

Teaching IELTS Speaking: Interactive Classroom Activities

The big list of useful vocabulary for IELTS Speaking Part One

Vocabulary for talking about names

surname/ family name/ last name
first name/ given name/ Christian name
nickname
full name
middle name
named after
short for/ abbreviation
initials

Vocabulary for talking about studies/ education

(Ivy League/ vocational/ junior/ technical) college
(first/ bachelor's) degree/ BA/ BSc
doctorate/ PhD
Master's/ MA/ MBA/ MSc
preschool/ nursery school/ kindergarten
(primary/ elementary/ secondary/ high/ cram/ grad) school
uni
graduate from
major in
pass (with flying colours)
scrape through
drop out
(entrance/ national) exam/ (end of term) test/ finals
cram/ swot
(fellow) alumni
retake/ re-sit
learn by heart
freshman/ first year student
sophomore/ second year student
junior/ third year student/ final year student
postgrad/ postgraduate
take notes
revise/ revision/ review
be distracted/ drift off
concentrate/ focus

Vocabulary for talking about places (accommodation, hometown, local area, etc)

(high-rise) apartment block/ block of flats
birthplace
camper van/ RV
caravan
company accommodation/ company dorm
condo/ condominium
family home
hometown

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host family
(youth) hostel
local area/ neighbourhood
(shared/ detached/ terraced/ semi-detached) house
student halls/ dorms
(studio) flat/ (studio) apartment
grew up/ was brought up
suburb
outskirts
town centre/ city centre/ downtown
neighbourhood
residential area
my own place
move out/ leave home
top floor/ penthouse
easy access/ transport connections
natural light
ground floor
B&B/ bed and breakfast
holiday home/ second home
dream home
commuter town/ satellite town/ dormitory town
green spaces
my roots
village/ hamlet
rural
rundown
gentrified

Vocabulary for talking about relationships with people

(ex)classmate/ fellow student
(ex)colleague/ workmate/ co-worker
(best/ oldest/ good/ old/ close/ male/ female) friend/ bestie/ BFF
(distant/ close) relative/ relation/ member of my family
(not) get on (well) with/ get along (well) with
acquaintance
(direct) boss/ (line) manager
clash with
fellow graduate/ fellow alumni/ fellow...
in-laws/ mother-in-law/ sister-in-law/ father-in-law/ brother-in-law
housemate/ flatmate/ roommate
only child
take after
look like
extended family
ancestor
look up to

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generation gap
(maternal/ paternal) grandparents
tell off
strict
indulge/ indulgent
spoil

Vocabulary for talking about festivals and celebrations

coming of age (day)
(local/ summer/ traditional) festival
fireworks (display)
street stalls
wedding (ceremony/ reception)
dress up/ (special) costume
take part in
take place
parade/ procession
a toast
(high school) reunion
street party
marked by/ with

Vocabulary for talking about transport and travel

(night/ local/ long distance/ highway/ Greyhound) bus/ coach
public transport/ public transportation
(local/ commuter/ rapid/ express/ bullet/ sleeper) train
tram/ streetcar
abroad/ overseas/ foreign countries
on foot
(business/ day)trip
broaden your horizons
backpacking
hitchhike
(hire/ shopper/ mountain) bike/ bicycle

Vocabulary for talking about TV and movies

cartoon/ (Japanese) animation
rom-com
sci-fi
thriller
directed by
starring
based on
set in
sequel/ prequel
adaptation
costume drama/ historical drama

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current affairs
game show/ quiz show
murder mystery/ whodunit
reality TV
sit-com/ situation comedy
sketch show
soap opera
stand-up comedy
talk show
travel programme
wildlife documentary
follow
binge
boxset
streaming (app/ service)
couch potato
telly addict
channel hopping

Vocabulary for talking about music

(19)50s/60s/70s/80s/90s
chart music/ top ten (hits)
classical
country (and western)
crooners
dance/ EDM
easy listening
folk/ traditional (music)
girl band/ boy band
(Japanese) hip hop/ rap
(big) hit
indie/ alternative (rock)
love songs
(mainstream/ Japanese/ Korean/ K-/ bubble gum) pop
(Japanese/ gangster) rap/ hip hop
R&B
(classic/ hard) rock
rock'n'roll
world music
drown out/ block out

Vocabulary for talking about work

responsible for...
in charge of...
report to...
side job/ side hustle
office worker

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(data entry) clerk
(line/ middle) manager/ (direct) boss
get promoted
between jobs/ on the dole
lose your job
downsizing

Vocabulary for talking about free time/ leisure/ hobbies

interested in
take up
go out for...
day off
stay (at) home/ stay in
meet up with
unwind/ relax/ chill/ take it easy/ laze around
do the housework/ do my chores
go (window) shopping
have a lie-in/ catch up with my sleep
keep fit
tidy up
hang out with
stay up (late/ all night)
DIY/ household maintenance/ jobs around the house