

IELTS Speaking #12 – Topic 1.9: Family

1. Could you tell me about your family?

“Yeah sure. I live in a nuclear family of 4 members and all of us are very close and love each other very much. My Dad and my Mom are both workers. I also have a younger brother. He’s 18 years old and in preparation to the college. He bears a remarkable resemblance to my mother. We live in a lovely house in the west of my country. I have two grandparents as well, but they don’t live with us.”

Trở lại với dạng câu hỏi trần thuật, “could you tell me about st.”. Trên kia mình trả lời hơi dài dòng nhưng các bạn chỉ cần trả lời khoảng 2-3 câu là ok. Đừng chỉ tập trung vào câu trả lời cho câu hỏi được đặt ra, hãy liên hệ xung quanh câu trả lời nữa (gia đình nhỏ hay to, có mấy người, bố mẹ là người như thế nào, anh chị em ra sao, mối liên kết gia đình có thân thiết hay không...). Chọn 2 trong các ý trên để nói là ok rồi.

Từ vựng:

nuclear family	gia đình nhỏ (từ 1-2 thế hệ)
in preparation to st.	chuẩn bị cho
bear a remarkable resemblance to sb.	giống ai đó

2. What kind of things do you and your family do together?

“There’s a lot of thing that we do together. My whole family always gather at dinner and discuss various types of stuff. I often take advice on important things from my parents, and sometime my little brother too. My parents often discuss their experience, tell us history and often teach us morality and importance of being honest in life. We also do our gardening together, you know watering, manuring and weeding the plants ...and a lot of other stuff I cannot list out enough.”

Ở đây mình đi theo hướng kể ra sau đó miêu tả chi tiết một tí các bạn có thể để ý. Có hai hoạt động gia đình mình thường hay làm cùng nhau, mình kể ra và sau đó thêm vào một câu miêu tả chi tiết nữa là ok. Kết thúc bằng một câu “ngoài ra có rất nhiều hoạt động khác nữa, không kể hết đc”.

Nghiên cứu thêm về cách trả lời dạng câu hỏi này tại câu 3, chủ đề [Hobbies and Interests](#).

Từ vựng:

morality	đạo đức
do gardening	làm vườn
water (v)	tưới nước
manure (v)	bón phân
weed (v)	nhổ cỏ

3. Do you prefer to spend time with your family or with your friends?

“If I were to choose between the two, I’ll go with my family because in many ways, my family are my friends and they are the ones who will stay with me all my life, whereas I don’t actually meet my friends

very often, you know although yeah sometimes I have more fun with my friends because they are closer to my age, I still tend to prefer hanging out with my family.”

Tham khảo cấu trúc ngữ pháp và cách trả lời dạng câu hỏi “prefer” tại câu 7, chủ đề [Sports](#).

Từ vựng:

be to do st.	phải làm gì/định làm gì
go with	chọn
hang out	dành thời gian, chơi

4. How are you getting on with your parents?

“If you asked me that question when I was at junior high, it would be totally different point of view. I mean, my parents, they had a list of things that they thought I need to become, and that I need to better myself and all, always compared me to another kids but it’s just like the story of the last decade. Now, when I’m being more mature, I understand them well, I get on with my parents wonderfully. They are easy to talk to, kind-hearted and I trust them completely coz I know my parents always want best things to me.”

Ở đây mình đưa ra cách trả lời theo dạng so sánh quá khứ với hiện tại để làm nổi bật vấn đề, các bạn có thể tham khảo. Hoặc các bạn có thể trả lời theo dạng này: Đưa ra câu trả lời có hay không, sau đó dẫn chứng một chút vì bố mẹ là người như thế nào, sau đó đưa ra một ví dụ cụ thể, ok?

Từ vựng:

junior high	trung học
better (v)	trở nên tốt hơn
decade	thập kỷ (10 năm)
mature	trưởng thành
get on with sb.	hòa hợp với ai
kind-hearted	tốt bụng

5. Is family very important to you?

“Of course it is. Family is the most important thing in the world to me. It’s the only thing that never turns back on me and it’s really all I have in the long run. Once I grew up and moved out and away, I more realized how important they are. I’ve been through some very painful times and I do not know what I would do without their love, support and strength as if they’re always be there for me. I remember the song named “You always find the way back home”. Wherever you go, whoever you become, you can always find the way back with your lovely family.”

Rõ ràng chỗ này phải đưa ra lý do rồi. Cứ “firstly – secondly” rồi liệt kê lý do thôi. Chú ý sử dụng những từ linking words nhé.

Từ vựng:

turn back on sb.	quay lưng lại với ai
long run	dài hạn
painful times	khoảng thời gian khó khăn

6. Would you prefer to have a larger or smaller family?

“Actually, I prefer my family remains unchanged coz it’s the best now. Although I also wanna live in an extend family then family members can support and foster each other but I’m a bit worried about generation gaps which might lead to some unnecessary arguments, you know. And it cannot be smaller coz we’re already complete.”

Từ vựng:

remains unchanged	giữ nguyên
extend family	gia đình lớn, nhiều thế hệ sống với nhau
foster	giúp đỡ, hỗ trợ
generation gaps	khoảng cách các thế hệ
complete	hoàn hảo, trọn vẹn

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

family unit	identical twins	household chore	breadwinner	relative
family circle	family man	family connection	mother-in-law	
step mother	nursing home	single parent family	generation gap	

Adjectives

understanding and caring	affectionate	intimate	distant
	hereditary	paternal	maternal

Idioms

it’s in the blood (= it’s a natural part of one’s character)	All my family are really fond of reading. I guess it’s in the blood.
run in the family (= be shared family characteristic)	My brothers and I have big ears. It runs in the family.

born with a silver spoon in one's mouth (= born into a rich family)	I wasn't exactly born with a silver spoon in my mouth. My family is quite normal.
start a family (= have children)	I am getting married next year and hope to start a family straight away.

Relationship

Part 1-style questions

Examiner: Do you see your friends very often?

Louisa: Yes ... we meet up most weekends ... we all get on really well and have a lot in common so we're always happy doing the same things and going to the same places.

to get on well with: to understand someone and enjoy similar interests

to have a lot in common: to share similar interests

Examiner: What do you like about your close friends?

Anna: I think we enjoy each other's company ... we see eye-to-eye on most things so we rarely fall out with each other.

to enjoy someone's company: to like spending time with someone

to fall out with: to have a disagreement and stop being friends

to see eye to eye: to agree on a subject

Examiner: Have you known each other long?

Amy: Most of them yes ... although my closest friend Carrie ... we struck up a relationship at college and got on like a house on fire ... but yes ... my other friendships go back years to when we were at school.

to get on like a house on fire: to like someone's company very much indeed

to strike up a relationship: to begin a friendship

to go back years: to have known someone for a long time

Part 2-style task

Describe a person you are very close to. You should say:

Reiko: I'd like to talk about my boyfriend ... Jose ... we got to know each other at University almost 4 years ago ... we were in the same department ... initially we were just good friends and used to go out in a group with our other friends ... when Jose went back to Spain for the holidays we would keep in touch with each other ... then one year he invited me to come to Spain with him ... and that's when we fell for each other I think ... so you couldn't really say it was love at first sight as it had been over a year since we'd met ... but we really hit it off and by the time we got back to university in September we were able to tell all our friends that we were in a relationship ... what do I like about Jose ... well he's very kind ... very funny ... and very supportive ... and we're really well matched in our interests ... he hasn't popped the question yet though ... we've talked about getting married and I think we're both ready to settle down and have children ... we'll just have to wait and see ...

to keep in touch with: to keep in contact with

to get to know: to begin to know someone

to be just good friends: to not be romantically involved

to fall for: to fall in love

love at first sight: to fall in love immediately you meet someone

to hit it off: to quickly become good friends with
to be in a relationship: to be romantically involved with someone
to settle down: to give up the single life and start a family
to be well matched: to be similar to
to pop the question: to ask someone to marry you

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: Do you think marriage is still as important as ever?

Cristine: Yes ... it certainly is in my country ... I think the problem for some people is a lack of commitment ... all relationships have their ups and downs but some people prefer to break up rather than working at the relationship.

to break up: to end a romantic relationship

to work at a relationship: to try to maintain a positive relationship with someone

to have ups and downs: to have good and bad time

Examiner: What do you think is the ideal time to get married?

Terry: Personally ... I think you should wait until you've found yourself first ... decided if you want a career ... perhaps do some travelling ... you should do this before tying the knot ... although if you fall head over heels in love plans like these can easily be forgotten.

to tie the knot: to get married

to fall head over heels in love: to start to love someone a lot

Examiner: Is it important to keep in contact with our friends when we're in a relationship?

Maria: Absolutely ... it's so easy to drift apart from your friends when you fall in love ... but I think both partners should try not to lose touch with their friends ... that's the best way to have a healthy relationship with your partner.

a healthy relationship: a good, positive relationship

to lose touch with: to not see or hear from someone any longer

to drift apart: to become less close to someone

Personality

Part 1-style questions

Examiner: How would you describe yourself?

Paula: Everyone tells me I take after my mum as I'm quite laid-back ... I think I'm good company but you should ask my friends if they agree ...

laid-back: see 'easy-going'

good company: enjoyable to socialise with

to take after: to be like (often another member of the family)

Examiner: In which ways are you similar to your friends?

Manuel: I seem to be attracted to introverts ... not people who are painfully shy but most of my friends are a little reserved ... and I think that's what I'm like ...

introvert: someone who is shy

painfully shy: very shy

reserved: shy

Examiner: Are you similar or different to your brother(s)/sister(s)?

Mira: I think my brother and I are very similar ... I'd say we're fun-loving and tend to be a bit extroverted ... my brother is certainly the life and soul of the party ... I'm not sure that applies to me ... fun-loving: to enjoy having fun

extrovert: an energetic person who likes the company of others

to be the life and soul of the party: a fun person, someone who is the centre of activity

Part 2-style task

Describe a teacher you once had who you enjoyed being taught by. You should say

who this person was

when they were your teacher

which subject they taught you

Carolina: I'd like to describe my English teacher from school ... Miss Thomas ... this was a few years ago now and she was my teacher at a time when I was getting a little bored with being at school ... unlike some of the other teachers Miss Thomas never lost her temper ... she was very calm and easy-going ... she was also very broad-minded ... we were able to ask her questions about lots of subjects that some other teachers would refuse to discuss which made us respect her even more ... she had a great sense of humour too ... she'd laugh at our jokes as well as making us laugh ... and she would also bend over backwards to help us with our work ... she always put us first and often stayed around at the end of class to talk with anyone who needed help ... apparently she was highly respected within her field but you would never know as she was the type that hid her light under a bushel ... she was very modest and self-effacing ... so yes ... Miss Thomas was a teacher I have fond memories of ...

to bend over backwards: to try very hard to help someone

broad-minded: prepared to accept other views or behaviours

easy-going: relaxed and not easily worried about anything

to put others first: to think of others before yourself

to hide one's light under a bushel: to hide one's talents and skills

good sense of humour: the ability to understand what is funny

self-effacing: to not try to get the attention of others (especially in terms of hiding one's skills or abilities)

to lose one's temper: to suddenly become angry

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: Which personal qualities do you think we most want to pass on to our children?

Martin: I certainly would want my children to be self-confident and self-assured ... I really believe that people who feel good about themselves are in a good position to face what life has to offer them ... and I'd hope they wouldn't be self-centred ... but remembered to think about others ...

self-assured: confident

self-centred: thinks only of oneself

self-confident: believes in one's own ability or knowledge

Examiner: Which characteristics do you think are the least appealing in a person?

Marianne: Well ... people who are very narrow-minded are difficult to get on with ... it's nice when someone is open to other people's opinion and willing to think about their own views ... and people who are two-faced can be a little irritating ... relationships are built on trust and without honesty there's not much left ...

narrow minded: opposite of 'broad-minded' (see above)

two-faced: not honest or sincere. Will say one thing to someone to their face and another when they are not present.

Examiner: Which personality types do you think are less likely to suffer from stress or anxiety?

Sol: Probably people who are thick-skinned ... who don't let people or problems affect them too much ... and if you are fair-minded you'll be less likely to overreact to situations or be quick-tempered ...

quick-tempered: to become angry quickly

thick-skinned: not easily affected by criticism

fair-minded: to treat people equally

Addition:

trustworthy: can be trusted

Physical Appearance

Part 1-style questions

Examiner: Do you look like any other people in your family?

Carlo: No ... not at all ... take my brother for example ... he has short cropped hair and has quite a pointed face ... he's also quite fair-skinned compared to me ...

cropped hair: very short hair

to be fair-skinned: light skinned

pointed face: the opposite of a round face

Examiner: Tell me about your family.

Andrea: My father's getting on a bit ... he's in his 60s ... but he looks very young for his age ... he still does lots of exercise and is quite well-built ...

to be getting on a bit: to be getting old

in his/her 30s/40s: to be 20/30 something

to be well-built: to be muscular

to look young for your age: to look younger than you are

Examiner: What does your best friend look like?

Mandy: She's the same age as me ... she has shoulder-length hair ... fair hair ... she has a slim figure and is medium height ...

fair hair: light-coloured hair

medium height: average height

slim figure: attractively thin

shoulder-length hair: hair that comes down to the shoulders and no further

Part 2-style task

Describe a person whose appearance you like. You should say

who this person is

what their relationship is to you

what they look like

and say what it is about their appearance you like.

Monique: OK ... I'd like to talk about my aunt ... her name's Marta and she's quite a character ... she's middle-aged but has a very youthful appearance ... she's a little overweight I suppose but not too much ... she has a friendly round face framed by thick blonde hair ... she has a lovely complexion and

she's always well-turned out ... she actually always looks like she's going out for the evening to somewhere special ... there's never a hair out of place ... I've always thought she bears a striking resemblance to someone on TV ... I can't remember the name now ... she wears glasses and always seems to have a different pair on every time I see her ... I like the way she looks because she wears clothes that are right for her age and manages to look glamorous without it looking like she's too done up ... yes ... I'll be happy if I look like her when I'm her age ...

youthful appearance: to look young

middle-aged: approximately between 45-65

thick hair: a lot of hair

to be overweight: to weigh more than is regarded as healthy

to be well-turned out: to look smart

complexion: natural skin colour and texture

to bear a striking resemblance: to look very similar to

to wear glasses: to use spectacles

to never have a hair out of place: perfectly styled hair

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: Is it important to dress well whenever we go out?

Mark: It depends where you're going ... I know some people get done up just to go to the shops ... but I don't see the point ... you shouldn't go out looking scruffy with disheveled hair but I really don't see the point in getting dressed up to the nines unless you're going somewhere special ...

disheveled hair: untidy hair

to dress up to the nines: to dress very smartly or glamorously

scruffy: dressed untidily

to get done up: to dress smartly

Examiner: Do people worry too much about their appearance as they get older?

Mira: I'm sure they do ... yes ... but it happens to all of us doesn't it ... we all go grey eventually and get hard of hearing ... we start to lose our figure ... that's why plastic surgery is so popular ... personally I think we just need to grow old gracefully and not worry too much about how we look ...

to go grey: to have hair that is turning grey

to grow old gracefully: to act in a way that embraces the fact you are getting older

to be hard of hearing: to find it difficult to hear

to lose one's figure: to have a figure that has lost its toned shape

Examiner: Is attractiveness a quality worthwhile aiming for?

Phoebe: I'd like to say no ... it shouldn't matter what we look like in terms of our physical appearance ... but unfortunately it seems women especially are taken more seriously if they are good looking with a slender figure with perfect make up and so on ...

slender figure: a figure that is tall and slim

to be good looking: to be attractive

make up: cosmetics