

SPEAKING — CUES

55 Speaking Questions Part 2

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LỜI NÓI ĐẦU

Phần thi Speaking Part 2 là phần mà nhiều bạn cảm thấy "cứng họng", không biết trả lời sao cho hết 2 phút, và quan trọng hơn là không biết gây ấn tượng với giám khảo thế nào. Đây cũng là phần thi rất khó luyện ở nhà, vì nhiều bạn chưa biết luyện như thế nào và luyện với câu hỏi nào.

Để giúp đỡ các bạn với phần thi Speaking nói chung, và phần Part 2 nói riêng, mình và các học sinh đã biên soạn ra bộ gợi ý trả lời cho 55 câu hỏi Speaking Part 2 được ra trong thời gian gần đây (cuối năm 2016). Mong muốn của mình là giới thiệu cho các bạn một phương pháp hiệu quả, giúp "thông họng", nói lưu loát trong phần thi này.

Đây là lý do mà bạn sẽ không thấy các câu trả lời mẫu trong tài liệu này. Đây chỉ đơn giản là gợi ý, và nhiệm vụ của bạn là chuyển các gợi ý đó thành câu đầy đủ. Và bạn sẽ không thấy các gợi ý khác nhau cho 55 câu khác nhau. Sẽ có rất nhiều ý mình dùng lặp đi lặp lại cho các câu, vì thực sự các câu hỏi trong Part 2 có thể rất khác nhau, nhưng cue thì quanh đi quẩn lại vẫn vậy (When, Where, Who, ...). Nếu bạn tập trung vào cue, bạn sẽ thấy mình có rất nhiều thứ để nói.

Để sử dụng tài liệu này hiệu quả, bạn hãy in nó ra và luyện nói theo gợi ý đã chuẩn bị sẵn. Bạn nhớ đặt thời gian 2 phút, hết 2 phút là dừng, và cố gắng nói được hết cue thứ 3 hoặc sang nửa cue thứ 4. Nếu bạn xong hết 4 cue mà vẫn còn thừa khoảng 30s+ thì bạn đang nói nhanh quá, và ngược lại, nếu 2 phút hết rồi mà bạn vẫn chưa sang được cue thứ 3 thì bạn cần phải đẩy tốc độ nói lên.

Mình muốn cảm ơn các học sinh đã giúp mình đóng góp, tổng hợp gợi ý cho các câu hỏi này. 55 câu quả là một công trình đồ sộ, và mình chắc chắn không thể làm nổi một mình. Mình xin cảm ơn người đã tìm và tổng hợp 55 câu hỏi này (người đó không phải là mình). Nếu bạn đọc được tài liệu này, mong bạn liên lạc để mình xin phép đăng hoàng và điền tên bạn vào phần credit trong các lần tái bản sau.

Xin chúc các bạn học tốt, và đạt được mức điểm band mong muốn trong kì thi sắp tới. Hi vọng tài liệu này phần nào đóng góp cho mức điểm đó của bạn.

Thay mặt các học trò,
Thầy Tùng IELTS

1. Describe a time you needed to use imagination

You should say:

- What the situation was:
 - Why;
 - What the difficulties were;
 - and explain how you felt about it.
- a. What the situation was (Past tense)
- design competition (sophomore)
 - **nerve-racking** time → part of an important assignment
 - design a piece of clothing → challenging → don't have a knack for art
- b. Why you needed to use imagination
- want to come up with something **one-of-a-kind** NOT **run-of-the-mill**
 - need to **think outside the box**
- c. What the difficulties were
- I was **met with** a number of difficulties
- + finance/budget → limited (student - **meager income**)
 - + ideas: resemble others
 - outdated → the judges expect something **up to the minute**
- d. How you felt :
- my **entry** was a **gown**, which was quite **ornate**
 - **ended up** in 2nd place
 - take lots of pride in my **accomplishment**

2. Describe a time when you are very busy

You should say:

- When it was

- What you had to do during that time
- How you managed it
- And explain how you felt about being bus

a. When

"LÀY STRUCTURE": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me

b. What?

- sit an exam (Mathematics)
- challenging → don't have a knack for calculations and memorization → difficult to remember formulas
- easier if English, which is my forte/strong suit

c. How you managed?

- Many exams → schedule - rigorous
- Get up early to do revision → don't mind (early bird)
- Work in groups → help with forte/strong

d. Feel?

- of course → under an enormous amount of stress
- pass with flying colors
- take a lot of pride in my accomplishment

3. Describe a tall building in your hometown you like or dislike

You should say:

- Where this building is
- What it looks like
- What it is used for
- And explain why you like or dislike

a. Where this building is

Lotte → skyscraper → situated in downtown Hanoi → a bustling area.

→ only a short drive from my house.

b. What it looks like

- 72 floors → most known for ... tallest building in the city
- modern architecture (e.g. it incorporates lots of glass) → stand in stark contrast with the historic buildings nearby

c. What it is used for

It serves a range of purposes:

- Shopping mall → luxury boutiques → items cost an arm and a leg → only for people who make a lucrative income.
- Resident complex → apartments are upmarket → cost a fortune → if I had the means → would like to relocate here in the future
- Office building → a lot of office space for lease → very costly
- Observatory → breath-taking view BUT admission is pricy.

d. And explain why you like or dislike

Mixed feelings:

- Like: close to my house → work part-time at Lotte → daily commute is a breeze.
- Dislike: busy and crowded → especially on holidays → absolutely packed and stuffy.

4. Describe a person/something that made you laugh

You should say:

- What made you laugh
- Where you were when it happened
- Who you were with
- And explain why it made you laugh

a. What?

- ICE-AGE, an animated movie produced by Pixar, a celebrated film studio.
- most known for animations made in collaboration with Disney

b. Where?

- Cinema: sound + images more vibrant >< At home: much less dramatic

c. Who?

- girlfriend on anniversary

→ create a sense of occasion ← girlfriend - a fan of cartoons

d. Why?

- hilarious → loads of clever jokes → crack me up

- characters → quirky

→ pleasant experience

5. Describe your favorite movie

You should say

- When and where you saw it
- What type of film it was
- What the film was about
- And explain why it is your favorite film

a. When/Where

SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION

- when: "LÀY STRUCTURE"

- where: cinema (sound effects - images - vibrant)

available on the I - Stream

b. Type

- Thriller → Plot - complicated/unpredictable/focus on performance of actors

- Invoke feelings

→ more rewarding compared to HORROR (gory/disgusting)

c. About

- a man falsely accused of murder

→ imprisoned → document his life in prison and how he broke out

d. Why

- fascinating

- captivating (turn away for one moment)

- performances were impeccable)

- can watch over and over again

6. Describe a piece of (electrical or electronic equipment in your home)

You should say:

- What it is
- How often you use it
- Who you usually use it with
- And explain why this item is important to you

a. What it is

iPad → tablet manufactured by Apple - a technology **giant/behemoth** → in addition to smartphones, A also offers ... laptops, smartphones, smart watches

b. How often

- practically **every minute of the day** → essential item → **cannot be without**

>< unlike TV → barely touch

c. Who use it with

- share with family members → inconvenient → want to buy my own → student (**meager income**) → **hold off the purchase** for a while

d. Why important

- do a lot of things on it (surf the net, catch up on TV shows, read the news, check my emails) → very convenient → **life-saver**

7. Describe a gift that you gave someone recently

You should say:

- What the gift was
- Who you gave it to
- Why you chose that gift

a. What the gift was

Backpack → all the rage.

- Manufactured by The North Face → **prominent** company.

- In addition to bags → offers a wide range of clothing.
- Young people like → generous space → fit a lot of stuff.

b. Who you gave it to

- One of my best buddies → classmate → knee-high to a grasshopper.
- 20 years → maintain close-knit relationship.
- A big fan of travelling → when received → happy.

c. Why you chose that gift

Many reasons:

- 1stly, affordable price ← part-time job → salary is meager → optimal choice.
- 2ndly, travel enthusiast → bring a lot of things when he travels

8. Describe a person who you have met and want to know more about

You should say:

- Who this person is
- When and where you met
- What you did or talked about

a. Who

- My Tam → celebrated singer → known for ... hits released in early 2000s
- In addition to singing → acting → performance is horrendous → stick to singing

b. When

"LÀY STRUCTURE": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me → let my hair down → go to see a concert

c. Where

- saw My Tam live in concert → spectacular → stadium → perfect venue for an artist of such calibre

d. What you did

- watched her perform → her performance was impeccable → hooked → chatted briefly after the concert
- talk more → can identify with her story

9. Describe an interesting song you like

You should say:

- What it is
- Which country the song comes from
- What story the song tells
- And explain why you think it is interesting

a. What it is?

- tell about the song I can listen over and over again : Beautiful in white
- which is performed by Westlife, **internationally acclaimed** boyband from Ireland → most known for their hits in early 2000s → **all the rage**

b. Which country the song comes from

- US well known R&B genres
- One of the hits 2010 which has broken every single record at that time

c. What story the song tells

- First heard ages ago at a **wedding reception** → immediately **hooked** by its catchy melody and meaningful lyrics
- The song is about the feeling of astonishment of the groom when seeing his **immaculate** bride in a white gown **walking down the aisle**

d. And explain why you think it is interesting

- touch my heart from first listen
- **ubiquitous** song in every wedding ceremony → mine no exception

10. Describe a creative inventor or musician

You should say:

- Who this person is
- What this person does
- How he knew this person
- And explain why you think this person is creative

a. Who is this person

- My Tam → celebrated singer → known for ... hits released in early 2000s
- In addition to singing → acting → performance is horrendous → stick to singing

b. What this person does

- compose songs → inspire young singer generation
- perform/do live concerts
- run her own business

c. How he knew this person

- saw her live in concert at a stadium in Hanoi → absolutely stellar → hooked → search information → become a fan

d. And explain why you think this person is creative

- relentless effort in order to achieve her goal, do a lot of charity and care very much for fans
- adored by audience + a very decorated artist (many awards) → impeccable human being

11. Describe a time you missed an appointment for something

You should say:

- When and where it happened
- What the appointment was for
- What happened when you missed it
- And explain how you felt about missing the appointment

a. When + where

"LÀY STRUCTURE": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me

b. What the appointment was for

Job interview - part-time job → fast-food restaurant → only make a meager income → but popular job for students

c. What happened

- why missed: something unexpected came up → had to run some errands for my dad → couldn't make the interview (be in time for the interview)

- Afterwards → call the employer → quite **furious** about it → fortunately, he was **sympathetic enough** to **give me a second chance** → **reschedule** the interview

d. How you felt

felt bad → unprofessional **on my part** → try not to repeat this mistake in the future

12. Describe a sport stadium that's important in your city

You should say:

- Where it is
- How often you go there
- What people do there
- And explain why you think it is important

a. Where it is

- My Dinh → football stadium → **namesake** district → unpopulated area → only crowded when there's a **highly anticipated** match
- one of the main attractions → considered a **landmark**
- **humongous** → **seats** 50,000 people → large capacity → only for important matches/events (e.g.) **kick-off game** of a tournament

b. How often

- not often → few matches → difficult to **get a hold of** the tickets

c. What people do

- football games
- concerts → Son Tung MTP concert last year → **spectacular** → perfect **venue** for an event of such **calibre**

d. Why important?

- one of the few **state-of-the-art** sporting facilities in the city → others are **run-down**

13. Describe a garden you have visited and liked

You should say:

- Where it was
- What it looked like
- What you did there
- And explain why you liked it there

a. Where it was

Ly Thai To Park:

- Located in downtown Hanoi → bustling area.
- A short drive from my house.

b. What it looked like

- Generous space → a lot of room for activities
- A range of flowers are cultivated here → such as ...
- Plants, bushes → fresh air
- A playground → children take full advantage of
- A statue of Ly Thai To → the 1st king of the Ly dynasty

c. What you did there

It serves a range of purposes:

- The young → play sports → such as ...
→ I play basketball every afternoon.
- The elderly → do yoga or taichi → a type of martial arts.

d. And explain why you liked it there

- Close to my house → on a daily basis → play sports.
- have been going here since... knee-high to a grasshopper → a lot of memories here.

14. Describe an area of subject that you are interested in

You should say:

- What it is
- When it started to become interested in it
- What we have learned from it
- And explain why you have interest in it

a. What it is

English communication → common skill worldwide

→ if incapable of speaking English → a range of disadvantages.

b. When it started to become interested in it

The height of a grasshopper

- My house → located in downtown Hanoi → met a lot of foreign visitors → communicated with them → high level of proficiency → compliments from them

c. What we have learned from it

- How to start a conversation → speak English better.

- **exposed to** international cultures → **broaden** knowledge → **enrich** our lives

d. And explain why you have interest in it

Many reasons:

- 1stly, interact with native speakers → promote Vietnamese attractions.

- 2ndly, improve job prospects → make a lucrative income

15. Describe a special meal you would like to have

You should say:

- Where you would like to have it
- Who you would like to have it with
- What you would like to have
- And explain how you would feel about the meal

a. Where

- Western gourmet restaurant → downtown Hanoi → a meal there **costs an arm and a leg** → **out of reach** for students like me - **meager in come** → eating there **creates a sense of occasion**

b. Who you would like to have it with

- best buddy → **food enthusiast** → I'm sure he would **thoroughly enjoy** the experience

c. What you would like to have?

- the restaurant serves Italian cuisine → a range of dishes → difficult to choose

→ start with an **appetizer** →

16. Describe something you did with a group of people

You should say:

- What the activity was
- When and where you did it
- Who you were with
- And explain how you felt about being part of this group

a. What the activity was

- Design competition → a popular annual school event.
- come up with an **one-of-a-kind** design for a piece of clothing → have to **think outside the box**
→ challenging → don't **have a knack for art**

b. When

- "LÄY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals + competition → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking time** for me

c. Who you were with?

- requirement: 5 people → **form a group** with my classmates → had multiple meetings to **delegate tasks** to each member

d. How you felt?

- Ended up in second place → take a lot of pride in my accomplishment → **gave it my all.**
+>through the contest.... → learnt to take responsibility → **rewarding experience** about teamwork
+ time management.

17. Describe a famous person in your country

You should say

- Who this person is
- How you know this person
- What this person is famous for
- And explain why you like this person

- a. Who this person is
 - MY TAM, who is a **celebrated**/prominent singer
- b. What this person is famous for
 - The most known for her hits released in early 2000s
 - Run her own business
 - Acting career → Performance is **HORRENDOUS** → Stick to singing
- c. How you know this person
 - "LÃY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals + competition → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking time** for me → let my hair down → went on to YouTube → stumbled upon My Tam's videos.
 - Youtube → I was HOOKED → Look up her on the Internet
- d. And explain why you like this person
 - Album/ Concert: Stellar
 - Her performance: **IMPECCABLE**
 - No scandals
 - I can **identify with** her → we **have a lot in common**

18. Describe a place where you go to relax

You should say:

- And explain why it relaxes you
- What you usually do there
- How often you go there
- Where it is

a. Where

- Sapa
- **mountainous town** in the North West of Vietnam
- about 4-hour drive from Hanoi → the road is **treacherous** → the journey is very exhausting → don't go here too often

- famous for a lot of things, especially the **breath-taking** atmosphere and landscape

b. When

- "LÃY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals + competition → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking time** for me
- made reservation for travel + accommodation → packed my stuff → left

c. What I did

- felt tired after I arrived → take a rest
- **take a leisurely stroll** → breath in the crisp and fresh air in the mountains
- take a hike to Fansipang, which is the highest mountain of Vietnam, where I had breathtaking view of picturesque landscape → snapped some photos → posted on my Facebook → my friends really envied me
- **Local delicacy**: 'thang co' which is kind of hot pot with horse internal organs

d. Why it helped me relax

- I can escape the hustle and bustle of the city
- Albeit distant, Sapa is always the best place to me → I always **have a blast** when I come here.

19. Describe an interesting or unusual thing you did recently (in your free time)

You should say:

- What you did
- When and where you did it
- Who you did it with
- And explain why you think it was interesting or unusual

a. What you did

- climb a mountain → a short walk from my house → the route was **treacherous** → but didn't discourage us
- when arrived → **blown away** by the **breath-taking** view of the sky

- **in this day and age**, difficult to watch the sky → too many skyscrapers in cities which block the view

b. When + where

- "LÃY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals + competition → **up to the ears** with revision
→ **nerve-racking time** for me → **let my hair down** → climb the mountain

c. Who

- **best buddy**, named ABC → **we go way back** → have known her since we were **knee-high to a grasshopper** → **close-knit** relationship

d. Why interesting

- Unforgettable trip → felt as one with nature → had a blast → definitely an **experience to be repeated.**

20. Describe an advertisement you have seen/heard recently

You should say:

- What the contents of the advertisements were
- What was advertised
- When and where you saw it
- And explain how you felt about it

a. The content

- TV advert → celebrated singer named My Tam → endorse a new smart phone
→ the singer was demonstrating the wonderful photo-taking capabilities of the phone

b. What

- smartphone by a company OPPO → a technology behemoth in VN
- OPPO most known for smartphones with cutting edge cameras
- in addition to smart phones, they also offer a wide range of laptops + tablets

c. When

"LÃY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals + competition → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking time** for me → **let my hair down** → YouTube → **stumbled upon** the advert → **hooked**

d. How I felt

- immediately **drawn to** the commercial → a fan of My Tam
- **tempted** to purchase one → because so impressed by the phone
- normally commercials annoy me → but this one is very fascinating

21. Describe a bicycle/motorbike/car trip that is interesting

You should say:

- Where you would like to go
- How you would like to go there
- Who you would like to go with
- And explain why you would like to go there by car, motorbike or bike

a. Where

- motorbike trip → Danang, **coastal city** in central VN → 8-9 hour ride from HN
- DN is known for its **splendid sceneries** + attractions → ex: Linh Ung pagoda → one of the most famous pagodas in VN.

b. How

- go by motorbike → more fun + challenging compared to cars or air plane
- roads in VN are often **treacherous** → going by motorbike is a bit of a risk

c. Who

- group of 5-6 close friends
- no point in going alone → having company is more fun → do things together → ex: watch sunsets + grab drinks.

d. Why bike?

- as I was saying → would be more fun + challenging → a chance to **bond** with my friends
- a chance to stop and admire the **breath-taking** view
- **more economical** compared to plane → gas costs less than an air ticket.

22. Describe an interesting photo

You should say:

- Who took it
- Who was in the photo
- When the photo was taken
- And explain why it was interesting

a. Who took it

- **best buddy** → professional photographer → **we go way back** → **knee-high to a grasshopper** → **close-knit** relationship → take photos for free

b. Who was in the photo

- My family → not only mother + father → **extended family** as well → aunts, uncles, nephews, cousins, etc. → surprised we could fit so many in the photo

c. When the photo was taken

- Tet holiday → New Year tradition in Vietnam → a time for family reunions → lots of **wine and dine & festivities** → take a picture to **create a sense of occasion**

d. Why interesting

- never realized there were so many members in my extended family → lots of aunts, uncles whom I never met → **treasure** this photo

23. Describe a small business you want to have in the future

You should say:

- What it would be
- What you need to prepare for it
- Where you would have this business
- And explain why you would like to do this business

a. What is it?

- Vin Group is a **real estate giant/behemoth**
- In addition to property, they also operate in number of industries (retail, tech, education,..)
- most known for chain of **apartment complexes** + **high-end hotels** located across VN

b. How you know it

- Vincom, one of the first shopping malls in VN → when it was first opened, all the rage → welcome thousands of daily visitors
- did some searching on Internet → found out Vincom was owned by VinGroup

c. What it does?

- As I was saying, it owns a lot of estates located throughout the country (major urban areas such as HN, HP, DN)
- Vin Mart, a chain of convenience stores > find them on virtually every street corner
- Healthcare/Vin Mec/services here are top-notch but also cost an arm and a leg

d. Why admire?

- A big fan of VG because of its huge/tremendous success
- The company grew leaps and bounds in a short amount of time
- Thank to the wise leadership of Mr Vuong, the wealthiest man in Vietnam

24. Describe a wild animal

You should say:

- What it looks like
- Where you can see it
- What it likes to eat or do
- And explain why you like it

a. What it looks like

- Lion → mammal (gives birth to cubs, rather than lay eggs) → a ferocious predator → hunt on smaller animals like deer or antelopes
- color: yellow or orange
- distinguishing feature: mane (thick fur around the neck) on male lions

b. Where

- in the great outdoor (savannah in Africa.
- also in zoos, but these lions are tamed

c. What it likes to eat or do

- carnivore → feeds on meat → I would imagine it is not a fan of greens

- predator → often go hunting
- don't know much apart from these things

d. Why you like

- watched Lion King, internationally acclaimed animated movie by Disney when I was knee-high to a grasshopper → a big fan of lions

25. Describe something you did with a group of people

You should say:

- What the activity was
- When and where you did it
- Who you were with
- And explain how you felt about being part of this group

REFER TO NO.16

26. Describe a sport that you prefer to do and is a little expensive

You should say:

- What it is
- How much it usually costs
- Who usually do it with
- And explain why you like to do this activity

a. What it is

Golfing → not a prominent sport in Vietnam because expensive → VN is a developing nation (the majority of population is poor) → people prefer common sports, such as football, ... → affordable

b. How much it usually costs

golf memberships cost Cost an arm and a leg

Golf courses are costly to build → so they charge through the nose → only for people who make a lucrative income.

c. Who usually do it with

- Not many people play professionally in Vietnam → recreational activity on the weekend.

- Can play by yourself → more fun with more people → best buddies.

→ but cannot with too many people like football

d. And explain why you like to do this activity

I'm into it because of a range of reasons:

- Stay in shape: 1 hour to finish a game of golf → do a lot of walking → optimal way to have a lean body.

- Expand network: social sport → a lot of talking with other players

- Improve job prospects: Most players are influential and wealthy → help me in the future → actually a lot of people in VN play golf to establish useful connections.

27. Describe a place in other countries where you would like to work.

You should say:

- Where you would like to go
- What kind of work/job you would like to have
- When you would like to go
- Why you want to work in that place

a. Where

- US → regarded as the land of dreams → lots of people from other countries aspire to a life in the US → I'm not an exception

b. What kind of work

- Have a B.A. in Engineering → naturally want to be an engineer at a high-flying corporation → make a lucrative income

c. When you would like to go

- as soon as possible → I am fed up with living in Vietnam

- working on my IELTS score + other documents → will go once I obtain my visa.

d. Why you want to go

- fulfill the American dream → live life to the fullest

- Promising prospects for engineers → unlike Vietnam → difficult to make a living being an engineer.

28. Describe someone who has a great influence on you

You should say:

- Who this person is
- How she knew this person
- What influence this person has on you
- And how you think of the influence

a. Who this person is

- My Tam → **celebrated** singer → known for ... hits released in early 2000s
- In addition to singing → acting → performance is **horrendous** → stick to singing

b. How she knew this person

"LÀY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking time** for me → **let my hair down** → Youtube → watched My Tam videos → I was HOOKED → Look her up on the Internet → a big fan of her

c. What influence this person has on you

- The way how to deal with/ overcome **adversities** + **hardships** in life.
- Successful career when young → Work hard + **aspire to** success

d. And how you think of the influence

- Positive
- inspire me to work harder
- I can identify with her → we **have a lot in common**

29. Describe a website you like to visit

You should say:

- When you found it
- What it is about
- How often you visit it

- Why you like this website

a. When

LÀY STRUCTURE": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me → let my hair down → my friend sent me an online invitation to join Facebook → signed up and have been using it ever since

b. What it is about

- social network → users create an online profile → interact with each other (post on walls, send messages, video calls, ... even play games)
- an incredible tool to keep in touch with friends + family

c. How often

- practically everyday → like most people, I've become addicted to it
- have a smartphone → always on Facebook

d. Why you like

- melting pot of all kinds of people → made a lot of friends on Facebook
- help me reconnect with old friends
- fascinating to see what's going on in other people's lives

30. Describe a difficult decision that you once made.

You should say:

- What the decision was
- How you made your decision
- What the results of the decision were
- And explain why it was difficult to make.

a. When

- senior → in the middle of my finals + thesis → up to the ear with study → nerve wrecking time → made a decision regarding career choice

b. What the decision was

- at the crossroads → which path to follow → go to work OR pursue higher education

c. How you made the decision

- my brother who always gives **sound advice** told me I should consider **pros + cons**
 - job: live independently → **relieve** parents' **financial burden**
 - study: higher qualifications → get a job with **lucrative income** + good **prospects**
- decided to enroll in further study

d. Why difficult

- **life-changing** decision → don't want to end up regretting

31. Describe an item that you received and made you happy

You should say

- When you received it
- What the item was
- Who gave it to you
- And explain why you felt happy

a. When

- 18th birthday → received a lot of gifts → one thing stood out and became my instant favorite

b. What the item was

- Note 4 → smartphone manufactured by Samsung - **a technology behemoth**
- In addition to smart phones, Samsung also offer ... tablets, computers, smart watches
- the phone is equipped with **state-of-the-art** features
- + a **cutting-edge** camera, great for selfies
- + lots of applications (portable word processing app → makes **typing on the go** a **breeze** → but **cost an arm and a leg** → hold off the purchase)

c. Who gave it to you

- My dad → very thoughtful → I have been **daydreaming** about the phone for a long time → my dad **picked up on that** → got me the phone

d. Why happy

- the phone is a real **life-saver** → use it **practically** every day, makes my life so much easier
- a present from dad → has a lot of **sentimental value**

32. Describe something you ate for the first time.

You should say:

- What it was;
- When you ate it;
- Why you ate it;
- And explain how you felt about it.

a. What it was?

- Mi Quang, which is nice noodles, served with barbecued pork
- A special sauce
- Most restaurants also offer a **complimentary** side of greens
- just thinking of it **makes my mouth water**

b. When and why, who you ate it ?

- LĀY STRUCTURE (slightly modified) - sophomore → **in the middle of** finals → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking** time → **let my hair down**
- went on a trip with one of my best buddies → a **travel enthusiast** → both went to Danang, where the dish **originated** → try it with him

c. Explain how you felt about it ?

- **Flavorsome**, fresh, satisfying > wolf down a couple bowls
- **Dirt cheap** → unfortunately, cannot buy some to bring home

33. Describe something that you had to share with other people, such as public transport, accommodation, and food.

You should say:

- What it was;
- Who you shared it with;
- Why you shared it with others;
- And explain how you felt about sharing

a. What it was

- it was **Lẩu** → traditional Vietnamese dish, also known as 'hot pot' in English-speaking countries
- put a pot over an electric stove → around: plates of raw ingredients (greens, meat, seafood, mushrooms, & other condiments) → cook everything in the boiling broth inside the pot
- very **yummy** → **crave** it all the time.

b. Who you shared it with

- my best buddies → after finals → **nerve-racking** time → great way to **blow off some steam**

c. Why you shared it with others

- Lau is a sharing dish → supposed to eat with other people
- **spark conversations** → more fun → **the more, the merrier**
- cheaper if go in bigger parties → save money → great for students

d. How you felt

- it was a lot of fun → a very convivial way of eating

34. Describe an activity you do to keep fit

You should say:

- What the activity is
- When, where you usually do it
- How you do it
- And explain why it can keep you fit.

a. What

- **cardio vascular** exercises → follow a fitness program → very **intense** → burns a ton of calories
- a range of moves (jumps, push-ups, pull-ups, sprints, etc.) → work the whole body

b. When/Where

- on a daily basis → must be consistent to see results

- mostly at home → very **economical** because little equipment is required
- can also do it at the gym → some moves require particular equipment → when you do pull-ups, you need a pull-up bar

c. How

- just watch videos and follow along → 45 mins a day → short but high intensity

d. Why it can keep you fit

- shed a lot of fat → get leaner
- actually started at 1xx kgs → dropped to 75 kgs → huge transformation → my friends were **astonished** → **jumped on the band wagon** (follow)

35. Describe a person who once moved to live with you

You should say:

- When and where this person moved in
- How you know - his person
- How you got along with this person
- And how you feel about living with this person

a. When

- last year → my roommate moved out → needed another student to share the room → cannot afford the rent on my own → asked one of my best buddies to move in
- a dorm room → **economical** option for students (work part-time, **meager income**) → cannot afford to rent an entire apt.

b. How you know

- As I was saying → **best buddy** → known him since I was **knee-high to a grasshopper** → 10 years → **close-knit**

c. How you got along

- already **on good terms** when moved in → agree on a lot of things → for ex: both like to keep the room neat → it was **a match made in heaven**

d. How you feel

- very comfortable → a good **tenant** (pay rent on time, responsible, tidy)

36. Describe an interesting tradition in your country

You should say:

- What the tradition is
- When do you celebrate it
- How do you celebrate it
- And explain why it is interesting

a. What the tradition is ?

- Tet holiday → known as Lunar New Year or Chinese New Year
- Some people think → originated in China → don't agree → Vietnamese have observed this tradition for so long → but actually don't care about its provenance

b. When do you celebrate it

- At the beginning of Lunar Year → late January, early February.
- Hanoi (4 distinct seasons) → when weather turns chilly → a chance for a family reunion → a sense of occasion

c. How do you celebrate it ?

- Cook a lot of food → ex: Banh Chung → made from rice → green beans and pork filling → wrapped in green leaves → yummy → crave it all the time
- Give young children lucky money → equivalent to Christmas gifts → wish them good luck → the children love it

d. And explain why it is interesting

- lots of fascinating customs → not seen in Western countries

37. Describe a person that you like to spend time with

You should say:

- Who is this person
- How do you know this person
- What you like to do together

- And explain why you like to spend time with this person

a. Who

- One of my best buddies → classmate → best buddy → go way back → knew him when I was knee-high to a grasshopper → close-knit

b. How do you know?

- classmates → sit next to me → struck me as a kind/ amiable person → a quality that really draws me to him → want to spend time with him

c. What do you like to do together?

- We both have strong preferences for travelling → go on trips together → share costs → very economical
- very adventurous person → it's a blast whenever I'm with him

d. Explain why you like to do?

- As I was saying → always fun
- He's a good listener → He's sort of my confidant → share with him everything → always turn to him for advice

38. Describe a piece of good news that you received

You should say:

- What this news was
- When and where you heard it
- How you heard it
- And explain why you think it was good news

a. What the news was

- I got a job offer → Apple → tech behemoth → jobs - very competitive → take a lot of pride

b. When/Where

- senior → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with finals + thesis → nerve-racking time → heard the news → relieve my burden + stress

c. How you heard it

- via email

→ anxious when check inbox → couldn't believe it when I saw that I was hired → over the moon

(một trong những trường hợp hiếm mà sử dụng được idiom này)

d. Why good news

- a job at Apple → lucrative income + good prospects → excited about the future

→ definitely a very good news

39. Describe a leader you admire

You should say:

- Who this person is;
- How you know this person;
- What skills he or she has for leadership;
- And explain why you think he or she is a good leader.

a) Who?

- Pham Nhat Vuong → the chairman of Vingroup, a real estate giant in VN
- Most known as the wealthiest person in VN
- A great philanthropist → sponsor a lot of aid programs

b) How you know?

"LẤY STRUCTURE": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me → let my hair down → Surf the web → learnt about the first billionaire in Vietnam → hooked → look him up → became a fan

c) What skills? & why you think he is a good leader

- A. Sharp analytical skills → led VG through the 2008 recession
- B. Powerful communicator
- C. Inspires and motivates others → influences people, especially youngsters
- D. Establish strong relationships
- E. Willing to train others → As a result, have a lot of industry experts

40. Describe a creative person that you admire

You should say:

- Who is this person
- How do you know this person
- What creative things this person likes to do
- And explain why you admire this person.

a. Who this person is

- My Tam → **celebrated** singer → known for ... hits released in early 2000s
- In addition to singing → acting → performance is **horrendous** → stick to singing

b. How you knew this person

"LÀY STRUCTURE": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals → **up to the ears** with revision → **nerve-racking time** for me → **let my hair down** → Youtube → watched My Tam videos → I was **HOOKED** → Look her up on the Internet → a big fan of her

c) What creative things this person likes to do

- Compose music → mostly **upbeat** songs → **catchy** melody
- Her tunes are **one-of-a-kind** → unlike the **mainstream** stuff you hear on the radio

d) And explain why you admire this person.

Many reasons:

- 1stly, inventive → her songs are all original
- 2ndly, independent → overcome challenges → never give up ← when met with **adversities**.

41. Describe a course that you want to learn

You should say:

- What this course is
- When you want to learn it
- Where you can learn it
- And explain why you want to learn it

a. What this course is

- an IELTS course → don't know the first thing about Writing → want to enroll in a Writing intensive course

b. When

"LÃY STRUCTURE" (slightly modified) - As soon as possible before graduating → before senior year, preferably → will be **up to the ears** with finals + thesis → **nerve-racking** time → won't have time for IELTS.

c. Where

- deciding between an IELTS center or a local teacher
- + English center: better facilities (tables/chairs/library)
- + independent teachers: more **intimate** relationship with the teachers
- do more searching before **pulling the trigger**

d. Why you want to learn it

- IELTS is **of paramount importance** in this day and age → a mandatory requirement in most firms → **limited prospects** without one

42. Describe an important skill you learned when you were a child

You should say:

- What this skill was
- When you learned it
- How you learned it
- And explain why you think it was important

a. What this skill was

English communication → common skill in worldwide
→ if incapable of speaking English → a range of disadvantages.

b. When you learned it

- knee-high to a grasshopper
- My house → located in downtown Hanoi → met a lot of foreign visitors → chatted with them → **acquired a high level of proficiency** → no Vietnamese **accent** → got a lot of compliments from native speakers

c. How you learned it

- Watched TV shows, music, ... → improve listening skills
- take some lessons, but mostly self-taught
- practiced with native speakers → very fluent

d. And explain why you think it was important

Improve job prospects, esp. at multinational companies (English communication is the norm)

43. Describe an activity that you do in your school after school

You should say:

- When and where you do
- What you like to do
- Who you do it with
- And how you feel about it

a. When and where you do

- When? ["LÂY STRUCTURE"]
+ Sophomore – in the middle of the finals - up to my ears in revision
+ nerve-racking time – Let my hair down
- Where? School – Football Pitch

b. What you like to do

- Play soccer – all the rage in the world
(my country is not exception – appeal to the youngsters like me)
+ Competitive game → involve loads of physical movements, strategy and technique
+ Rules: Simple
- Unlike Golf → take a long time to get used to → too expensive for students like me

c. Who you do it with

d. And how you feel about it

- The optimal way to stay in shape (lots of running, ...) → can't stand to be out of shape
- win a tournament → Take a lot of pride in my team's ACCOMPLISHMENT → We gave it our all

44. Describe a mistake that you once made

You should say:

- What the mistake was
- When, where you made it
- Who was with you
- And how the mistake affected you

a. What the mistake

- go to work right away INSTEAD OF pursuing higher study

→ working: make an income → live independently → relieve parents' financial burden

→ study: an even more lucrative income → better prospects

b. When

- senior → in the middle of my finals + thesis → up to the ear with study → nerve wrecking time → made a decision regarding career choice

c. Who

- my brother who always gives sound advice → point out the pros + cons → advised to study more → I disregard his advice → go with the other option

d. How it affected

- stuck with entry level jobs → limited prospects → try to get day release from my boss → obtain a higher degree

45. Describe an occasion you got up extremely early.

You should say:

- When this happened
- What you needed to do that day
- Who you were with
- And how you felt about getting up early that day

a. When

- sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me

b. What you needed to do

- sit a Math exam → really nervous → Math is not exactly my forte → find it difficult to memorise formulas

c. Who

- classmates → study together → try to cram some knowledge before taking the test

d. How you felt

- exhausted → during the exam, I was zoned out → dozed off a couple times → worried about the results
- Fortunately, things turned out OK → I was able to pass with flying colors

46. Describe a big company you are interested in.

You should say:

- What is the company called;
- How did you know this company;
- What kind of business this company does;
- What kinds of interesting activities the company has
- And why this company is interesting

a. Apple → logo is an apple w a bite taken out of it → did some searching → no meaning

b. How you know

"LÅY structure": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears w revision → nerve-racking time for me → let my hair down → YouTube → Apple advert → I was hooked → impressed by the creativity → became a big fan

c. What it does

a number of activities

- 1stly, manufacture devices → known for iPhone, a popular smartphone
- 2ndly, develop software → applications for mobile devices
- Finally, own an animation studio called Pixar → known for their cartoons made in collaboration with Disney

d. Why interesting

- innovative approach to design → every product has a universal appeal → highly sought after by consumers

47. Describe a method that helps you save money

You should say:

- What the method is
- When you started to use it
- How you knew it
- and explain why it is helpful

a. What the method is

Putting the money in the bank → very straight-forward → common in Vietnam → especially among the middle-aged → my mom → worry about financial stability.

b. When you started to use it

Started depositing when sophomore → started working part-time job → salary was meage.

- up to the ears with work → cannot take care of the money.

- If spent all money → recreational activities → all would vaporize → decided to save little by little → buy something significant.

c. How you knew it

I watched one of my best buddies → recommended to deposit in the bank → I followed the method → it worked beautifully → after a while → save a significant sum.

→ my mom and dad already told me to do so → was reluctant

d. And explain why it is helpful

Many reasons :

- 1stly, after 1 year → it worked → bought a laptop.

- 2ndly, take up the habit → take good care of money → prepare for future → while the young → reckless with their finance.

48. Describe a positive change in your life

You should say:

- What the change was
- When it happened
- How it happened
- And explain why it was a positive change

a. What the change was

- lose weight → at time I weighed over 100 kgs → unhealthy → risk of contracting various diseases like diabetes → determined to be more fit

b. When

- "LÀY structure": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me → didn't have time to take care of my diet → ate a lot of junk food

c. How

- I gained a lot of weight → looked at myself in the mirror → disappointed at how I let myself go
- decided to exercise → run/ work out → shed some pounds
- eat healthier → more greens → abstain from greasy food

d. Why

- because I got healthier → felt much better → have a lot of energy → learn to never give up when things get tough

49. Describe an interesting public place that you like to visit

You should say:

- Where is this place
- What you can do there
- Who you like to go with
- And explain why you think this is an interesting place

a. Where is this place

Ly Thai To Park:

- located in downtown Hanoi → bustling area.

- a short journey from my house.

b. What you can do there

It serves a range of purposes:

- The young → play sports → such as ...
→ I play basketball every afternoon.
- The elderly → do yoga or taichi → a type of martial arts.

c. Who you like to go with

One of my best buddies → classmate → best buddy → go way back → knew him when I was knee-high to a grasshopper → close-knit
→ share the common interest in basketball → play together

d. And explain why you think this is an interesting place

Many reasons:

- 1stly, I can play sport here → on a daily basis → let my hair down.
- 2ndly, generous space → authorities open outdoor exhibitions on the weekend → attract many tourists.

50. Describe a wedding you have been to

You should say:

- Where it was
- Who you went with
- What you saw
- And how you felt about the wedding

a. Where it was

- Trong Dong → top wedding venue → situated in downtown Hanoi → bustling area → parking is a real hassle.

b. Who you went with

One of two best buddies → classmate → best buddy → go way back → knew him when I was knee-high to a grasshopper → close-knit
→ went with the other friend ← wedding invitation → want to watch him tie the knot.

c. What you saw

Small wedding → one-of-a-kind → 50 people → groom + bride, bridesmaids, groomsmen, guests.

d. And how you felt about the wedding

- Romantic **setting** → cosy + **intimate** atmosphere → welcomed.
- So touched → groom and bride kissed → shed a tear.

51. Describe a program or app in your computer or phones

You should say:

- What the app/program is
- When, where you found it
- How you use it
- And how you feel about it

a. What the app/program is

Google Maps → GPS app.

- Developed by Google → tech giant.
- In addition to maps → search engine, online videos.

b. When, where you found it

- "LAY structure": sophomore → **in the middle of** finals → **up to the ears** w revision → **nerve-racking** time for me → **let my hair down**
- Surfing the net → **stumbled upon** a program → Google Earth → navigational system → explore views of different areas → fascinating and hooked.
- Looked up → had a app for phone → downloaded.

c. How you use it

To find ambiguous addresses.

- Hanoi has a lot of streets → I don't have a knack for memorisation.
- New street → addresses are messed up.
- the app **comes in handy** (useful).

d. And how you feel about it

A big fan of Google Maps:

- Technology → state-of-the-art/service → speedy.
- Handy app to have → a must-have for people who travel routinely.

52. Describe a situation that made you a little angry.

You should say:

- What it was that made you angry
- Where you were when this happened
- What you were doing at the time
- And explain why you felt angry.

a. What it was

- had a dispute with a friend → money problems → best buddy → go way back → knew him when I was knee-high to a grasshopper → really upset when I fought with him
- borrowed money → promised to pay back → after a while didn't mention → asked for it back → said he didn't recall asking me for money

b + c. When + What

- "LÀY structure": sophomore → in the middle of finals → up to the ears with revision → nerve-racking time for me → all the more furious

d. Why angry

- angry because he was my best friend → didn't deserve to be treated that way

53. Describe a (short) journey that you disliked

You should say:

- Where you went
- Who you went with
- What you did
- And explain why you disliked this journey

a. Where you went

- Danang - coastal city - Central VN → 1-hour flight from Hanoi
- known for its beaches → My Khe, one of the most immaculate beaches in the world

b. Who you went with

- best buddy - 10 years ago - knee-high to a grasshopper → close-knit relationship
- travel enthusiast → ask him to come along

c. What you did

- sightseeing → mountains
- beaches → go in for a swim
- local cuisine → known for its seafood → wanted to see what the fuss was all about

d. Why disliked

- locals were not very hospitable
- food did not live up to its expectations
- felt a bit underwhelmed

54. Describe an antique or an old object that your family has kept for a long time.

You should say:

- What it is
- How your family first got this thing
- How long your family has had it
- And explain why it is important

a. What it is

- a saber sacred → long blade → used to be razor sharp → now rusty
- still has the original shaft

b. How your family first got this thing

- a gift granted/bestowed by a king in the Ly Dynasty → a reward/recognition for significant contribution to the country → cannot remember the recipient

c. How long your

- not sure → first knew about it when I was knee-high to a grasshopper → suppose a pretty long time

d. Why important

- act as a reminder of my family's **glorious lineage** → take a lot of pride in being the keeper of such a treasure

55. Describe a character or personality of yours

You should say:

- What it is
- How it affects your life
- Where you get it from
- And how you feel about it

a. What it is

honesty → not very common in life → honest people are a **rarity** → **highly valued**, especially in the workplace

b. How it affects your life

has both advantages and disadvantages

- ad: never has to lie → always **feel at ease** → also establish yourself as a **credible** person → **good prospects**

- dis: sometimes **being too blunt** / **frank** can hurt people's feelings

c. Where you get it from

- my father → when I was **knee-high to a grasshopper** → set an example → respect him a lot of that

d. How you feel

- take a lot of pride in this quality → it's a **virtue** → more people should be honest