

Unit 2

Life in the 21st Century

(A) Look at the pictures below. How important are these items to our lives today? Discuss with a partner, then rank the items in terms of importance from 1 to 5.

(i)



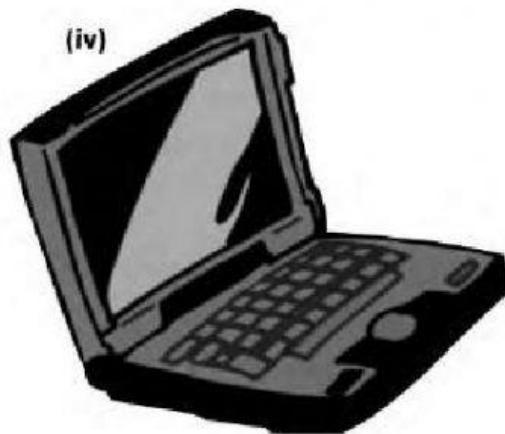
(ii)



(iii)



(iv)



(v)



Ranking: 1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____ 4: _____ 5: _____

(B) You will hear five extracts. Each extract relates to one of the items pictured above. Match the extracts to the pictures. Write the correct picture (i-v) in the space provided.



Extract 1 _____

Extract 2 _____

Extract 3 _____

Extract 4 _____

Extract 5 _____

(C) Soon, you are going to prepare a short speaking exercise. But first you will read some more about Part 2 of the Speaking test and ways to prepare for it on the pages which follow. After you have finished reading about Part 2, you will be asked to answer the following question, speaking continuously for about two minutes. The question is: **Which one of the items in the pictures above is most useful to you?** In your answer you should say:

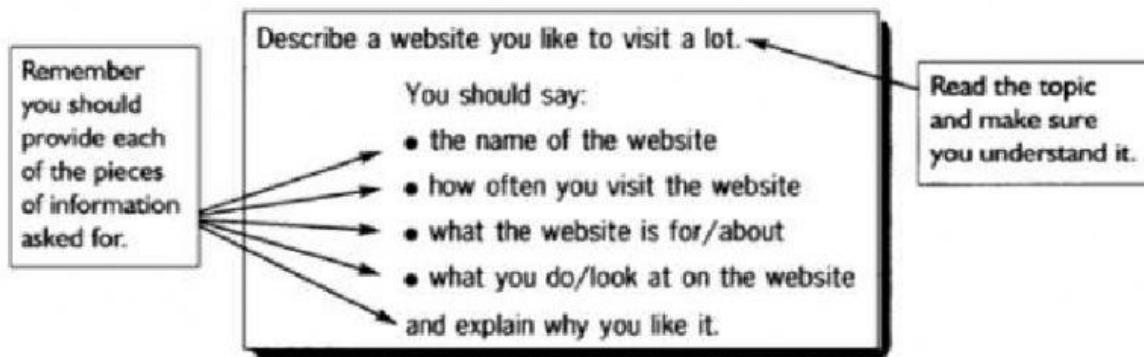
- what the item is
- how often you use it
- what you use it for
- why it is so useful to you

Exam Focus: Part 2

In Part 2 of the exam, you will be asked to give a short talk for about two minutes. You will be tested on your ability to organise your ideas and speak fluently.

You will have to prepare and talk about a topic given to you during the test by the examiner.

Here is an example Part 2 task (you will be given a similar task-card by the examiner):



This part normally lasts 3 minutes.

You must...

- 1 **Read the task.**
- 2 **Make notes on each of the parts (approx. 1 minute).**
- 3 **Talk about the topic, answering the questions on the card.**
- 4 **Stop talking (after about 2 min.) when the examiner tells you to.**
- 5 **Answer some follow-up questions.**

In this book, you will learn a step-by-step strategy for practising how to talk continuously for up to two minutes that will help you to build up your confidence so that you are ready for the task come exam day.

We start off by making notes - a kind of brainstorm which gets you thinking of ideas. Then we write our answer down in full. Next, we put the written answer to one side (without memorising it) and we attempt to talk for as long as we can about the subject with the help of our notes.

At first, it may be hard for you to do this, but as you practise, you will find yourself having more and more to say. Eventually, you will become a lot more fluent and you will rely far less, if at all, on your notes. What's more, your confidence in your ability to express yourself will improve.

The note-making and writing will train your brain to think about and organise your answers logically. This will provide you with a starting point for your speaking and give you more to say. Eventually, you will become so good at organising your thoughts that you will no longer be reliant on the notes and you will be able to put your thoughts together more or less as you speak. **YOU MUST NEVER TRY TO MEMORISE YOUR WRITTEN ANSWERS THOUGH** as this defeats the purpose of the exercise. See the next page for more.

EXAMPLE: Describe a website you like to visit a lot.

You should say:

- the name of the website
- how often you visit the website
- what the website is for/about
- what you do/look at on the website
- and explain why you like it.

Step 1 Make notes

Name - Facebook

Visit - Twice a day (at least)

For - friends to keep in contact

Do - send messages to friends; look at friends' news; post pictures and videos I like; comment on friends' pictures and videos; write on friends' walls (wall is the place where all a friend's news is seen); comment on friends' pictures and videos; say what I am doing; see what friends are doing; post links to other websites; 'like' different things (to like something you press a 'like' button on the website; means you are a fan of it...) - can 'like' music, pages, programmes, people; all sorts of things...; also able to play games - Facebook has lots of games apps

Why I like it - a great way to keep in touch with people - literally everyone; close friends, family, friends who live far away, work colleagues etc.; can find out all their news and keep them up to date with what you're doing as well, plus you're in control - get to decide who sees your pictures and posts and you can even set up groups for different kinds of friends; this means you don't have to share everything with all your friends; can choose who sees what; also love the games, so much fun, like Farmville - can create my own little online farm and become a virtual farmer and even build up a virtual farming community! There's so much you can do...

Step 2 Write Answer

Always introduce the topic.

(a) A website I love to visit is Facebook - you probably know that one Most people do since it's one of the most visited sites in the world.

(b) I visit it at least twice a day, and often more - it's so addictive that

(c) sometimes I stay on it for hours actually! Facebook is basically designed for people who want to keep in touch with their friends. It's a bit like a chat site, I suppose - but that's not doing it justice; the site's amazing really. I mean, I can use it for so many different types of things: I can message my friends on it, check out their news and see what they're up to, post pictures and videos that I like onto my page and see the ones friends have posted, too. I can write on my friends' walls - a wall is sort of like a webpage where all a friend's news and updates can be seen. I can comment on my friends' pictures and photos, too, and they can comment on mine - so long as they don't say anything nasty! Then again, if they did, I could just 'unfriend' them, so it wouldn't matter anyway! I can say what I'm doing by updating my status, see what friends are doing, and 'like' lots of different things. 'Liking' is when you want to show your appreciation for something or tell everyone that you are a fan of it. Basically, if you like something, you just click the 'like' button on the page. You can like music, pages, videos, updates; all sorts of things

(e) really... You can also play games on Facebook - it has tons of great apps. As for why I like it: it couldn't be simpler really: it's just the best site on the net! It is a brilliant way of keeping in touch with people, from family to close friends to faraway friends or even just acquaintances. You can find out all their news and keep them up to date with what you are up to, too. Another great thing is that you control what people can see and you decide who to share your news and updates with. Oh, and did I mention the games? I love them all, but especially Farmville; you can create your own little farm and become a virtual farmer - and even build a virtual farming community! There's so much you can do I could go on all day!

Notice how the register isn't that formal - in Parts 1 and 2 you don't have to use very formal language.

Using language that sounds authentic, like phrasal verbs and lots of idioms will impress the examiner - provided they are used in the right way!

Just as when writing, it is very important to use linking words and phrases to bring your talk together and to help your ideas flow smoothly.

Remember: you should answer all the questions on the prompt card in order to maximise your score. Here, each new point answered is marked with a letter, (a), (b), (c), (d) or (e), and underlined.

Step 3 Speak!

This step is very simple (and yet perhaps the most difficult of all): now that you have structured your thoughts and put them into a logical order, you should have plenty to say. Put away the written answer, and, using only your notes to help you, try to speak for as long as you can about the subject. Allow the ideas to flow from your mouth and don't worry if you can't speak as well as you've written; just try your best to be fluent - keep going! - and natural-sounding. With practice, your confidence will improve as will the manner in which you express your ideas.

Remember the steps in our practice method...

- 1 Make notes on each of the separate parts of the task.
- 2 Convert your notes into a written answer.
- 3 Try to speak for about two minutes using only your notes to help you.

Now, let's look at question C again.

(C) Which one of the items in the pictures on page 38, is most useful to you?

In your answer you should say:

- what the item is
- how often you use it
- what you use it for

And why it is useful to you.

Complete your answer by following the steps below.

Step 1 Make Notes

Step 2 Write Answer

Step 3 Speak!

(D) Look at the pictures below. They show two different families. Picture (i) was taken in the 1980s and Picture (ii) was taken in the 2000s.

(i)



(ii)



Discuss the following questions with a partner:

- In what ways might life have been different for the family in Picture (i) in the 1980s compared with life for the family in Picture (ii) in the 2000s?
- Do you think the children would have done the same things, played the same games, had the same hobbies, worn the same clothes, behaved in the same way, listened to the same music etc.?
- What have been the big changes in our lifestyle today compared with 20 or 30 years ago?

(E) Listen to the recording of a teenager talking about her life, and fill in the gaps in the transcript below using the words that you hear. Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** in each gap.



I was really excited today when I heard the news my parents had; you'll never guess what; I'm going to _____! Isn't that so cool? I mean, I've never been to _____ before in my life and neither have any of my friends. And we're taking _____ over from Pembroke port in Wales. It's a four-hour journey, I think. Can you believe it? The ferry! None of my friends have been on one of those yet either. I'm going to _____ to my aunt in Dublin to tell her I'm coming over to see her. I wonder what she'll look like in person; I've only ever seen the photos of her that she's sent _____. We don't even get to talk that much really; well, every Sunday night _____, but that's only for about five minutes - phone calls are _____, you know... Anyway, now we'll finally get to meet. I'm going to bring my camera and take as many shots as I can. I bought five _____ yesterday; my camera will be click, click, click!

Then discuss the questions below with a partner:

- When do you think this recording of a teenage girl was made - in the 80s or today?
- What evidence is there to support your opinion?



(F) Sort the phrases in the box below into ones that probably relate to life in the 1980s (A) and ones that probably relate to life today (B).

many stay-at-home mothers
young children text each other
most school-leavers go straight into the workplace
people do their banking online
discipline in schools is good
the TV listings give 400 different channels
televisions are expensive and there is only one in every house
houses are affordable for first-time buyers
most people are married by age 25
most people go on foreign holidays
there are many jobs in I.T.

families play board games at night
domestic holidays dominate
the number of college graduates is very high
young people are very confident and loud
it is cool to smoke
most music sales are downloads
international flights are very cheap
cigarette advertising is banned
few people are computer literate
distance learning courses are very popular
telephone boxes are used very regularly

A (1980s)

B (today)

(G) Use the three-step method (note-taking ... written answer ... spoken answer) to do the following task.
Once you have finished your written answer, give your talk to the class.

Describe a typical day in your life.

You should say:

- at what time you get up
- what you normally do in the morning
- what you normally do in the afternoon and evening

and give examples of ways you like to relax after a busy day.

Make Notes



(H) Now pair off with another student and ask each other these follow-up questions:

- (i) Do you think your daily routine would be very different if you were actually living in the year 1981?
- (ii) What sorts of activities do people do today which might not have been so popular 20 or 30 years ago?
- (iii) What aspects of life today would you miss the most if you were taken back in time to the 1980s and left there, do you think?
- (iv) Do you think you have an easier life than people your age did in the past?

(I) Here are some further Part 2 questions for you to practise in your own time.

Describe your favourite piece of technology.

You should say:

1

- what it is
- how expensive it is and where you can buy it
- what it does

and why you like it **so** much.

Follow-up Questions:

- What piece of technology do you think, would be hardest to live without?
- What are the most popular technological devices with young people nowadays?

Describe what life was like when you were a young child.

You should say:

2

- where you lived and what your daily routine was like
- how you felt about school
- what you used to do in your free time

and explain how your life is different now.

Follow-up Questions:

- Did you find life easier when you were very young?
- Do you agree with people who say our school days are the best of our lives?

Speaking Test 2

PART 1

The examiner will ask you some questions about yourself.

Let's talk about your home town.

Where do you come from?

What is it like where you live?

Do you like living there?

Have you always lived in the same place?

What is there to do near where you live?

The examiner will then ask you some questions about one or two other topics. See the example below.

Now let's talk about learning languages.

How long have you been learning English?

Do most people in your country learn English?

Have you studied any other languages? Which language do you find easiest?

Do you think it is important to learn English?

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start learning a foreign language?

PART 2

The examiner will give you a topic on a card like the one below and ask you to talk about it for one to two minutes. Before you talk you have one minute to think about what you want to say. The examiner will give you some paper and a pencil so you can make notes if you want to.

Describe a website you like to visit a lot.

You should say:

- the name of the website and how often you visit it
- what the website is for/about
- what you do/look at on the website

and explain why you like it.

The examiner may ask you one or two more related questions when you have finished, like those given in the example below.

Do you spend a lot of time online?

Apart from looking at websites, what else do you do online?

Do you think the internet is very useful, or not really?

PART 3

The examiner will ask you some more general questions which follow on from the topic in Part 2.

Is surfing the internet more or less popular today than it used to be, in your opinion?

What would you say are the main reasons people use the internet?

Do you agree with people who say the internet is addictive?

Do you think it is healthy when people spend a lot of time online?

What are the dangers people using the internet face?

The internet is very important to the way we live our lives in the 21st century. Do you agree?

Are we influenced by what we read and see on the internet?

Do you think the internet is a reliable source of information?