

UNIT 6: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEAKING

Exercise 1: In this unit, you will learn strategies to help you answer IELTS Speaking Part 3 questions as well as ways to improve your Grammatical Range and Accuracy mark. Read the information. Then watch the video of a native English speaker answering a question about television. Choose the two phrases that she uses to give herself time to think before she answers.
(Video 6.1)

- ☐ *I don't think there is an easy answer to that question.*
- ☐ *Let me see.*
- ☐ *Let me have a think.*
- ☐ *Let me think.*
- ☐ *That is a difficult question to answer.*
- ☐ *That is a good question.*
- ☐ *That's a tricky question.*

Exercise 2: Read the examiner's questions and the student's responses. Put the words in the correct order to complete the phrases that the student uses to give herself more time to think.

1. **Examiner:** *What would you say has been the most significant technological development of the last five years?*

Student:

Really difficult / question / that's / a / to / answer / .

I guess virtual reality deserves a mention. Not only is it used for entertainment purposes, like in video games, but it can also be used to train, say, doctors or pilots in a safe environment and allow them to improve and develop their skills without risking people's lives.

2 **Examiner:** *Do you think virtual reality will be the next big thing?*

Student:

I'm / quite / sorry / your / I / follow / don't / question / but / .
Are you asking if I think VR will become more popular?

3 **Examiner:** *Does technology dominate our daily lives?*

Student:

By / you / that, / do / mean / , are we too dependent on technology?

4. Examiner: *Should children be more computer-literate?*

Student:

Not / what / entirely / asking / you're / I'm / sure / .

If you're asking if schoolchildren should learn to use the internet or something like Word or Excel, then I would say not necessarily. However, I do think that it could be an optional subject in secondary school.

5. Examiner: *Do you think technology brings people together?*

Student:

That / don't / to / is / clear-cut / answer / I / a / think / there / .

I would say that it depends entirely on how it is used. It certainly makes it easier to communicate with people over long distances, for example by using Skype or social networking apps. I suppose the counter-argument is that some people use it so much that this means they spend less time meeting face-to-face.

Exercise 3: Read the information. Then match the phrases with the grammar descriptions.

Using these grammar structures in the IELTS Speaking test will help you achieve a higher mark for Grammatical Range and Accuracy.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| 1 If I had to choose, I would have to say that ... | ● | ● | present simple <i>get</i> passive |
| 2 I'm always using it. | ● | ● | <i>would</i> for hypothesis |
| 3 I've been using it ... / I've been thinking about buying ... | ● | ● | present continuous with <i>always</i> for habits |
| 4 It also gets used ... | ● | ● | hypothetical ability |
| 5 I don't know what I would do ... | ● | ● | present perfect continuous |
| 6 It has become ... | ● | ● | <i>be going to</i> + obligation |
| 7 I'm going to have to ... | ● | ● | second conditional |
| 8 Prices will be reduced. | ● | ● | future passive |
| 9 I wouldn't be able to ... | ● | ● | present perfect simple |

Exercise 4: Read the IELTS Speaking Part 2 task card. Then listen to a student's response to the task card and answer the questions. Choose True or False. (Track 6.6)

Describe a piece of computer software that you use.

You should say:

how you found out about the computer software

how often you use this computer software

what you use it for

and give your opinion on it.

1. The student covers all the points on the task card. **True / False**

2. The student uses a variety of discourse markers to structure the response and connect ideas.

True / False

3. The student includes examples of the following grammar:

conditionals **True / False**

future forms **True / False**

modals in the past **True / False**

passive **True / False**

past continuous **True / False**

past perfect **True / False**

present continuous with *always* for habits **True / False**

present perfect **True / False**

present perfect continuous **True / False**

relative clauses **True / False**

5: Read the information. Then look at the verbs in the box. What patterns do the verbs follow? Complete the table with the verbs.

watch / persuade / permit / finish / deserve / imagine / can't stand
make / resist / agree / encourage / warn / enable / let / refuse / suggest / manage

verb + to-infinitive

verb + object + infinitive without to

verb + object + to-infinitive

verb + -ing

Exercise 6: Read the IELTS Speaking Part 3 questions and responses. Find and correct the 11 verb pattern mistakes. Then watch the video of native English speakers responding to the questions and check your answers. (Video 6.2)

Verb patterns refer to how verbs are used together in a sentence. The form of the second verb depends on the first one. For example:

verb + to-infinitive: agree, decide, want, try

verb + object + to-infinitive: allow, persuade, remind

verb + object + infinitive without to: let, make, help

verb + -ing: enjoy, don't mind, consider

Some verbs can use more than one pattern. For example, would like can use the first two patterns shown above:

She would like to come.

She would like you to come.

Some verbs, such as prefer, can use the to-infinitive and -ing patterns with no change in meaning:

I prefer to get up late at the weekend.

I prefer getting up late at the weekend.

Some verbs, such as stop, can use the to-infinitive and -ing patterns with a change in meaning:

I stopped watching TV. (= I was watching TV, but then I stopped.)

I stopped to watch TV. (= I was doing something else, and I stopped doing that in order to watch TV.)

It is important to learn verb patterns if you are hoping to achieve a high mark for Grammatical Range and Accuracy in the IELTS Speaking Test.

1. **Speaker 1:** Do you have a smartphone, and if so, what do you use it for?

Speaker 2: Of course, and I can't really imagine to live without it. I would be useless without it. It enables me speak to friends, go online, watch TV. It reminds me when I have to be somewhere or do something and tells me how to get there. The funny thing is that for a long time, I resisted buy one. In the end, it was my brother who persuaded me getting one, and now I am completely addicted.

2. **Speaker 1:** Is it possible for people to become addicted to technology?

Speaker 2: Absolutely! I know a lot of people who check their phones constantly for updates or messages. They can't stop to do it because they are worried they might miss something important. My sister is the worst. I have asked her not to look at her phone all the time, but she refuses listening to me. And she gets anxious if she forgets her phone or if it runs out of battery.

3. **Speaker 1:** Should we spend less time on our gadgets?

Speaker 2: Definitely. Personally, I try avoiding to use my smartphone in the evenings when I get home because, quite honestly, I could spend hours just to check messages or looking at things online. And one of my friends actually says she regrets buy her smartphone and is considering to downgrade her smartphone to a much simpler mobile phone. She much preferred it when things were simpler and there was less choice.

Exercise 7: Read the IELTS Speaking Part 3 questions. For each one, write a response using one or more of the verbs shown in brackets. Make sure you use the correct verb patterns.

1. Some people say that students should be forced to turn off their mobile phones in class. Do you agree?

(allow, permit, don't mind, insist on, encourage, remind)

2. What do you think the next innovation in mobile phone technology might be?

(be able to, enable, allow, permit, be likely)

3. Is it important for parents to limit the amount of time their children spend online?

(encourage, persuade, warn, force, allow, permit)

Exercise 8: You are going to do the full IELTS Speaking test on the subject of science and technology. You will need some paper and a pencil.

Part 1

1. *Do you use computers regularly?*
2. *How are computers different now from when you first used them?*
3. *What features do you look for when you buy a mobile phone?*
4. *Do you think you could live without a mobile phone?*

Part 2

Describe a piece of computer software that you use.

You should say:

how you found out about the computer software

how often you use this computer software

what you use it for

and give your opinion on it.

Part 3

1. *How important is it to have experience of computers and software when you're looking for a job?*
2. *Some people say technology has been replacing people at the workplace and taking people's jobs. Do you agree?*
3. *What kinds of technology are most commonly used in the home in your country?*
4. *What kinds of new technology do you think we will see in homes in the next ten or twenty years?*