



Ready for Speaking

Part 2

Track 18

(E = examiner; C = candidate)

- E:** Now, I'm going to give you a card with a topic to look at. You have one minute to make notes and then I'm going to ask you to talk about the topic.
- E:** Can you talk about the topic?
- C:** The skill that I'd like to talk about is playing a musical instrument, mmm ... like the piano, and I'd like to learn it in the near future. I know it's possible to go to a class to learn to play the piano, but mmm ... I know I'd find that very annoying. I think learning to play the piano's one of those skills that'd be better to learn ... to acquire by paying for individual tuition. I realise it might be expensive, but it'd be mmm ... very rewarding in other ways.
- Why I'd like to be able to take up the piano is because ... it's mmm ... very soothing to play and to listen to. It's a wonderful feeling to lose yourself in the music as you're playing. I've got several friends who are mad about music, and I've listened to them many times. They've played both classical and pop music to me, and they've found it thrilling to play for someone. And to me it is a very peaceful experience just sitting there and listening. As well as helping to calm people down, playing an instrument like the piano's mmm ... very good for the brain as it keeps it active. One of my friends, who plays the guitar and the piano, says that he plays for about ... half an hour before he does any homework, and it helps him to focus on his work and concentrate more. And it's healthy, because it helps take away part of the stress of modern life. Friends have also told me that it improves their ability to focus, and so they play before they study or do any work, which I think would mm ... benefit me too.
- E:** OK. Thank you. Which type of music would you like to learn to play?
- C:** Mmm ... I'd like to start with classical, but I'd like to learn jazz music later on and maybe some pop music.

Part 3

Track 19

(E = examiner; C = candidate)

- E:** Let's talk about learning new skills generally. Do you think it's important to keep acquiring new skills throughout one's life?
- C:** Yes, I think it is.
- E:** Why do you think so?
- C:** Well, mmm, at the moment life is changing so fast with the advances that have been made in technology, and also through mmm ... globalisation in the past few decades, so it's important for people of all ages to keep up-to-date with skills of all kinds.
- E:** How essential do you think it'll be for workforces in the future to be proficient technologically?
- C:** Mmm, I'd say it'll be vital, because more and more of the work that is done nowadays requires a lot of input using one form of technology or another, so that in the near future it will be almost impossible to find work, even basic work, without practical computing skills. Take car design, for example. It seems that technical drawing done by hand is less important now than knowing how to create new products on the screen. Soon designers'll be creating holograms of cars, not just three-dimensional computer images. And the same applies to architecture and teaching too.
- E:** In what way do you think learning only computing skills can be a disadvantage in life?
- C:** Mmm ... first of all, people are already becoming over-reliant on computers for virtually everything. In the current knowledge-based society, where information is available literally at people's fingertips, there's a danger that people's knowledge'll decrease and accessing information'll become just like switching on the light without necessarily understanding what's happening. And people're in danger of losing their ability to do basic things.
- E:** Mmm, should the preparation of children and young people for work focus on computing skills at the expense of practical skills?
- C:** Mmm ... I think it's a matter of balance, because we need the people to build computers and so on, and the people to learn to be able to use them for their

work. Also, if any machines break down, we need people to be able to fix them. And so if education concentrates on training people to use machines to access knowledge at the expense of training technicians, etc, then there'll be a major problem.

- E:** Do you think people will have to work longer in the future?
- C:** At one time, it was thought that people would have more leisure time in the future, but it seems that the opposite is true. As people are living longer worldwide, they're also being asked to work longer with the result that the age at which people will be drawing a pension, if they have one, will be later than it is now. And in fact it's already starting to happen in many countries like the UK and France.
- E:** How can people ensure that work does not control their lives?
- C:** It's not easy, but not impossible either. One way is to ensure that one has interests outside work, and that these interests are not connected with work in any way. For example, if people are involved in working in computers all day, they could find something that requires manual skills, like pottery.

