

IELTS-Style Speaking Test Questions and Answers

Family

Part 1

1) How many people are there in your immediate family?

Four people make up my **immediate family** – my dad, my **sister** and my two **brothers**. They all live close to me except for my youngest brother who moved away because of his work.

2) Do you get along well with your family?

Most definitely. I used to argue with my **brothers** and **sister** a lot when we were. It was **sibling rivalry** I guess but we **get on** really well now.

3) Which member of your family are you closest to?

I'd have to say my **sister** but we're a **close-knit family** and we all **get along** just great.

4) How much time do you spend with your family?

We used to go to my **parent's** house for Sunday tea every few weeks but since my **mother** died, my oldest **brother**, my **sister** and I take turns to spend time **supporting** our **father**. This means that we don't all get together so often. However, we still have **family gatherings** on special occasions.

5) When did you last have a family party?

Just a few weeks ago. It was for my **father's** birthday. We had a **get-together** at his house and we all took along cakes and snacks to share.



Part 2

Describe a family celebration that you attended.

You should say:

- **where this celebration was held**
- **why it was held**
- **what you did at the event**

and explain what you enjoyed about this celebration.

One of the most memorable **family** events of recent years was my **father's** 80th birthday. We wanted to have a special celebration for him but decided to keep it a secret so as to surprise him on the day.

My youngest **brother**, who lives two and a half hours drive away from the rest of my **immediate family**, told Dad that he'd come down with his **family** so we could all go out for a meal together.

What we actually did was to invite members of our **extended family** to come as well without my **father** knowing. Most of them live a long way away, like in London or Scotland, so we don't see them very often. They came down the day before and stayed in local hotels.

There was a lot to arrange and it was difficult to sort everything without Dad guessing what we were up to. There were several times when I thought he must know something was going on but was just playing along and pretending he didn't.

We booked a table at a local restaurant and on the day, my **sister** decorated it with balloons and other party bits and pieces. It looked amazing. It was a very long table as in the end there were more than twenty **family members** at the meal. So, as well as my **parents** and my **siblings**, there were also **nieces**, **nephews**, **aunts**, **uncles** and **cousins**. I think it was probably the biggest **family gathering** we'd ever had.

We arranged for Dad and Mum to be the last to arrive so that everyone else could be seated at the table waiting for them. I'll never forget Dad's face when he walked into the restaurant. He hadn't guessed what we were arranging and it was a real surprise to him to see everyone there.

We had a lovely meal together but the best thing was spending time with all our **relatives**. It made me realize what a **close-knit family** we are even though we don't see each other very often. I think that Dad enjoyed it too and I hope it showed him how much he means to our whole **family**.



Part 3

1) In what ways can people in a family be similar to each other?

Both immediate and extended family members often have a lot of similarities. For example, they can look alike. My brother Steve is the spitting image of our cousin Peter, while my sister takes after our mother in the way she both looks and talks.

Also, relatives may be good at the same things or do similar types of work. Most of my extended family are either teachers or scientists.

Specific interests often run in the family. In my family, we all love the outdoors and nature, particularly the older generation. Younger family members do like to go out walking as well but now that my nieces and nephews are all teenagers, they spend a lot of time on their electronic gadgets.

The final way that people in a family can be alike is in their personality, and especially in their sense of humour.

2) In terms of personality, are people influenced more by their family or by their friends?

In my opinion, personality is mostly hereditary. I think that the main traits of a person's character are passed down from parents to their offspring. Some people are more like their father, others more like their mother but most of us can recognise characteristics of both parents in our own personality. For example, I'm quiet like my dad and have my mum's creativity.

How children are raised also affects the way they think, feel and behave as they grow up. Kids from a happy, stable family background generally have a normal personality. However, an unhappy childhood, which may include some form of abuse, will definitely affect a child's mental development and their character later in life.

This suggests that personality can change so it's probably true that the people we spend time with as friends and colleagues also influence the way we think, feel and behave. However, I don't think that they alter our deepest character.

So in conclusion, I'd say that an understanding of personality is quite complex and involves both hereditary and social factors.



3) How has the role of elderly people in the family changed in recent times?

In the past, the **older generation** was highly respected in most cultures. They were considered to be wise because of all the things they'd learnt in their long lives. Elderly **family members** would have been **family** leaders, teachers and spiritual guides to the **younger generation**. They helped to maintain the structure and stability of the **family**.

One of their most important roles was to pass on the old traditions and to maintain traditional culture. The other vital job they did, especially the **grandmothers**, was to provide **childcare** for their **grandchildren**. They would certainly have played an important role in their **upbringing**.

In my country, most of this changed when it became normal for adult children to move away to study and get better jobs. **Family ties** are no longer so strong and elderly people aren't respected as they once were. **Grandparents** aren't the people we usually go to for advice these days. To be honest, many elderly people don't have a significant role in most **families** any more. However, many do still look after the **grandchildren** if they live close to them.

Family Vocabulary for IELTS

For an extensive list of family-related words and phrases for IELTS visit:

www.ieltsjacky.comfamily-vocabulary.html

