

IELTS Speaking Part 3: How to Get a High Score

Do you think IELTS Speaking Part 3 is a challenge?

Can you get ideas quickly, find the right words, and speak out fluently with ease?

If not, don't worry, I have got you covered.

In this lesson I will give you the secret to getting a high score in IELTS Speaking Part 3

How do you Get a High Score in Part 3?

Of course, there are many things you can do to get a high score, and the most important is to improve your overall level of spoken English.

This includes,

- improving your fluency
- using a wider range of grammar more accurately
- using more vocabulary more accurately
- improving your pronunciation

Now I can hear you thinking,

“Yes, yes, Keith, I know that but that is too general! Give me something a bit more specific”.

Well, whilst there are no shortcuts, there is something very few people are talking about, and for me it's essential for IELTS Speaking Part 3.

First of all, hopefully, you know you need to develop your answers in Part 3.

But how do you do that?

The secret for me is all about using **HOTS**.

No, not high temperatures!

H.O.T.S. stands for Higher Order Thinking Skills

These are *critical thinking skills* at a higher level, unlike low level thinking skills, which are things like reciting, repeating and memorising.

Higher Order Thinking Skills include,

- Analysing
- Reasoning
- Evaluating
- Justifying
- Speculating

And this is exactly what you need to do in Part 3 of IELTS Speaking.

A Sample IELTS Speaking Part 3 Answer

Imagine the examiner asks you the following question,

Should we let children use mobile phones?

It's not enough to say,

I think so, yes, that's a good idea!

You also need to reason, synthesise ideas, evaluate, and even possibly speculate on the future.

In short, you need to be using HOTS.

You might say something like this,

*I'd say so, yes, **because for one**, they can help children do their homework better, **on top of that**, they can help keep children safe. Of course, students can be distracted by social media on phones, and **that's a hugely important issue we need to address**, but mobile learning **is going to become more popular** and so we need to move with the times.*

In this sample, I answer first by **reasoning** (*because*) and **synthesising ideas** (*for one, on top of that*).

Then I **evaluate** an idea (*that's a hugely important issue*). Finally, I **speculate** (*is going to become*).

Using Functions in IELTS Speaking Part 3

So, HOTS are the thinking skills you need, but of course, you need the words and phrases in English to do this.

When we focus on the English needed to express these skills, we often call them functions.

In this lesson we will look at the following functions which relate directly to Higher Order Thinking Skills,

Giving opinions
Reasoning
Justifying
Evaluating
Speculating

I will show you simple and complex phrases. In IELTS Speaking, you need to use both simple and complex language. Don't think that everything needs to be complex. That is not how native speakers speak.

In addition, I will highlight which kind of questions will probably produce which functions.

Giving opinions

So, this is a fairly simple function and a good place to start. Common questions in IELTS Speaking Part 3 that might be answered with this function are

Do you think _____?

Do you agree that _____?

Is it a good idea to _____?

Useful phrases

I think that _____

I think so, _____

I reckon that _____

Based on my experience _____

It seems to me that _____

Do you agree that books are better than films?

Based on my experience, the book is usually better than the film. Directors often give a narrow interpretation of the story and it's hard to capture the spirit of the original book.

Giving reasons

Questions in IELTS Speaking Part 3 that might be answered with this function are

Why is _____ so popular?

Why do some people _____?

Useful phrases

It's because...

The main reason is _____

There are a number of reasons, firstly _____

It (all) boils down to _____

One cause could be _____

Note: It boils down to something = something is the most important thing.

(Put this in a shaded box)

Why do parents let their children use the Internet at such a young age?

***It all boils down to** time, parents are too busy to look after their kids and so use the Internet as a kind of baby-sitter!*

*I **reckon** the main reason is parents are too busy to look after their kids and so use the Internet as a kind of baby-sitter!*

Justifying

Typical IELTS Speaking Part 3 questions that might be answered with this function are

Why is _____ so popular?

Why do some people _____?

Useful phrases

I think this is true because _____

This seems to be the case because _____

This is down to the fact that _____

The reason I think so is _____

Why do young people like studying in a coffee bar rather than at home?

*I'd say **this is down to the fact that** coffee bars can provide a relaxing atmosphere that's conducive to better study, at least **this seems to be the case because** chain stores like Starbucks with their comfy sofas and soft music, are full of students studying.*

Evaluating

Some questions that might be answered with this function are

How important is _____?

How useful is _____?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of _____?

Useful phrases

It's important

I think this is hugely important

I think this is extremely useful

This is critical

It's not as important as you may think, _____

How important is tourism in your country?

I think this is hugely important, in recent years the pandemic has led to fewer visitors coming to my country and this has really impacted the local economy.

Speculating

Some common Part 3 questions that might be answered with this function are

Will we _____ more in the future?

How will _____ change in the future?

Useful phrases

It will _____ (to express certainty)

It might _____ (to express possibility)

It could _____ (to express possibility)

It may _____ (to express possibility) It

may be that _____ (to express possibility)

It might well _____ (to express strong possibility)

It's highly likely that _____ (to express high probability)

Will books disappear in the future?

***They might well** disappear given the popularity of e-books, but that said, I think so many people still enjoy flipping the pages of real books, that **it is highly likely that** we will have both paper books and e-books in the future*

Conclusion

To get a high score in IELTS Speaking Part 3, you need to develop your answers, connecting your ideas in a fluent and coherent way.

A great way to do that is to use phrases that express different functions.

The most useful functions in IELTS Speaking Part 3 are the ones connected to Higher Order Thinking Skills.

Watch the video above again, and start practicing using these functions.

If you are working with a speaking partner here is a useful list of IELTS Speaking Part 3 topics and questions you can ask each other.

The PDF (Part 3 Speaking Practice Guide) can be downloaded at the end of this post on this link:

<https://keithspeakingacademy.com/ielts-speaking-part-3-high-score-tips-questions>

Remember, there is no shortcut!

Practice and build flexibility over time, and most of all, have fun!

If you liked this lesson, **leave a comment below**.

If you want to see more functions in action, try the following links

Comparing and contrasting

[Link](#)

Agreeing / Disagreeing

[Link](#)