



# General Topics

## Activities

- 1) Each student gets one topic and answers the questions.  
(Z Level: at least 3 questions; V Level: at least 5 questions)
- 2) Each student gets one topic and speaks about the topic.  
(Z Level: at least 1 min.; V Level: at least 2 min.)
- 3) Each group of students gets one topic and makes a mental map of subtopics and vocabulary.
- 4) Each student gets a set of questions. First, the student answers the questions, then he/she translates the answers, and finally, he/she underlines useful vocabulary.



## 1 Personal Identification

<b>How would you describe yourself or your friend?</b>	Well, I'd say I am average height and a little thin. I think I work hard and am kind to my friends and family. If I have to mention one negative thing I would say I'm a little shy.
<b>Can you describe your childhood?</b>	My childhood was nothing special. I went to school, which I enjoyed because I like reading. I had a few friends but not that many. I liked spending time with my grandfather, who would take me for walks in the woods and tell me stories.
<b>What characteristics do you look for in a friend?</b>	I hope my friends are trustworthy, kind and intelligent, so we have something interesting to talk about. I don't like people who are aggressive or too loud.
<b>What is one thing you would like to change about yourself?</b>	I would like to be more confident around other people. I think I will need this when I get older.
<b>What would you like to do one year from now? Five years? And ten years?</b>	In one year, I would like to start studying at university. In five years, I think I would like to take a break from study and travel. I would like to go to South America. In ten years, I don't know. I suppose I hope to become a journalist.



## 2 Family

<b>Can you describe the members of your immediate and extended family?</b>	I have one younger brother. He is very athletic and very sociable. My mother is very quiet. I think I take after her. My father is a very confident man. He's a lawyer, so he's very bright as well. Both my grandmothers are kind. They cook for us and always ask about school. One of my grandfathers, to be honest, is not so nice. He is very serious and strict. The other is the sweetest man I know. We have a lot in common.
<b>What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of having brothers and sisters, or being an only child?</b>	Sometimes I think it would be nice to be an only child. The house would be more peaceful and there would be no fights. But it could also be a little lonely, especially at Christmas time or on family holidays. At those times, I like having a brother.
<b>Which parent stays at home to look after the children? Who and why?</b>	This depends on the family. When children are very small, say to the age of five, they need a parent. Most of the time it's the mother. I can't say it is always better. It's more traditional. Once children start school, they don't need a parent at home because they are starting to be more independent.
<b>What housework do you help your parents with?</b>	My brother and I have to set the table, clear the table and do the dishes every night. We're also responsible for tidying up our room.



## 3 Housing and Living

<b>Can you please describe your room for me?</b>	My room is average size. It has bunk beds because I share with my brother. It has got two desks, one for each of us, with a lamp and a chair each and there's a bookshelf as well. There's also a poster of Machu Picchu because I want to go there one day.	<b>Would you prefer to live in a house or a flat? / In a city or a village? Why?</b>	I would prefer to live in a small house, I think. In a village, because I could be close to the forest and we could have a small garden. Unfortunately though, we live in a flat in the city.
<b>What are the advantages and disadvantages of sharing a room with your brother or sister?</b>	Now, that I'm older there are mostly disadvantages. I like to have a quiet place to read but my brother wants to bring his friends to our room. He is also a lot more untidy than me. But it was nice when we were young. We could talk while we lay in bed. Now, though, I don't enjoy it.	<b>If you could, what changes would you make to your flat or house?</b>	That's easy. I would add one more room. Unfortunately, it's not possible. So I suppose I wouldn't mind some new furniture. My brother and I have had the same beds and desks since we were little children.
		<b>What makes a house a home?</b>	The most important thing is a sense of family. We do things together in our family like having meals and going on trips.



## 4 Everyday Life

- What do you usually do in the evenings?** Well, the first thing I do is finish all my homework for the next day. Then I do some extra study, mainly English and Spanish, because they are my favourite subjects. Then I read or write emails to friends. On Thursdays I watch my favourite programme. It's a documentary about the Incas.
- What is your favourite day and why?** That's very difficult. At school I like Mondays and Wednesdays because that is when I have English and Spanish, my favourite subjects. I like Saturdays because I have a lot of time to myself.
- How do you get on with your schoolmates?** Okay. I have two good friends at school. I don't usually spend time with everyone, though.
- Do you have a part time job? And if so, what is it? And if not, why not?** No I don't. I would like to get one when I'm at university because I think it would teach me responsibility and also because I want to save money to travel.
- How would you imagine your ideal day?** My ideal day would be very simple. I'd have a nice big breakfast, and if the weather was warm I'd go for a walk then find a tree and sit under it and read or relax.



## 5 Education

- Can you describe your typical day at school?** A typical day at school will mean four or six lessons. I don't have the same lessons everyday so I can't say that there is a typical day. One thing that is the same is that I have to study a lot and I get a lot of homework.
- What's the best way to learn a foreign language?** One of the ways is obviously to have an opportunity to speak. It is also important to read and listen to music and maybe watch movies, so that you can learn new words to use when speaking. A good teacher is very important too, I think.
- What was your first day at school like?** It's hard to remember. I was very scared, very nervous. Lots of other kids cried and wanted to run to their mothers. My teacher was not very friendly.
- What are you going to do after graduation?** I want to go and do a language course for one month. I'd like to go to the US or Canada but I will probably have to go to the UK because it's closer and so much cheaper.
- Do you think that education is important?** Education is very important and not only for a job. Education helps us understand the world. It improves our ability to make decisions, so we can be more independent.



## 6 Free Time

- How do you spend your free time?** As you can guess, reading. Sometimes by watching movies. I also like going for walks with my dog, especially in the forest but also, sometimes, in the city, especially the historical parts.
- Did you have any hobbies or interests as a child which you no longer have?** Yes, the hobby that has changed is that I no longer play with toys and I don't go fishing any more either.
- Are there any hobbies you would like to try?** Oh yes. I would like to try rock climbing. It looks very exciting.
- Do you listen to music in your free time? If so, what types and why? Or if not, why don't you like music?** I don't listen to music much because I find it distracting when I'm reading. Sometimes I listen to folk singers like Bob Dylan because they have good lyrics. I really hate loud music.
- Which do you prefer, going to the cinema or watching DVDs at home? Why?** I prefer to go to the cinema because I like the atmosphere. And when the cinema is all dark I feel like I'm more in the movie.



## 7 Interpersonal Relationships

- Have you ever been to a birthday party? What was it like?** I've been to some. It was okay. People played games. It was not really my cup of tea.
- How do you keep in touch with your friends and parents?** With my parents, I use my mobile. Usually I send them text messages. With my friends I use email.
- Do you prefer having a large group of friends or a small group of friends? And why?** Definitely small because I can get to know people better and we can have more interesting conversations.
- What are some typical problems that teenagers face with parents?** I suppose it is good to have a relationship that's close but not too close. So I suppose a lot of teenagers argue with their parents and maybe some are too close to them.
- How do you usually make friends?** Slowly I guess. One of my best friends I met in my first year of school and I still know him. The other took some time.



## 8 Travel

<b>What do you need to travel to another country?</b>	You need a passport, money or a credit card, and luggage. You might also need a visa, depending on the country. It is also a good idea to have travel insurance.
<b>Would you prefer to stay at a hotel or camp while on holiday?</b>	It depends on the weather. If it's warm I prefer to stay outdoors and be in the fresh air. In winter, a hotel is necessary, but I prefer a small family one.
<b>What are your plans for the summer and winter holidays?</b>	For these winter holidays, I will go skiing with my school. I'm not very good at skiing but I want to improve. In the summer, I hope to do a language course.
<b>What are some problems that can occur while travelling?</b>	You can lose your luggage or passport. You can also get lost or be robbed.
<b>What is your dream holiday destination? And why?</b>	South America, because I am interested in the lost civilizations. I want to go hiking in the Andes and see Machu Picchu.



## 9 Health and Hygiene

<b>What do you do to keep fit?</b>	I don't really think about it. I walk a lot and that helps.
<b>When should you visit a doctor and when is it OK to just treat yourself?</b>	You should visit a doctor if something bad has happened like you broke a bone, like your arm or your leg. You don't have to visit a doctor if you just have a cold or a headache and you don't feel well.
<b>What do you do when you have a cold?</b>	I usually stay in bed and try to sleep. Mum usually makes me tea with lemon and honey. I don't take any pills if I don't have to.
<b>What stresses teenagers the most?</b>	Well, I think oral exams are very stressful; at least they stress me a lot. I get very nervous even when I'm good at the subject. I prefer to have written exams and tests.
<b>Have you been to the hospital much?</b>	I broke my ankle last winter skiing and I was taken to the local hospital but I didn't stay overnight. The last time I stayed in hospital was when I was eight. I had food poisoning.



## 10 Food

<b>Tell me about your favourite type or types of food?</b>	My favourite type of food is Italian. I like pasta and tomato sauce and Italian herbs. They are very tasty.
<b>What are the advantages or disadvantages of fast food restaurants?</b>	The advantage is that it saves you time and you always know what you will get, wherever you are. The disadvantage is that it is usually unhealthy.
<b>Do you like to cook? Why or why not?</b>	No, I don't like cooking. My parents do the cooking and since I can't cook as well as them I don't bother.
<b>What's typical for Czech cuisine?</b>	Czech cuisine often includes meat and a sidedish such as potatoes or dumplings. It is very heavy, fatty food. I quite like it, especially when my grandmother prepares it.
<b>Are there any foods that you wouldn't eat as a child that you eat now?</b>	I would not eat rice as a child. I don't know why but now I eat it.



## 11 Shopping

<b>How do teenagers usually spend their money? What do you usually buy?</b>	Teenagers spend their money on things they want, I think. I usually spend my money on books and sometimes DVDs. Most other things are bought for me.
<b>What is a shopping mall and what are the different stores and shops it contains?</b>	A shopping mall is a large building with many different stores, such as fashion stores, a supermarket, computer store, stationery store, maybe a bookstore and food stores.
<b>Do you prefer a shopping mall or small stores?</b>	I prefer small shops because there are fewer people there and usually the service is friendlier.
<b>How have consumer goods changed since the Revolution? What do you think?</b>	According to my parents, the quality has improved. They also say that there is more to choose from. However, they sometimes say that people buy a lot of things they don't really need.
<b>What is the most expensive thing that you have ever bought?</b>	The most expensive thing I ever bought was my cross-country skis. However, my grandparents gave me the money.



## 12 Work and Profession

<b>What must not be missing from a good CV? What do you think?</b>	You have to include your personal data, experience, your education, your strengths and everything must be truthful.
<b>What are your plans for your future career or job?</b>	I would like to be a journalist. That way I could travel and write about my experiences.
<b>How should you dress if you go to a job interview?</b>	You should wear nice clothes. A shirt, tie and trousers if you're a man and a nice shirt and either trousers or a skirt if you're a woman. Above all, you have to look neat.
<b>Which jobs would you never try? Why?</b>	I would never be a teacher. I think it would be too tiring and children don't listen. I wouldn't be a policeman either because I think the hours are long and the pay is not good.
<b>What problems do young people face when looking for a job?</b>	At the moment, the biggest problem is that there are fewer jobs than before. The other problem is that employees are looking for people with more experience.



## 14 Society

<b>Who can you ask for help when you have a problem? Why?</b>	It depends on the problem. If it is a personal problem I would speak with my mother. If it is a problem with one of my subjects at school, I would ask my father.
<b>How can the internet be dangerous or harmful to teenagers? Tell me your opinion.</b>	There are a lot of terrible websites out there on which teenagers can see terrible images. There are also dangerous people who use the internet to hurt young people.
<b>How would you help someone close to you who has a problem?</b>	I could listen to them and try to give them advice. If the problem is serious I might tell them to tell a teacher or a parent.
<b>What are the different problems that adolescents face today?</b>	There are a lot of problems, such as finding decent work, being able to afford to live, as well as more serious issues like drugs and crime.
<b>How can drugs be a problem for youth?</b>	Drugs can affect your relationships with people and your ability to work normally. And drug addicts spend all their money on drugs so they often get into debt, which leads to crime.



## 13 Service

<b>What kinds of services do you usually use?</b>	I use the education service, public transport and sometimes medical service. I go to the post office from time to time and I also go to the public library.
<b>What is the difference between public services and private? What do you think?</b>	Usually, public services are cheaper while private services have better quality. Usually, the service is more friendly if it's private.
<b>Which do you prefer: sending information or communicating by post or by email? Why?</b>	I'm more used to using email. To be honest, I like the idea of writing letters but no one does it anymore. Email is just too convenient.
<b>When did you last travel by train? Tell me about the experience.</b>	If you mean travel on Czech Rail then the last time was when I went to visit my mother's parents in Benešov. The journey from Prague is quite short.
<b>What can be done to improve the service in restaurants and shops?</b>	I don't eat in restaurants much but I think waiters could be more friendly.



## 15 Geography and Nature

<b>What is the weather like today?</b>	Today it is cold, freezing. There's snow and ice on the ground and the sky is a little cloudy.
<b>What is the weather like in your country in each season; in autumn, winter, spring and summer?</b>	In autumn it is wet and grey with some wind. In winter the weather is usually quite cold with some snow but the days can be clear too. Spring is very changeable. Sometimes it rains and sometimes it is sunny. Summer can be quite hot and even sometimes humid.
<b>What is your favourite season? Why?</b>	I like autumn because I like to see the leaves change colour and it can be quite nice to take a walk in the woods.
<b>How can the weather influence your mood?</b>	Weather can make you feel tired, especially in the spring. Sunshine can make people feel happy and a lack of sunshine can make people depressed.
<b>How can you become a so-called green person?</b>	You can become a green person by recycling and also by not using too much energy. Taking public transit or walking instead of using a car is also better for the environment.

Toto jsou všeobecná témata uvedená v katalogu požadavků pro maturitní zkoušku z anglického jazyka. Specifická/odborná témata, která testují specifickou slovní zásobu a znalosti faktů,

si stanovuje škola (např. realie anglicky-mluvicích zemí a ČR). Volba odborných témat může odrážet zaměření školy (např. zdravotnictví, ekologie...).