health, try to behave normally)
- How can the state help?
(special homes with trained staff, free medical treatment, financial assistance, provide ramps/lifts, education to overcome prejudice)

25. CHILDREN

- Is there anything wrong with parents punishing children by hitting them?
(teaches violence is justified, feel humiliated, ineffective method in the long run)
- How can people prepare themselves to be good parents?
(educate themselves in child psychology, think back and remember their childhood, simply love their children, get ready to make sacrifices for their children, achieve financial security and stability)
- What could be the results of parents who are too strict or narrow minded?
(children rebel, become irresponsible, turn to delinquency, violence, run away from home)

26. PEOPLE AND ANIMALS

- What should you bear in mind when you are considering buying a pet?
(can you devote enough time, could it annoy neighbours)
- Why are some people cruel to animals?
(have a sadistic streak in them, a way to release their aggressions, forget they are living beings, cruelty to animals inexcusable and immoral)
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