

## Speaking Test Strategies

### Aim

To provide speaking strategies when encountering difficult questions

### When to do the activity

Do this activity when preparing students for Part 3 of the test  
Time needed: 25-30 minutes

### Types of activity

- Watch a video
- Practise sentence stress
- Controlled practice role-play

### Before class

- Check the classroom computer, projector and sound are working.
- Sign in to Road to IELTS and go through the activities below.
- Print out the worksheet for students.

### Step 1

Write on the board:

'What should you do if you are not sure what the examiner asked you?'

Elicit some responses.



### Step 2

Go to *Speaking, Practice Zone, Set 1, What makes good Part 3 answers?* Put the video on full screen and play from 01:18-01:27.



### Step 3

- Ask what the candidate said and why he said it. (He says 'Sorry?' because he doesn't understand the question.)
- Explain that if a candidate is unsure what the examiner is asking, he or she should always ask for clarification. Elicit examples of how to do that. Here are some examples:

So<sup>•</sup>rry, could you repea<sup>•</sup>t that?

Could you sa<sup>•</sup>y that aga<sup>•</sup>in?

I didn't ca<sup>•</sup>ch what you sa<sup>•</sup>id.

I'm not su<sup>•</sup>re what you mea<sup>•</sup>n by 'wo<sup>•</sup>rk/li<sup>•</sup>fe ba<sup>•</sup>lance'?

Do you mea<sup>•</sup>n stu<sup>•</sup>dying or wo<sup>•</sup>rking?

I'm not su<sup>•</sup>re what 'u<sup>•</sup>rban' mea<sup>•</sup>ns.



### Step 4

Remind students that pronunciation is one of the grading criteria, and that having good sentence stress is important. Demonstrate the stress in each sentence. Drill with students.

(Note: Depending on your students' needs, you might decide to focus on intonation instead.)



### Step 5

Demonstrate the next activity with two or three students by asking a question so that the student can ask for clarification.

'Do you think AI will give us more free time?'

'What is your favourite cuisine?'

'Would you like to live in a rural environment?'

In each case clarify the question and ask for an answer.

### Further practice

- Hand out the worksheet to students, and group them in pairs. Demonstrate first with two stronger students. Do the controlled practice activity.



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## Worksheet

### Strategies for dealing with questions you did not understand

Work with a partner. First, look at the questions on the left. Use a dictionary to check any words you don't know. Note down the meanings of any new words. Then one of you should be the examiner (asks the question) and the other is the candidate (gives the response). After four questions change roles.

**Example:**

Examiner: What kind of possessions do you think give status to people?

Candidate: I'm not sure what 'possessions' means.

Examiner: 'Possessions' mean things that a person owns.

Candidate: Oh, I think watches, sports cars and smart clothes give status because ...

**Student A (Examiner):**

Can you tell me what reasons people have for visiting other countries?

Can you tell me the benefits of working or studying in another country?

OK, let's go on to talk about art in everyday life. What kind of decoration do you like on your walls?

Should the government provide support for art and cultural activities?

OK, let's talk about cities. So, how do you think city life will change in the next few decades?

What are the most serious problems facing cities at the moment?

Right, let's move on to jobs. Do you think job satisfaction is more important than salary when choosing a job?

What occupations do you think people will do in the future, which are different to the occupations that they do now?

**Student B (Candidate):**

Ask the examiner to repeat.  
Then answer the question.

Ask what 'benefits' means.  
Then answer the question.

Ask what 'decoration' means.  
Then answer the question.

Ask what 'provide support' means.  
Then answer the question.

Ask what 'next few decades' means.  
Then answer the question.

Ask examiner to repeat.  
Then answer the question.

Ask what 'satisfaction' means.  
Then answer the question.

Ask what 'occupations' means.  
Then answer the question.