

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Discussion Questions and Model Answers – Education

Ten Part 3 discussion questions on the topic of education, each with a fully developed model answer and useful vocabulary highlighted in bold. Read each answer, note down vocabulary you want to learn, then use the practice pages to plan and speak your own, more developed answers.

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Topic: Education

WHAT'S INSIDE

How to Use This Pack
Questions 1–10 with Model Answers
Vocabulary Log
Questions 1–10 for Practice (with note boxes)

Speaking Practice — Instructions

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By the end of this pack, I will be able to: give fuller, well-developed Part 3 answers on education by building a personal vocabulary list and planning opinion, reason and example before speaking.

Follow These Steps for Every Question

- 1 **Read.** Read the question. Then read the model answer.
- 2 **Look.** Look at the **bold words**. These are useful words and phrases for this topic.
- 3 **Choose.** Choose the words you want to learn. Write them in your Vocabulary Log at the back.
- 4 **Look up.** Look up any words or phrases you need. Use a dictionary or a translator.
- 5 **Take notes.** Part 3 answers are longer and more developed than Part 1. In the note box, plan your **opinion**, a **reason**, and an **example** — as short notes, not full sentences.
- 6 **Practise.** Say your own full answer out loud, using only your notes to help you.
- 7 **Move on.** Go to the next question. Do the same steps again.

TIP Part 3 examiners want a fuller, discussed answer, not just a quick fact. Aim for: **opinion → reason → example → (a counterpoint if relevant) → a short conclusion.**



Speaking Part 3 — Education

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QUESTION 1

How has education changed compared with the past?

I think it's changed quite a lot, mainly because of technology. In the past, students relied almost completely on **textbooks** and **face-to-face teaching**, whereas now a lot of learning happens through **digital devices** and **online resources**. For example, students can now watch **video lessons** or join **online classes** instead of only sitting in a **physical classroom**. Another change is that education today focuses more on **practical skills**, not just memorising facts, because **employers** want people who can actually apply what they've learned. So overall, I'd say education has become more flexible and **skills-based** than it used to be.

QUESTION 2

What do you think is the main purpose of education?

That's an interesting question. I'd say the main purpose is to prepare people for both a **career** and everyday life. On one hand, education gives you the **knowledge** and **qualifications** needed to get a decent job, which is obviously important. But at the same time, it also teaches people how to **think critically** and solve problems, which is useful in situations outside of work too. For instance, someone might use skills like time management or communication in their personal life just as much as in their career. So ultimately, I think education is really about preparing people to function well in society, not just to **pass exams**.

QUESTION 3

Do you think teaching ability is more important than subject knowledge for a teacher?

That's quite a tricky one, actually. I'd say **teaching ability** is probably slightly more important, mainly because even someone with excellent **subject knowledge** won't help students much if they can't explain things in a way that's easy to follow. For example, a teacher might understand a topic extremely well but talk about it in such a complicated way that students end up more confused than before. Having said that, subject knowledge obviously still matters, especially for more advanced or **specialised subjects**, where a teacher genuinely needs deep **expertise** to answer difficult questions. So I suppose the ideal teacher has both, but if I had to choose, I'd lean towards teaching ability.

QUESTION 4

Do you think exams are the best way to measure students' abilities?

Not really, to be honest. **Exams** are useful because they're a quick and fairly objective way to check how much information someone has learned. However, I don't think they measure everything that matters. A student might be very creative or good at **working in a team**, but an exam wouldn't necessarily show that. For example, someone could **memorise facts** just for the test and forget them a week later, which doesn't really prove real understanding. That said, I think exams combined with other methods, like **projects** or **presentations**, would probably give a much more complete picture of a student's abilities.



QUESTION 5

How should the cost of university education be shared between students and the government?

I think it should really be a shared responsibility rather than falling on just one side. The main reason is that **university education** benefits both the individual, through better **job prospects**, and society as a whole, since it creates a more **skilled workforce**. For example, the government could fully **fund** subjects that are in high national demand, like medicine or teaching, while students contribute towards other courses through affordable **student loans**. Another advantage of sharing the cost is that it spreads the financial burden, so it doesn't fall too heavily on either students or taxpayers alone. So overall, I'd say a balanced system works better than making one side pay for everything.

QUESTION 6

Do you think technology has made students better learners?

To some extent, yes, although I wouldn't say it's made a difference for everyone. On one hand, technology gives students access to an enormous amount of information and different **learning styles**, which suits people with different ways of learning. For example, someone who struggles with a topic can now easily find a video explaining it in a completely different way. On the other hand, technology can also be quite distracting, since students might end up scrolling through social media instead of actually **studying**. So I think it really depends on how students use it — for some, it's improved their learning enormously, while for others, it's actually become more of a distraction.

QUESTION 7

Do you think online learning will ever completely replace traditional classroom teaching?

I don't think so, no, at least not entirely. **Online learning** definitely has advantages, like flexibility and the ability to study from anywhere, which suits a lot of people's busy schedules. However, **classroom teaching** offers something online learning struggles to replicate, which is direct **interaction between students and teachers**. For instance, a teacher can immediately notice if a student looks confused and adjust their explanation, whereas that's much harder to do through a screen. There's also the social side of school, like making friends and **working in groups**, which online learning doesn't really provide in the same way. So, I'd say the two will probably continue existing alongside each other rather than one completely replacing the other.

QUESTION 8

Is a university degree still necessary to secure a good job nowadays?

I think it depends quite a lot on the industry. In some fields, like medicine or engineering, a **university degree** is still essential because of the specific knowledge and qualifications required. However, in other areas, particularly in technology or creative industries, **employers** seem to care more about **practical skills** and experience than **formal qualifications**. For example, a lot of successful programmers are actually **self-taught** or learned through **online courses** rather than university. That said, having a degree can still open doors and give people a competitive advantage, even if it's not always strictly necessary. So overall, I'd say it's becoming less essential, but it hasn't lost its value completely.



QUESTION 9

What factors do you think influence how well students perform at school?

There are probably several factors involved. One major one is **family support**, because students who are encouraged and helped at home tend to do better than those who aren't. Another important factor is the **quality of teaching**, since a good teacher can really motivate students and explain things in a way that's easier to understand. On top of that, I think a student's own **motivation** plays a huge role too, because even with great teachers, someone who isn't interested is unlikely to put in much effort. For example, a student who genuinely enjoys a subject will usually study it more willingly than one who's just doing it to pass. So, I'd say it's really a combination of environment, teaching quality, and personal motivation.

QUESTION 10

What can schools do to prepare students for the jobs of the future?

I think schools need to focus more on **practical and adaptable skills** rather than just **theoretical knowledge**. For example, teaching students how to use technology confidently would be useful, since most future jobs will probably involve some kind of digital skills. Another thing schools could do is encourage **problem-solving** and **creativity**, because as automation increases, these are the kinds of skills that are harder to replace with machines. Schools could also introduce more **work experience** or **internships**, which would give students a realistic idea of what different careers actually involve. So overall, I think the key is moving away from purely **academic learning** and giving students more practical, real-world preparation.



My Education Vocabulary

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Write the bold words and phrases you chose from the answers. Write what each one means in your own words, then write your own example sentence. Need more space? Print another copy of this page.

WORD / PHRASE**WHAT IT MEANS****MY EXAMPLE SENTENCE**

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MY NOTES — OPINION / REASON / EXAMPLE

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MY NOTES — OPINION / REASON / EXAMPLE

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