

IELTS Speaking – Topic 1.3: Where You Live

Câu 1: Where do you live now?

⇒ “Well, I’m now living in Ho Chi Minh city which is the formerly named and still also referred to as **Saigon** and I have lived here for almost 20 years now. I’m quite happy to be here, I have to say, because this vibrant city is really on the move with higher living standard and a lot of, you know, entertainment attractions.”

- Chắc là các bạn cũng bắt đầu quen với các trả lời những câu hỏi kiểu như thế này rồi đúng không. Luôn bắt đầu bằng một vài từ Linking như “Well”, “you know”, “actually”, “to be honest”... sau đó trả lời luôn vào câu hỏi và không quên dùng mệnh đề quan hệ để làm rõ cho câu trả lời của mình. Nếu các bạn muốn kéo dài thêm câu trả lời thì có thể đưa ra một số ý kiến cá nhân như mình trên kia. Câu này trả lời 2 câu như vậy là đủ rồi ạ, không nên dài quá.
- Câu trả lời này không có một từ mới hoành tráng nào cả, chỉ có một số từ mà mình thấy hữu ích và khá dễ học nên mình đưa ra ở dưới. Với những câu hỏi như thế này, việc các bạn diễn tả được tự nhiên và trôi chảy quan trọng hơn nhiều so với việc đưa ra những từ vựng độc lạ.

vibrant	sôi nổi, năng động
be on the move	đang trên đà phát triển
living standard	tiêu chuẩn sống, mức sống
entertainment attractions	khu giải trí, trung tâm giải trí

Câu 2: What part of the city do you like best?

⇒ “Well, admittedly, I like district 1 (CBD) the most coz it’s the center of all fancy places, up-market shopping malls, local cuisine and also a lot of hustle and bustle that’s by the way what I’m into. I like to be where crowds are for most of the time, the same as most young people today, I guess. Also, I love it here because most of my friends are here and we can hang out whenever we want.”

- Trong câu trả lời này, mình đưa ra câu trả lời cho câu hỏi một cách ngắn gọn và sau đó đưa ra 2 lý do cho câu trả lời đó. Và các bạn hãy nhớ, luôn luôn đưa ra REASON cho câu trả lời như thế nhé. Nó sẽ giúp bạn có cái để nói, để phát triển ý và vận dụng được những gì bạn đã chuẩn bị. Đừng quên sử dụng các từ linking nữa nhé.
- Cấu trúc câu trả lời cũng không có gì đặc biệt ở câu này. Các bạn hoàn toàn có thể ĂN CẤP ý tưởng cũng như lời văn tiếng nói nhé. Mình rất mong các bạn làm điều đó nhưng hãy luyện tập kỹ càng để nói thật tự nhiên nha.

CBD = Central Business Districts (Q1)	khu trung tâm
fancy	đẹp, lộng lẫy
up-market	thời thượng, hiện đại
local cuisine	đặc sản địa phương
hustle and bustle	sự nhộn nhịp, xô bồ

Câu 3: Is there anything you don't like about this city?

⇒ “Well, one thing I don't like about HCM is that there isn't a good sense of community here. I mean I kind of have a feeling that people just care about themselves but anything else, but that's just my feeling. In addition to that, the cost of living in this cosmopolitan city is quite difficult to afford. Another one of my least favorite things is having to fight rush hour traffic everyday, you know, kind of disastrous traffic system which I bet you will agree with me at this point, won't you?”

- Ở đây, ngoài cấu trúc trả lời thông thường mà các bạn đã quen thuộc, mình muốn đưa ra một số từ có thể dùng khi các bạn muốn đưa ra lý do hay nói đúng hơn là giải thích rõ hơn cho những gì mình vừa nói. Các bạn có thể nhìn thấy ở trên các từ in đậm là những từ như vậy:

..., I mean...	For instance...	To be exact...	To be more direct...
..., which means...	More specifically...	More precisely...	

- Thường xuyên luyện tập sử dụng những từ này cùng lý do, ý bổ sung cho ý mình vừa nói ở trước.
- Một lần nữa mình vẫn phải nhắc lại là đừng quên sử dụng các từ chỉ đường khi bạn muốn đưa ra nhiều hơn 1 ý trong câu trả lời: “One thing I don't like about Hanoi is that... In addition to that, ... Another one of my least favorite things is...” Các bạn có thể để ý mình luôn dùng đi dùng lại những từ này. Các bạn cũng vậy, thay vì học một list từ chỉ đường thứ nhất, thứ hai, thứ 2. Hãy chuẩn bị cho mình từ 2, 3 cụm đủ dùng thay nhau không lặp lại trong suốt phần thi là ok rồi.

sense of community	tính cộng đồng
cost of living	chi phí
cosmopolitan city	thành phố đa văn hóa, tập trung nhiều người từ nhiều nơi khác nhau
rush hour	giờ cao điểm
disastrous	khủng khiếp, tồi tệ

Câu 4: Where did you grow up? / Tell me about your hometown.

⇒ “As you cannot probably guess that I originally come from Ha Tinh which is located in the middle part of Vietnam. This is where I was born and grew up for my whole childhood. I suppose if I had to describe my hometown, the first thing I would say is that it's absolutely enormous, maybe even one of the biggest province in my country, I guess. It's so big in fact that even the locals have problems finding their way around. Another significant characteristic is that it offers examples of both classical and contemporary architecture which I found really fabulous. And although it's not a municipal city like HCM but it's trying to catch up.”

- Câu hỏi này có thể thay bằng câu “Tell me about your hometown” mà có thể các bạn sẽ thường xuyên gặp hơn. Thực ra những câu hỏi như thế này các bạn hoàn toàn có thể linh động trả lời. Hometown của bạn có thể vẫn là nơi bạn đang sống và làm việc và như vậy bạn có thể miêu tả cái city ở trên chẳng hạn... Trong bài thi cũng vậy. dù giám khảo hỏi câu CÓ VẼ hóc búa như thế nào cũng đừng hoảng nhé. Vì thực chất nó là cách diễn đạt hoa mỹ của những câu rất đơn giản mà thôi mà cho dù không phải đi chẳng nữa. Hãy cố gắng tinh tảo đưa nó đi theo hướng bạn muốn nhất có thể nhé.

- Ví dụ ở nhà bạn chuẩn bị câu trả lời về chủ đề book, vào thi gặp chủ đề watching movies. Thực ra hai chủ đề này bạn có thể gộp thành một mà, đúng không, sử dụng từ vựng và idea của cái này để nói cho cái kia chứ đừng có lúng túng nghĩ lại từ đâu nhé.
- Nếu bạn không nghe rõ câu hỏi, hãy yêu cầu examiner nhắc lại câu hỏi bằng câu “Pardon” hoặc “Sorry” “can you repeat the question please”.
- Và các bạn có thể thấy những từ in đậm là những linking words đấy ạ.

childhood	thời thơ ấu
enormous	rộng lớn
the locals	người dân bản địa
classical and contemporary architecture	lối kiến trúc vừa cổ điển vừa hiện đại
fabulous	tuyệt vời
municipal	thuộc vùng đô thị
catch up	theo kịp

Câu 5: What is the most famous place in your hometown?

⇒ “Well, to be honest, there isn’t much in Ha Tinh which is famous like HCM but Ky anh beach is a great tourist attraction where most people want to go when they come to Ha Tinh. As well as that, Ho Chi Minh square and hometown are other places that cannot be missed in that list because, you know, for what I forgot to mention, Ha Tinh is also the hometown of HoChiMinh- the ever greatest president of our people.”

- Đề ý những từ in đậm là những linkings và từ chỉ đường các bạn có thể dùng

tourist attraction	Điểm thu hút khách du lịch
Ho Chi Minh square	Quảng trường Hồ Chí Minh
Ho Chi Minh hometown	Quê Bác
people (số ít)	Dân tộc

Câu 6: How has your hometown changed in recent years?

⇒ “I guess I have to say that my hometown has experienced dramatic change over the past 10 years or so years. First thing to recognize is that residential areas are spring up like mushroom, which speeds up the pace of life here. Another thing showing that my hometown has changed for the better is that all the roads are either under construction or already upgraded. Finally, I won’t forget to mention a series of infrastructure design which offers both classical and contemporary architecture which I already mentioned above. I’m pretty proud of my hometown, you know. I guess everybody does.”

dramatic	đáng kể
residential areas	khu dân cư
be spring up like mushroom	mọc lên như nấm
speeds up	tăng, đẩy nhanh tốc độ
pace of life	nhịp sống
under construction	đang xây dựng
upgrade	nâng cấp
infrastructure design	thiết kế cơ sở hạ tầng

Để ý cách mình dùng những từ chỉ đường để vạch rõ ranh giới các ý chính nhé.

Câu 7: Do you want to live in a big city or in a small town?

⇒ “Big city, definitely. Although I really love spending time in a small town, you know, because, there’s less traffic and it’s not so crowded, which seems to be very peaceful and ideal to go travel and stay there for a couple of day but not to live there. You know, coz I have gotten accustomed to life in the big city so it’s hard to get bored when you already live in a place that never sleeps, right.”

- Bây giờ hãy thử cùng mình đánh giá các câu trả lời này theo tiêu chí chấm điểm IELTS xem nó có đạt yêu cầu không nhé:
 - Pronunciation: Xem video để check thử.
 - Fluency and Coherence
 - Nói không bị ngắt ngứ, ậm ừ. Nói khá tự nhiên
 - Câu trả lời đúng chủ đề, không lạc đề
 - Có lý do và giải thích bổ sung cho câu trả lời thêm chặt chẽ
 - Có từ chỉ đường rõ ràng ngăn cách giữa các ý cho câu trả lời trở nên rõ ràng, mạch lạc
 - Grammatical range and accuracy
 - Câu trả lời nào cũng có ít nhất một cấu trúc phức. Không mệnh đề quan hệ thì cũng câu điều kiện, câu rút gọn, chính phụ...
 - Dùng đúng ngữ cảnh giao tiếp và không bị sai ngữ pháp
 - Lexical Resource
 - Dùng được từ academic cho từng chủ đề khác nhau (xem bảng từ vựng ở mỗi câu trả lời)
- Như vậy là các câu của mình đáp ứng khá đầy đủ các tiêu chí chấm thi phải không ạ. Hi vọng sẽ đạt điểm cao. Các bạn khi luyện tập cũng đừng quên thường xuyên đối chiếu câu trả lời với tiêu chí chấm thi nhé. Đừng chỉ nói theo bản năng đi thi IELTS sẽ khó được điểm cao.

Một số từ vựng khác về chủ đề này các bạn có thể dùng cho câu trả lời riêng của mình. Các bạn hãy tự tra từ điển các từ này để biết nghĩa và cách đọc, cách phát âm của nó nhé. Hãy cố gắng đặt một câu với một từ, một câu có nghĩa nhé, không đặt đối phó:

▪ Nouns

winding street	residential area	historical sites
suburb	estate	lifestyle
architecture	neighborhood	inhabitant
the locals (= people)	apartment complex	downtown
local cuisine	culture atmosphere	

▪ Adjectives

sprawling	commercial	distinctive	industrial	ancient
regionally important	unique	built-up	provincial	dynamic

▪ Idioms

run down (= in bad condition)	Some areas are run-down
up-market / chic (= fashionable)	Some neighborhoods are very up-market / chic.

Accommodation

Part 1-style questions

Examiner: Do you live in a house or an apartment?

Callum: Actually I live **on campus** ... in a **single room** in **halls of residence** ... all first year students are encouraged to do that as they're close to the university ... next year I plan to move into **student digs** in town ...

- **to live on campus:** to live on the university or college grounds
- **hall of residence:** a college or university building where students live
- **single room:** a room for one person
- **student digs:** student accommodation

Examiner: Tell me about where you live.

Julia: I live with my parents **in the suburbs** of Madrid ... we only **moved in** recently ... in fact we had a **house-warming party** just a few weeks ago ...

- **the suburbs**: a residential area on the edge of towns or cities
- **to move into**: to begin to live in a property
- **house-warming party**: a party to celebrate moving into a new home

Examiner: What kind of accommodation do most people live in in your city?

Maria: In the city itself the majority of people live in **apartment blocks** ... that's what surprised me about England ... most people seem to live in **terraced houses** with lovely **back gardens** ...

- **terraced house**: a house connected on both sides by other properties
- **apartment block**: a large building made up of smaller units of apartments
- **back garden**: a garden at the rear of the house

Part 2-style task

Describe a house or an apartment you would like to live in. You should say

- what kind of accommodation it would be
- where it would be
- who would live there with you
- and say why you would enjoy living in this place.

Paolo: I think most people when answering this question would say they'd like to live in a big **detached house** with **spacious rooms** ... views of the countryside and so on ... but actually my **ideal home** would be a lot different ... I've always loved the idea of having a **mobile home** ... a really expensive one with **all the mod cons** ... so I could live wherever I wanted or at least have lots of holidays and be able to take all my **home comforts** with me whenever I travelled ... I realise this would have to be a second home as I'd need a base ... a **permanent address** ... but the mobile home would be the accommodation I'd find it exciting to live in ... I suppose once I settle down and have children I'll want **to get on the property ladder** ... I'll be like everyone else ... saving up **to put down a deposit** on a house or an apartment ... I don't think my family would want to live in a mobile home ... but I like to think I'll still keep that **dream home** in mind ...

- **ideal home**: a perfect home
- **spacious room**: a large room
- **dream home**: a home you regard as perfect
- **mobile home**: a home that can be moved by a vehicle or one that has its own engine
- **permanent address**: a fixed address

- **to get on the property ladder:** to buy a property with the aim of buying another bigger or more expensive one later in life
- **home comforts:** things that make a home feel comfortable to live in
- **to put down a deposit:** to pay an amount of money as the first in a series of future payments
- **(all the) mod cons:** technology at home that makes jobs easier such as a washing machine, dishwasher etc.
- **detached house:** a house that is not physically connected to another property

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: Is it better to own your own home or to rent?

Ana: I think both have their advantages ... living in **rented accommodation** isn't necessarily a bad thing ... you don't have a huge debt like you do when you **take out a mortgage** but I suppose the **property market** offers you an investment for the future ... I'm sure that's why most people prefer **to own their own home** ...

- **to take out a mortgage:** to borrow a large amount of money, paid back over several years, in order to buy a house
- **property market:** the buying and selling of land or buildings
- **to own your own home:** to have bought the property you live in
- **rented accommodation:** property owned by someone else and for which a person pays a fixed amount to live in

Examiner: What options are available to young couples looking for accommodation in your country?

Toni: If they want to buy their own home it isn't easy for **first-time buyers** ... mortgages are hard to get so most people live with their parents or in **rented accommodation** ... but that can also be very expensive ... you often have to **pay rent in advance** ... and if the accommodation isn't **fully furnished** you have the expense of buying furniture ...

- **to pay rent in advance:** weekly or monthly rent paid at the beginning of the week or month
- **fully-furnished:** a rented property with all furniture included
- **first-time buyer:** someone buying a property for the first time, especially when taking out a loan (mortgage)
- **rented accommodation:** property owned by someone else and for which a person pays a fixed amount to live in

Examiner: What are some of the pleasures involved in making a home for ourselves?

Suki: I suppose it starts with **house-hunting** ... finding your ideal home ... some people enjoy **doing**

up an old property ... giving a property that's old and tired a new lease of life ... others like making wherever they live feel like home with some **home comforts** ...

- *to do up a property*: to repair an old building
- *house-hunting*: looking for a property to live in

Town and City

Part 1-style questions

Examiner: What is it like where you live?

Christiane: I live in a **residential area** of a busy town in the south of Spain ... we have all the facilities you need ... good **public transport** ... a good **shopping centre** ... it's nice ...

- *shopping centre*: an area consisting of multiple shops
- *residential area*: an area where people live

Examiner: Do you like living in the city?

Andrea: Yes I do ... I like going out with my friends and there are lots of **lively bars and restaurants** within walking distance of my apartment ... I'm a bit of a culture vulture as well so it's great to have access to art exhibitions and that kind of thing ...

- *lively bars/restaurants*: bars or restaurants with a good atmosphere

Examiner: Do you get many tourists visiting your area?

Mandy: Not really no ... I live in the **inner-city** and the area is a little **run down** ... it's basically a lot of **high-rise flats** and many of the shops are **boarded up** ... so nothing to interest tourists really ...

- *high-rise flats*: multi-story apartments
- *inner-city*: the central part of a city where people live and where conditions are often poor
- *boarded up shops*: shops that are no longer doing business
- *run down*: old and of a poor standard

Part 2-style task

Describe an interesting town or city in your country that visitors might enjoy. You should say

- what the place is called
- where the place is
- what the facilities are like

and say why visitors might enjoy going there.

Monique: Anyone who comes to my country really should spend some time in Barcelona ... it's a beautiful place ... it's not what you would call a **sprawling city** ... it's quite compact really and you could walk across the city in a couple of hours ... but there's no need to do that as we have a fantastic **public transport system** so it's easy **to get around** ... there are various districts all with their own character ... you have the **upmarket shops** in the centre ... you'll find lots of **chain stores** you'll recognise from your own country but also local brands as well ... we have the narrow streets in the Gothic district with lots of **fashionable boutiques** and **tourist attractions** ... there's the Olympic area and the beaches along the coast ... and dotted around the city are some lovely **public spaces** ... parks and squares in the **city centre** and **on the outskirts** of Barcelona where people relax with their friends and family ... and of course **pavement cafes** everywhere ... all that and some great historical **places of interest** ... so a great destination for tourists ...

- *public transport system*: public vehicles such as buses and trains that operate at regular times on fixed routes
- *upmarket shops*: expensive fashionable shops
- *to get around*: to travel around
- *sprawling city*: a city that has grown over time and which covers a wide area
- *chain stores*: well-known brands with shops in multiple cities
- *fashionable boutiques*: fashionable clothes shops
- *tourist attraction*: a place of interest to tourists
- *public spaces*: areas in a town or city that are open to the public
- *on the outskirts*: **on the parts of town or city that are furthest from the centre**
- *pavement cafe*: cafes with tables outside on the pavement
- *places of interest*: buildings that have a particular interest for visitors

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: What are the advantages of living in a city or big town?

Carrie: I think it's having access to **local facilities** really ... local shops as well as access to larger **shopping malls** in the city centre ... and if you're well-off you can afford to live **in the suburbs** away from the busy traffic ...

- *shopping malls*: large indoor shopping centres
- *local facilities*: local buildings or services serving the public
- *in the suburbs*: the outer area of large towns and cities where people live

Examiner: In your experience are city centres usually attractive places?

Mary: Some can be yes ... especially those with a historical interest ... but sometimes they're full of ugly **office blocks** ... **multi-story car parks** ... and residents living in **poor housing**... it depends on the city doesn't it?

- *multi-story car parks*: car parks on several floors
- *office block*: a large building that contains offices
- *poor housing*: housing that is not in good condition

Examiner: What are some of the challenges facing towns and cities?

Penny: I suppose **traffic congestion** is a major problem ... and the growth in **out-of-town supermarkets and retail parks** mean lots of town centre shops are **closing down** ... plus a shortage of good quality housing ... I think these are the major challenges ...

Definitions

- *to close down*: to stop doing business
- *out of town shopping centre/retail park*: large shopping centres outside of the town or city
- *traffic congestion*: heavy traffic making it difficult to move around a town or city