

TOPIC: DESCRIBE A PERSON

Sample answers, useful
vocabulary and resources for
IELTS speaking exam

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References to teaching and authentic materials related to this topic: IELTS blogs, podcasts, videos and articles.

1. SAMPLE ANSWERS

PART 1

1. Describe yourself physically.

- **Basically**, I am a young **green-eyed** girl with white skin and brown hair with the typical Russian look. I do seem younger than my age.

2. Describe yourself emotionally.

- **At the first glance**, I am an emotionally balanced person. What peeves me most is, in fact, dishonesty: I just can't stand people **lying through their teeth**. Thankfully, there are not many people like that around.

3. In which ways are you similar to your friends?

- Well, we've been **through thick and thin** together. That's probably why we are those **easy-going** and **trustworthy** friends, sharing common goals and

beliefs that have helped us **foster** cohesion and empathy.

4. Are you similar or different to your brother(s)/sister(s)?

- Well, people have often said that I have many **striking resemblances** with my younger sisters. I'd say we all are **caring, empathetic, loving and hard-working**.

5. What do you think a true friend should be like?

- In my opinion, friends **are always there for each other**. They support, listen, and sometimes even work for each other. There should be nothing impossible for people who claim to be friends.

PART 2

Describe someone you like in your family. You should tell.

- **What the appearance of this person is**
- **What personality he/she has**
- **Why do you like this person.**

We all have our favorite personalities who we respect and love from the bottom of our hearts. **Personally**, I'm going to talk about my father as he has been a major influence in my life.

Physically, he is a **good-looking** man with a **youthful appearance**, quite **tall** with an **average body build** and his **pointed nose** compliments his **dark hair**. He's hard-working and seems to **get on well** with everybody.

Furthermore, he is a truly patient person, especially in **dealing with** obstacles in our family, although occasionally he may be strict. **Undeniably**, he is a **glass-half-full person**, which inspires me the most no matter how hard are situations we are facing. **Lastly**, he is my **happy pill** with a **good sense of humor** and **self-assurance**, making me smile despite certain challenges I encounter. Hopefully, I've inherited some of these traits.

Definitely, he is the best father in the world, and I do love him for a great number of reasons. **To start with**, he is my **life inspiration**, for I have witnessed how he stood still in the midst of the storm for our family. **Secondly**, he is my **role model**, since he is willing to **sacrifice his own happiness** for our own sake. So, if I was here to choose between my father and what this world has to offer, **I definitely** wouldn't hesitate to pick my dad.

PART 3

1. What do you think are the most important qualities for friends to have?

Well, I quite am **picky on** choosing my friends. **Personally**, I believe they tend to have common interests and possess similar personalities (**idea**). A great proof to this idea is the saying that goes “**birds with the same feathers, flock together**”. Empathy and openness are the first two steps to grow the friendship and it matures once friends start forgiving each other’s faults. Moreover, trustworthiness is a core of a long-lasting and faithful friendship. No-one wants a friend they think might stab them in the back someday (**explain**).

2. Which personality types do you think are less likely to suffer from stress or anxiety?

Based on my personal experience, I would rather say being an optimist is vital, since stress and anxiety both result from negative thinking (**idea**). Thus, having a generally positive attitude, one is more likely to live a **stress-free life (explain)**. Moreover, it is crucial to develop resistance and resilience to all the inevitable struggles we face throughout our lifetime.

3. Is attractiveness a quality worthwhile aiming for?

I would disagree with this (**idea**). Although an attractive appearance might give one a **head start** over others in some ways, it’s still the **inner beauty** that really sets a person apart. Unfortunately, it seems that many people pay much more attention to how they look than actually needed (**explain**). It is not rare to see a poor male or female starving themselves to death on a **crash diet** so that they can lose as much weight as possible. I am not convinced this can be any good for **health** or **consciousness (example)**.

2. KEY VOCABULARY

GENERAL APPEARANCE

**striking
resemblance**

when two people or things are very similar, especially in the way they look

In fact, we have a **striking resemblance**.

attractiveness

a quality that causes an interest desire in, or gravitation to something or somebody

It is a must to not only focus on our **attractiveness**.

youthful appearance

used when saying about someone who looks young

He is a **good-looking** man and has a **youthful appearance**.

good-looking

attractive

Our neighbor has a **good-looking** wife.

body build

a distinctive physical makeup of a human being

I have noticed that almost all of the athletes have a strong **body build**.

**in his/her
teens/early twenties
/mid-thirties**

meaning person who is aged from 13 to 19 (teenager), from 20 to 25 (in early twenties), from 31 to 36 (in mid-thirties)

According to the research released last week, one in six Indian workers are already unhappy at work by the time they reach **their mid-thirties**.

well-dressed

wearing smart clothes of good quality

He was quite a dashing figure, quite tall, handsome, **well-dressed**, extremely charming.

untidy looking

having or showing a lack of care in grooming

A very **untidy looking** man entered the room.

handsome

good-looking (normally about men)

He was a tall blonde man, slightly overweight but still **handsome**.

first impression

is what a person thinks of you when they first meet you

It is true that the **first impression** matters.

to take after

to be similar to an older member of your family in appearance or character

I hope the children **don't take after** their grandfather.

HEIGHT AND BUILT

plump

slightly fat in a fairly pleasant way – used especially about women or children, often to avoid saying the word “fat”

She was a charming-looking woman, middle-aged and comfortably **plump**.

slightly overweight

having a bit above a weight considered normal or desirable

He was a tall blonde man, **slightly overweight** but still handsome.

slim woman

gracefully thin

She was said to be 'tall, **slim** and strikingly handsome **woman**'.

obese person

grossly fat or overweight

What is your first thought or emotion when you see an **obese person**?

chubby

rounded in a pleasant and attractive way (esp. of children)

The illustrations feature **chubby**, cheerful babies and toddlers.

well-built

having a strong and attractive body

Do women love **well-built** men?

muscular

having very big strong muscles

He wished he was more **muscular**.

HAIR, FACE, SKIN AND COMPLEXION

pointed nose

with a point at the end

His **pointed nose** compliments his **black hair**.

curly hair

hairs that made, growing, or arranged in curls or curves

He had a girlfriend with **curly** blond hair.

to go bald

to lose hair

Unfortunately, her boyfriend is **going bald**.

fair complexion

a complexion that refers to the color of a person's skin, especially the face. If you have light skin, for example, you might be said to have a fair or pale complexion

He is tall with an average body build and has a **fair complexion**.

bald

being without hair

He was a man who went **bald** at a very young age.

freckles

a small patch of light brown color on the skin

Some people think that **freckles** are especially attractive.

beard

a growth of hair on the chin and lower cheeks of a man's face

Tom was nearly sixty and had a long brown **beard**.

moustache

a line of facial hair above the top lip

He was handsome and had a **moustache** which suited him.

wrinkles

a slight lines or folds in something, especially the skin of the face

This lady came to me to remove the facial **wrinkles** around her face.

CLOTHES, OUTFIT

dark brown jacket

a short coat, reaching the waist or hips and fastening at the front

The first time I met my wife, I was wearing a **dark brown jacket**.

**single / two tone /
stripped tie**

a narrow strip of a fabric tied round the neck for smart wear with a shirt and collar

Mel bought this **stripped tie** for me yesterday.

flowery dress

a one-piece garment for a woman or girl that covers the body and extends down over the legs and has flower prints or patterns on it

Carren has a beautiful **flowery dress** for her performance, she looks lovely in it!

a plain shirt

a garment for the upper body made of cotton or a similar fabric, with a collar, sleeves, and buttons down the front

We bought him a new **plain shirt** for £20 and borrowed a flashy waistcoat.

glasses

a pair of lenses set in a frame resting on the nose and ears, used to correct or assist defective eyesight or protect the eyes

She had a small pair of silver **glasses** resting on her nose.

jewelry

ornamental worn items

I like handcrafted **jewelry**.

skinny jeans

hard-wearing trousers made of denim or other cotton fabric, for informal wear; tight-fitting, with very narrow legs

She was wearing blue **skinny jeans** and a jacket, a long jumper and a small yellow metal ring decorated with bows.

formal suit

a set of outer clothes made of the same fabric and designed to be worn together

These **formal suits** for men are branded and quite expensive because of the popularity the product provides.

sporty shoes

a footwear such as sneakers, primarily designed for sports

He was wearing black **sporty shoes**, white socks, and a loud checked jacket.

sneakers

a soft shoe with a rubber sole worn for sports or casual occasions

I wear my **sneakers** without socks just for the simple reason that it is comfortable that way.

wristwatch

watch worn on a strap around the wrist

The first modern **wristwatch** was designed by Cartier to help out his friend.

casual

being informal (usually about clothes or behaviour)

Whether you choose business or **casual** dress, the most important factor is to look approachable to a prospective client.

hooded sweatshirt

a loose, heavy shirt with a hood, typically made of cotton, worn when exercising or as leisurewear

My nice red **hooded sweatshirt** kept me warm on the journey home.

pullover

a knitted garment that covers the top half of your body, which you pull on over your head

He was wearing light **pullover** and trousers.

polo

a casual short-sleeved shirt with a collar

Sweatshirts and **polo** shirts are available at the school office.

t-shirt

a short-sleeved casual top, generally made of cotton

Some print-on-demand websites have an online tool to design **t-shirts**.

trendy men's clothes

very fashionable or up to date in style or influence clothing for men

It has become very common to shop online for **trendy men's clothes** at affordable prices.

POSITIVE ADJECTIVES TO DESCRIBE PERSONALITY

good-hearted

having a kindly generous disposition

She is one of the **good-hearted** persons who helped the victims.

glass-half full person

person who views the situation optimistically or hopefully

He is a **glass-half full person**, which inspires me the most no matter how hard is the situation we are facing.

good sense of humor

causing lighthearted laughter and amusement; comic

A **good sense of humor** requires being observant, paying keen attention to what is going on.

humorous

causing lighthearted laughter and amusement; comic

The most **humorous** people I know tend to be so not because of jokes they tell.

role model

a person looked to by others as an example to be imitated

A polite person is a **good role** model to children.

to lose temper

become angry, especially when under pressure

He kept **losing his temper** with his children.

trustworthy

be trusted; reliable

He is **trustworthy**, keeps his word, does what is right.

easy-going

relaxed and tolerant in approach or manner

I have been told that I'm very '**easy going**'.

extrovert

somebody who is confident and outgoing

Her sister-in-law has been more of an **extrovert**.

introvert

a shy, reticent and typically self-centered person

He was an **introvert**, who quickly learned to be independent and self-sufficient.

practical

making choices or decisions that are sensible in the circumstances; pragmatic

He was very **practical** and helped the parties move forward.

emotional

emotional having strong feelings and showing them to other people

Some people are too sensitive, and some are highly **emotional**.

rational

able to think sensibly and logically

A normal, **rational** person can believe the evidence of their senses.

impulsive

tending to act as a result of sudden feelings or desires, without thinking about consequences

At least for the next few days, allow yourself to be more **impulsive**.

perseverance

the quality of persevering, of not giving up trying to do something difficult

Despite the prediction, he recovered because of his **perseverance** and determination.

goal-oriented

concerned with or focused on achieving a particular aim or result

He was **goal-oriented** and no one was able to distract him from his goal.

flexible

able to change or adapt to new situations

You must be able to collaborate with other artists and be **flexible**.

energetic

people who have a lot of energy, enthusiastic and determined

Exercise helps you to be **energetic**.

life and soul of

someone who is energetic and funny and at the center of activity during social occasions

We were at the same dinner party last night and he was the **life and soul of** it.

talkative

tending to talk a lot

She is a lively **talkative** girl who is doing well in school.

friendly

behaving in a pleasant and helpful way towards others

It was really great as I found the classes excellent and everyone was really **friendly** to me.

honest

straightforward, truthful and sincere

He was also **honest**, loyal and modest; his word was his bond.

shy

being reserved or having or showing nervousness or timidity in the company of other people

Most **shy** guys find it very difficult to talk to you in person.

perfectionist

somebody who wants everything to be perfect

Johnny and Gordon are **perfectionists**.

generous

showing a readiness to give more of something, as money or time, than is strictly necessary or expected

He was a **generous** man who treated his friends well.

optimistic

person confident that the future will be positive

Always so upbeat and **optimistic**, Carmel, for once, failed to come up with reasons to be cheerful.

loyal

giving or showing firm and constant support or allegiance to a person

A woman can be utterly **loyal**.

NEGATIVE ADJECTIVES TO DESCRIBE PERSONALITY

picky

fussy or choosy

I am very **picky** when it comes to music, but I really like your mix.

stubborn

unwilling to change one's ideas even when there are good reasons to do so

He accused her of being a silly, **stubborn** old woman.

mean

unkind, cruel, nasty

Jack was a **mean** and bitter person.

aggressive

behaving in an angry, violent way

They soon became **aggressive**, punching him in the face and demanding his wallet and phone.

pessimistic

tending to believe that a bad outcome is the most likely, or interpreting something in the most negative way

I am **pessimistic** about any change in legislation in the foreseeable future.

arrogant

having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities

To me he will always be a selfish, **arrogant** bully who believes the only good advice is the advice he gives.

egoistic

having a very high opinion of yourself and interest only in yourself

Humans are **egoistic** by nature, this is because the will to be alive drives us all.

possessive

demanding someone's total attention and love

My husband was very jealous and **possessive**, and he couldn't bear the fact that I wanted to pursue a career

selfish

thinking only of oneself, or showing this

I think he is **selfish**. Let me explain you.

3. WORD FORMATION

sensitive

adjective

The new method of protein detection was more **sensitive** than earlier ones.

sense

noun

A little bit of praise and appreciation can give people a real **sense** of well-being.

to sense

verb

I think she must have **sensed** there was something wrong.

achievement

noun

To reach this stage is a great **achievement**.

achiever

noun

These children are **achievers** destined to follow an exacting academic route

reaction

noun

Carrie's immediate **reaction** was one of relief react.

to react

verb

How did your husband **react** when you told him you were pregnant?

compliment

noun

She paid me an enormous **compliment**.

complimentary

adjective

Jennie was very **complimentary** about Kathy's riding.

muscles

noun

Relax all the **muscles** of your body and try to be aware of your breathing.

muscular

adjective

He wished he was more muscular.

curls

noun

Ruth and Walter had lovely, long, blond curls.

curly

adjective

He had a girlfriend with curly blond hair.

to curl

verb

Her hair **curled** naturally.

humour

noun

Find the **humor** in the situation and make light of it.

humorous

adjective

The most **humorous** people I know tend to be so not because of "jokes" they tell.

4. COLLOCATIONS AND PHRASES

bubbly
extrovert
sparkling
vibrant
charming
attractive

adjective +

personality

overwhelming
strong
deep
mixed
conflicting

adjective +

emotion

attractive
youthful
strange
outward
odd
handsome

adjective+

appearance

to look young for your

phrase+

age

to be

verb+

well-built

to be

verb+

well-turned out

to be

verb+

overweight

to be

verb+

the life and soul of the party

to hide

verb+

one's light under a bushel

to lose good

verb+

sense of humor

5. USEFUL RESOURCES

THIS TOPIC ON IELTS BLOGS

- [199 Words and Phrases To Describe Personality | Taken from Articles, Podcasts And Videos \[thetesttaker.com\]](#)
- [How To Describe a Person And Impress Your IELTS Examiner \[thetesttaker.com\]](#)
- [IELTS Speaking Part 2: describe a person \[ielts-simon.com\]](#)
- [IELTS Personality Vocabulary \[ieltsspeaking.co.uk\]](#)
- [IELTS Physical Appearance Vocabulary \[ieltsspeaking.co.uk\]](#)

PODCASTS

- [Who's the best superhero? \[teacherluke.co.uk\] \(right click save as\)](#)
- [Susan Boyle \[teacherluke.co.uk\]](#)
- [English Vocabulary & Pronunciation 2.3 – Describing People \(& Character\) \[zappenglish.com\]](#)
- [English Vocabulary & Pronunciation 2.9 – Describing Appearance \[zappenglish.com\]](#)
- [6 Minute English. The way we look \[bbc\]](#)

USEFUL RESOURCES

ARTICLES

- [What are some words that describe your best friend perfectly? \[quora.com\]](#)

VIDEOS

- [How to improve Speaking at home for IELTS | 11 tips \[Darian Sandmartin\]](#)
- [4 Phrases to Describe Yourself in American English \[Go Natural English\]](#)
- [Speaking about physical appearance in English - Spoken English Lesson \[Let's Talk\]](#)

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