

Unit 3

Different cultures

Speaking

connecting ideas • past simple • pronunciation: verbs ending in -ed • giving long answers



Develop your exam skills

The complete Speaking test (Parts 1, 2 and 3) takes 11–14 minutes. The examiner asks questions and the candidate gives answers. The answers are recorded.

Part 3: Two-way discussion

- Part 3 takes 4–5 minutes.
- The questions in Part 3 relate to the topic in Part 2.
- The discussion is between the examiner and you.
- The examiner asks you questions. You talk about different issues and ideas on the topic.
- Part 3 tests your ability to talk about other topics related to the Part 2 topic and to express and justify your personal opinions and ideas.

1 Look at the beginnings of Part 2 task cards 1–3. Match each card with a general topic a–c. Which topic would you find easiest to answer and why?

1 Describe someone in your family who you like.

You should say:

what kind of person he/she is

2 Describe an activity that you like doing.

You should say:

what activity it is

3 Describe a special occasion in your life.

You should say:

where this occasion took place

a events

b hobbies

c people

Exam tip

The Part 2 task prepares you for Part 3 because you talk about a related topic.

2 Look at three typical questions from Part 3. Match each question a–c with a task card 1–3 from Exercise 1. Ask and answer each question.

- a** Do young people in your country celebrate special occasions?
- b** What do you think are the differences between sports now and in the past?
- c** What is the role of grandparents in your culture?

**4**

Look at the underlined key words in the Part 3 question below. Listen to two more Part 3 questions. Write the questions and underline the key words. Then listen again and check.

Do you think computer games are good?

- 1
- 2

Read answers from two different students to one of the questions in Exercise 3. Which question do the answers match?

Student A

Yes, I think, yes. In my country, we have one or two big festivals. And ... um ... also we visit family or we remember people or events. I think it's important. I mean, it's a serious thing but it's fun. I like travelling to other countries for festivals too. It's interesting to learn about the world.

Student B

I went to a festival in my country last year and I enjoyed it. It was important to me because I saw my friends and family.

Exam tip

Try to give an answer of four or more sentences. Do not give short answers.

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5 Read the students' answers again. Answer the questions about each one.

- 1 Is the answer on the same general topic?
- 2 Is it relevant to the question?
- 3 Does it include the key words or words similar to the key words?

6 In Exercise 4, what three phrases does Student A use to help link ideas?

7 Choose a Part 3 question from Exercise 2 or Exercise 3 and write your own answer. Record your answer. Then assess it using the questions in Exercise 5.

Practice for the test

Part 2

- 1 Read the Part 2 task card and write notes for your answer. You have one minute for this in the exam.
- 2 Record your answer. You have one to two minutes for this in the exam.

Describe a special occasion in your life.

You should say:

where this occasion took place
when it took place
who was there

and describe how you felt on this occasion.

Part 3



3 Read and listen to the Part 3 questions.

What is an important festival in your country?

What are your favourite parts of this festival?

How have special occasions such as weddings changed in your country?

4 Record your answers to each question in Exercise 3.



Develop your exam skills

info

In the exam, you may be given a list of headings and a text divided into sections. The headings will be in the form of short statements which summarize the information in a section. You will need to read the text sections quickly (using a skimming technique) and decide which of the headings best fits that section. This type of task tests whether you understand the organization of texts and can identify the main idea or topic in a paragraph.

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1 Read paragraph A on page 29 and identify the main point of the paragraph. Look for the phrase that gives information about what the text will be about and underline it.

2 Read paragraphs B–D and identify links to the main paragraph. Underline any evidence that shows that comparing styles across countries is difficult. Notice how one main theme is developed throughout the text.

3 Identify the following phrases in the text. Then think about how they relate to the overall theme of ‘the difficulty of making comparisons’. The first one is done for you.

moreover (in A): introduces another reason why it is difficult to compare styles/periods

first of all (in B)	secondly (in B)	despite (in C)
then again (in C)	moreover (in C)	unsurprisingly (in D)

4 Read paragraphs B–D again and find examples of particular periods. Do you think these examples help clarify the general theme?

5 Look at the following suggestions for a conclusion of this text and cross out any that are not suitable. The conclusion could:

- a** highlight the point about how easy it is to be confused (i.e. the fact that different words refer to the same period and that the same words can refer to different periods)
- b** refer back to the three main examples in paragraphs A–D
- c** mention that non-British people may find it harder to understand the vocabulary relating to artistic styles
- d** give information about another period (e.g. introduce the Elizabethan period)
- e** include a personal opinion or comment relating to the main idea or its consequences (e.g. visitors to the UK may need more information about tourist attractions than we might think).

A It is not easy to compare the artistic styles and periods of different countries. This is partly because they may use different words to refer to the same features, or even use the same words with a slightly different meaning. Moreover, particular styles and periods overlap.

B An example of this is the 'Victorian' period in Britain, which has a style that is often described as romantic. First of all, the name of this period links it immediately with British royal history, which could create confusion to non-British people who know little about it – Queen Victoria's reign lasted from 1837 until her death in 1901. Secondly, the Victorian style itself continued right into the twentieth century, and it could also be argued that there are different styles that can be called Victorian, for example, the use of flower patterns and pastel colours.

C Despite Victorian times being characterized by romanticism, the famous British romantic poets belong to the period before Queen Victoria. These are poets such as Robert Burns, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and John Keats. There are also famous writers from the same period, such as Jane Austen and Mary Shelley (the author of *Frankenstein*), and great architects, such as James Wyatt and John Nash. The great painters Gainsborough, Reynolds, Turner and Constable also belong to the pre-Victorian period. But who outside of Britain could label this era? And even if we know they can all be described as Georgian artists, which King George does this refer to? Actually, it refers to four of them (George I, George II, George III and George IV), covering a long period including most of the eighteenth century and some of the nineteenth. But then again, there was a Georgian revival in the twentieth century. Moreover, the style itself incorporates previous styles, including gothic; it also has its own subdivision, Regency style, which describes the period of George IV.

D The period after the Victorian era is referred to as Edwardian, after Edward VII, who reigned from 1901 to 1910, when he died. Unsurprisingly, nobody is sure whether 1910 is the correct end point for the period. Some people suggest it should be 1912, when the Titanic sank, the start of World War I (1914), its end (1918), or the signing of the post-war peace treaty of Versailles (1919). And then, in other European countries the Art Nouveau era ended around the same time ...

Practice for the test

1 The reading passage has five sections, A–F. Choose the correct heading for sections A–F from the list of numbered headings below. Write the correct number 1–10 next to sections A–F.

List of headings

- 1 The disappearance of traditional playground sports
- 2 The disappearance of classic playground games
- 3 The dangers of the playground
- 4 The best traditional games in Britain
- 5 Possible explanations for the bans
- 6 Not a very British bulldog
- 7 No real support for the bans
- 8 Differing opinions about the bans

9 Different ways of playing

10 A closer look at some traditional games

Sections

Section A:

Section B:

Section C:

Section D:

Section E:

Section F:

Is this the end of traditional British playground pastimes?

Section A

A survey has suggested that traditional pastimes are increasingly being banned at break times in primary schools. Number one on the list is the chasing game British Bulldog, followed by leapfrog and conkers.

Section B

Despite its name, British Bulldog is a game that does not involve animals, and is played all over the world in a number of variations. In its basic form it involves runners trying to get to the other side of the playground without being caught by the chaser, the 'bulldog'. If caught, they become a bulldog too, until there is only one person left: the winner of the game. 'Conkers', on the other hand, is genuinely British as it is a game that was invented in England. The players bring their own 'conker' – a horse chestnut attached to a thick piece of string that goes through the middle of the nut and is knotted underneath. Players pair up, wrap the string around one of their hands and try up to three times to hit the other person's conker by swinging the conker back and forth. They take turns doing this until one of the conkers is destroyed. That could be the end of the game or the winner could go on to play against others. There are different types of scoring methods in place. The game is also played outside the school playground, with a world championship taking place in England every year.

Section C

It will come as no surprise that people have had accidents resulting in a broken arm or leg while playing British Bulldog, or simply while walking across the playground when a game was taking place! It is also not difficult to imagine that many conker players manage to hit their opponent's hand rather than their conker. Horse chestnuts are very hard and being hit with one hurts, as many school children will tell you proudly.

Section D

Banning games is not something new. In the past, we have heard stories about schools banning tig and musical chairs. There is also anecdotal evidence that some schools have banned marbles and even hopscotch, duck-duck-goose and skipping. The main reason for forbidding these games is the fear of injury. Sometimes the justifications given for the ban are strange and perhaps not actually true. For example, tig, a chase game where the chaser catches a person by touching them (who then in turn becomes the chaser), may pass on germs. And conkers might also be a problem for children with nut allergies.



Section E

Sporting activities are also becoming rarer in the playground, often because there is a lack of staff available to supervise them. Apart from banning these, there are also more original

solutions, such as allowing students to play touch rugby only – a form of rugby where tackles are not allowed – and playing football with a soft ball rather than the traditional leather one. Having said that, these activities are often not popular with children, and this may discourage them from playing the traditional versions.

Section F

Your comments:

This is just ridiculous! Illnesses and injuries are part of growing up! *Sean, Watford*

I used to play all these games, and more. I think I split my lip once when I fell over during a circle game, but so what? It can't compare with the hours of fun I had with my friends. *Susan, Bournemouth*

I don't think it's wrong to question whether we should allow violent games in schools. After all, violence should not be tolerated in an educational environment. Perhaps this could lead to healthy group discussions involving teachers and pupils about rules and behaviour, but at the same time, it should not result in banning healthy running games such as circle, tag or chase games. Otherwise all P.E. and sports activities should also be banned on health and safety grounds, which would be mad. *Kiran, Cardiff*

Let's ban active playground activities. Let's keep kids inside classrooms during break times and pay extra staff to supervise them and keep them safe. Let's watch them become fat and very boring adults! *A. Watson, Sheffield*

Allowing children to play games that involve the occasional risk, such as British Bulldog, teaches them to make intelligent decisions about their safety. *Mohammed, Scotland*

Glossary

leapfrog: a game that children play, in which a child bends over, while others jump over their back. • *horse chestnut*: the nut of a horse chestnut tree (a large tree which has leaves with several pointed parts and shiny reddish-brown nuts) • *marbles*: a children's game played with small balls, usually made of coloured glass, in which you roll a ball along the ground and try to hit an opponent's ball

Listening

matching sentence endings • answering short-answer questions • answering multiple-choice questions



1

Develop your exam skills

You will hear a conversation between a tutor and a student about a project on how much people talk in public in different countries. **Underline the comparing and contrasting words you hear.**

the same as different from more [adjective] than much more [adjective]
in comparison with [adjective] -er than like

We often use other words with comparisons to emphasize or limit any similarity. For example: 'The pronunciation of the Spanish language in South America is not exactly the same as the pronunciation of Spanish in Spain.' This is the same as: 'The pronunciation of the Spanish language in South America is similar in some ways to the pronunciation of Spanish in Spain, but not in other ways.'

2

Complete the table with the words below. The first one has been done for you.

very a bit extremely incredibly
quite not a little exactly rather

To emphasize similarity	To limit similarity
very	

We also use words like *and*, *as well as* and *too* to show that things are similar.

Rice is popular in India as well as in China.

Rice is popular in India and in China, too.

We use words like *but*, *except* and *apart from* to show that things are different.
Most houses in the UK are made of brick but blocks of flats are made of concrete.

Many homes in the UK are made of brick, except / apart from blocks of flats, which are made of concrete.

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Exam tip

When listening for comparisons and contrasts, *compare* means to look at things to see how they are similar and how they are different; *contrast* means to look at things to see how they are different.

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page 151 and more
PRACTICE online

In this type of question you will have to match information in the recording with different speakers. You have to choose from several options but you will not hear them in the same order as they appear on the question sheet. Make sure you read all the options before you listen to the recording.



3

You will hear three people discussing eating habits in their home countries. Listen carefully for the relevant part of the conversation. Choose THREE letters, a–g.



Match the country where they eat this food for lunch.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| a potatoes | d noodle soup | g chicken |
| b cereal, toast and eggs | e rice and vegetables | |
| c bread with lentils | f a sandwich | |

- 1** in the UK **2** in India **3** in China

4

Read the sentence stems and make them into questions.

- 1** In traditional Indian families the bride and groom meet for the first time at ...
.....
- 2** In India the father of the bride used to ...
.....
- 3** Recently it has become very popular for Indian families to ...
.....
- 4** After they are married, the couple live ...
.....

Exam tip

In this type of multiple-choice question, try turning the first half of the sentence – the sentence stem – into a question. It might help you find the right answer.



5

You will hear two students comparing marriage customs in their countries. Read the statements below. Then listen and choose the correct answer, a, b or c.



- 1** *In traditional Indian families the bride and groom used to meet for the first time at*
 - a** the marriage.
 - b** the bride's home.
 - c** the groom's home.
- 2** *In India the father of the bride used to give*
 - a** the bride a gift.
 - b** the groom some money.
 - c** the groom's family a gift.
- 3** *Recently it has become popular for Indian families to*
 - a** use websites to find marriage partners for their children.
 - b** ask their children to get married online.
 - c** send their children abroad to find a partner.
- 4** *In India these days, more and more married couples live*
 - a** with the bride's family.
 - b** on their own.
 - c** with the groom's family.

Practice for the test

Exam tip

Listen to the introduction to each recording. It will give you an idea of what the conversation will be about. You will have time at the beginning of the test and between each recording to read the questions and think about possible answers.

Section 3



Questions 1–2

You will hear two students discussing a project on international festivals with their tutor. Choose the correct letter, a, b or c.

1 *The students are planning to study*

- a** different types of celebration.
- b** how the festivals started.
- c** people's attitudes to festivals.

2 *The students have already discovered*

- a** the seasons in different countries.
- b** how the Carnival is linked to different times of the year.
- c** similarities between countries that are far away from each other.



Questions 3–5

Now you will hear the next part of the recording. Choose THREE letters, a–g.

What do the students say about the changes in the Carnival since it started?

- a** It has turned into a church celebration.
- b** It celebrates the end of winter.
- c** It is only celebrated in Europe.
- d** It is celebrated in many different regions.
- e** It takes place during the rainy season.
- f** It is not connected with the seasons.
- g** It is celebrated when the weather is very hot.

3 what

4 where

5 when



Questions 6–10

Now listen to the last part of the recording. Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS OR A NUMBER for each answer.

6 What else are the students going to research?
.....

7 How many countries do they know of where festivals involve water?
.....

8 What three meanings can water have?

9 What do water festivals celebrate?

10 How are the Carnival and the seasons linked?
.....



Develop your exam skills

info

In the Task 2 essay, you may have to justify an opinion, explain causes and effects, or outline problems and suggest solutions. In an opinion essay, you must give your opinions, along with reasons and examples.

- 1 Read the essay title and possible topics below. Then choose the topic of the essay, a, b or c, that matches.**

All museums and art galleries should be free because they are an important part of a country's culture.

How far do you agree with this statement?

- a** a country's culture
- b** the importance of museums and art galleries
- c** free entrance to museums and art galleries

- 2 Read the essay question in Exercise 1 again and then read the alternative questions below. Choose the question, a, b or c, that has the same meaning.**

- a** How far do you agree that museums and art galleries are an important part of a country's culture?
- b** How far do you agree that it is a good idea for museums and art galleries to be free for cultural reasons?
- c** How far do you agree that museums and art galleries are good?

- 3 Read the essay question below. What does it say children *do* and what does it say *is the result*? Which question, a, b or c, matches the essay question?**

Children watch too much television nowadays and this is bad for their education and development.

How far do you agree with this statement?

- a** To what extent do you agree that if children watch too much television, they do not learn or develop well?
- b** To what extent do you agree that television is bad for children?
- c** To what extent do you agree that watching television means that children learn nothing?

- 4 Read the four ideas below that either agree or disagree with the statement in the essay question in Exercise 3. Write A (agree) or D (disagree) next to each idea. Which ideas do you agree with?**

- 1** There are many interesting and educational programmes on television.
- 2** Watching too much television makes children lazy because they do less sport.
- 3** Watching some television is fine but watching too much television is bad for children.
- 4** Many children learn through visual activities, so watching television can help them.

Exam tip

Task 2 questions are often a statement followed by one of the following questions:

How far do you agree with this statement?

OR *To what extent do you agree with this statement?*

These questions both mean: *To what extent do you agree with the statement?*

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Exam tip

Make sure you answer the question about the essay topic. Don't just write about the essay topic in general.

Exam tip

In the exam, spend two or three minutes thinking about your ideas before you start writing. Write your ideas on the test paper to help you remember them.

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- 5** Read the essay question and the ideas that follow. Why is the first idea too general? Decide which ideas 2–6 answer the question or just describe the topic in general. Write Q (question) or T (topic) next to each idea.

All children should learn to play a musical instrument at school. How far do you agree with this statement?

- 1 Music is fun for children so they enjoy it. **T**
- 2 Learning to play a musical instrument is a good idea because it helps children learn useful skills like coordination and self-motivation.
- 3 Learning to play a musical instrument is difficult so not all children can do it.
- 4 Listening to music helps children relax so it is good for their health.
- 5 Schools should include subjects such as music in the timetable because they are creative.
- 6 Learning a musical instrument at school is good but playing sport and other activities are also important for children.

- 6** Read the essay question below and complete sentences 1–4 with your own ideas. Then write four or five of your own ideas about the same essay topic. Give your reasons and use the conjunctions **and**, **but**, **because** and **so**.

Countries should not replace their traditional culture with modern culture. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- 1 Traditional culture is important because
- 2 Modern culture is important because
- 3 Young people often prefer modern culture but
- 4 Both traditional and modern culture are popular so

Practice for the test

Task 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Young people should spend more time on cultural activities such as music and theatre and less time on sport.

How far do you agree with this statement?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 175 words.