

**Topic Task:**  
**Music, Travel & Descriptions**

**At a glance**

**Level:** ISE Foundation

**Focus:** Topic task

**Aims:** To provide students with a model of a good topic form/topic discussion, to familiarise students with the language requirements for the ISE Foundation Topic task, to practise discussions, students prepare their own topic form, students ask and answer questions using the language communicative skills in speaking, to practise forming questions and answers using the language of the grade

**Objectives:** Students are able to recognise strengths and weaknesses in example topic forms/topic of the grade

**Topic:** Music, travel, descriptions and students' own choice

**Language functions:** See language functions of the grade

**Grammar:** Dependent on topic choice

**Lexis:** Vocabulary related to topics chosen

**Materials needed:** ISE Foundation specifications, whiteboard, paper and pens

**Timing:** 80 minutes

**Procedure**

**Preparation**

1. This lesson plan assumes that students have already chosen their topic.
2. This lesson will work better if students are already familiar with the language requirements for ISE Foundation.
3. If possible, pre-record the example exam scripts using two different people (yourself as the examiner; another person as the candidate).
4. Make a copy of the topic forms and worksheet for each student.

**In class**

1. Remind students that the ISE Foundation Speaking & Listening exam starts with a 4-minute topic phase. Explain that they must complete a topic form before the exam. Tell students that in this lesson they will see good and bad examples of topic forms, and work on completing their own topic forms.
2. Write these three topic titles on the board, and check students' understanding:

**My guitar**

**My visit to Istanbul**

**My life**

Give out the three topic forms and explain any unknown vocabulary. Ask students to match the titles on the board to the forms in pairs, then check answers in open-class.

3. Ask students which of the three topic forms they think is the best and why. Explain that '**My guitar**' is the best, because it covers the most language functions of the grade.
4. Give out the student worksheet and ask the students to look at the language requirements for ISE Foundation (which appear at the top of the worksheet). Tell the students to match each point on the topic forms to one of the language functions. Do the first one together as an example. After five minutes, go over the answers:

**My guitar**

When and where I play  
*Describing routines*

Guitar compared to piano  
*Expressing simple comparisons*

My next concert  
*Describing future plans*

How I learnt to play  
*Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities*

**My visit to Istanbul**

When I went  
*Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities*

What I did  
*Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities*

Who I went with  
*Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities*

Where I stayed

*Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities*

**My life**

My family

*Describing people, objects and places*

My friends

*Describing people, objects and places*

My house

*Describing people, objects and places*

My town

*Describing people, objects and places*

5. Tell students they are going to hear an example of how the exam might go using each topic form. For each example, students complete the tables on the worksheet. If you have pre-recorded the scripts, play the recordings. If not, read the examiner's part yourself and choose a strong student to read out the candidate's part. Play part of the first script to give an example of how to complete the worksheet.
6. After each script, allow students to compare their answers in pairs, and then go through them as a class. Make the following comments:

**My Guitar**

This is a very good example of an ISE Foundation topic. The topic form covers a range of language functions of the grade.

**My visit to Istanbul**

This is a weak ISE Foundation topic. The topic form only covers the language function of "Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities" (although it has the potential to cover "Describing people, objects and places"). The candidate only gives very brief answers to the examiner's questions that are not directly related to the topic form, meaning they are not actually demonstrating the language of the grade.

**My life**

This is a very weak ISE Foundation topic. The scope of the topic is too wide; candidates should be encouraged to choose something more specific. The topic form only covers the language function of "Describing people, objects and places". The candidate is intent on reciting pre-prepared chunks of language; and is unable to handle the examiner's interruptions.

7. Refer students to the blank topic form (on the topic forms handout), and tell them they have ten minutes to complete it for their own topic. Encourage them to cover as many language functions of the grade as possible.
8. Put students into pairs. Tell them to swap topic forms, and to write a list of questions related to their partner's topic form. Encourage them to cover as many language functions of the grade as possible.
9. Label each pair A and B. Tell them that student A is the candidate and B is the examiner. The examiner asks their questions and the candidate answers for 4 minutes.
10. Change roles and repeat.
11. Whilst students are working in pairs, write up the errors you hear on the board. Once the students have completed the task, comment on their progress and then address the errors.

### **Extension activity**

Students can change partners and repeat the activity as many times as time allows.

### **Further support activity**

The weaker students can be told to write example answers to the questions their partner asks them. You should then check their example answers.

### **After class**

Ask students to rewrite the topic form for **My trip to Istanbul** covering as many language functions of the grade as possible.

**Audio Script** (for the teacher)

*If possible, pre-record the example exam scripts using two different people (yourself as the examiner; another person as the candidate).*

**Audio Script 1: My guitar**

E: Can you play the guitar?

C: Yes, I can.

E: When did you learn to play?

C: Sorry, did you say when or where?

E: When.

C: I learnt to play the guitar 2 years ago. My brother played guitar, and I liked listening to him. He was very good.

E: Did he teach you to play?

C: No, I went to lessons after school. The lessons were every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6pm.

E: When do you play now?

C: Now, I play in a band with my class mates. They are very friendly and funny. We practise every Wednesday evening, and sometimes we give concerts at school.

E: When are you going to give your next concert?

C: Next weekend. All of my friends are going to watch.

E: Can you also play the piano?

C: No, I can't. The piano is more difficult than the guitar. It is also more expensive. I like listening to the piano, but I'm not going to learn to play it. Can you play any instruments?

E: No, I can't.

**Audio Script 2: My visit to Istanbul**

E: When did you visit to Istanbul?

C: I visited Istanbul in July last year. I stayed there for 3 days, then went to the coast of Turkey for one week. It was very hot and sunny.

E: What did you like about Istanbul?

C: Yes, I liked it.

E: What did you like?

C: Yes.

E: Did you like the food?

C: Erm... yes. In Istanbul we visited the main monuments of the city. On the first day, we went to the Blue Mosque. On the second day, we went to the market...

E: Can you describe the market?

C: What?

E: Tell me about the market.

C: It is big. On the third day, we visited a palace.

E: Which was more beautiful: the Blue Mosque or the palace?

C: The Blue Mosque and the palace are beautiful.

E: Did you stay in a hotel?

C: Yes. The hotel was called "Hilton". It is in the centre of Istanbul. It has a swimming pool and a restaurant.

E: Lovely! Can you swim?

C: Yes, I can.

E: What time did you get up in Istanbul?

C: What?

E: Did you get up early?

C: Erm... yes.

E: And who did you go to Istanbul with?

C: I went to Istanbul with my mum, dad and sister. Do you often go on holiday with your family?

E: No, I usually go on holiday with my friends. Are you going to visit Istanbul again in the future?

C: Erm... I don't know.

**Audio Script 3: My life**

E: How many people are there in your family?

C: In my family, there are 4 people: My mum, my dad, my brother and me. My mum is tall with brown hair. She is intelligent and funny. My dad...

E: How old is your brother?

C: 14. My dad is fat and bald. He is quiet and serious. My brother...

E: What does your dad like doing?

C: Erm... My brother is very handsome. He...

E: And your dad? What does he like to do in his free time?

C: Erm... free time?

E: Does your dad have any hobbies?

C: My hobby is swimming. My brother is short...

E: When do you go swimming?

C: Yes.

E: Let's talk about your house now. Where do you live?

C: I live in flat with my mum, my dad, and my brother.

E: Which is the biggest room in your flat?

C: I don't know.

E: Which room do you like best?

C: Erm... my bedroom.

E: Which town do you live in?

C: I live in Trani. It is a small town near Bari. It is by the sea.

E: Is Trani bigger than Bari?

C: No.

E: What do you like about Trani?

C: I don't know.

E: Who is your best friend?

C: I have three best friends: Giulia, Anna, and Massimo. Giulia is 15 years old. She is intelligent and pretty. Anna is...

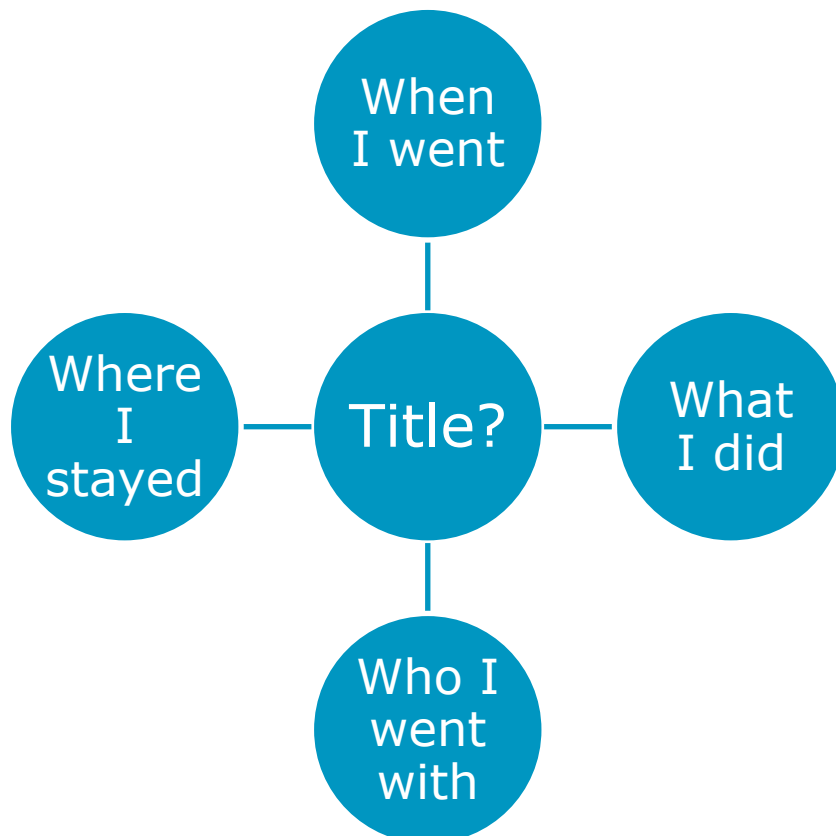
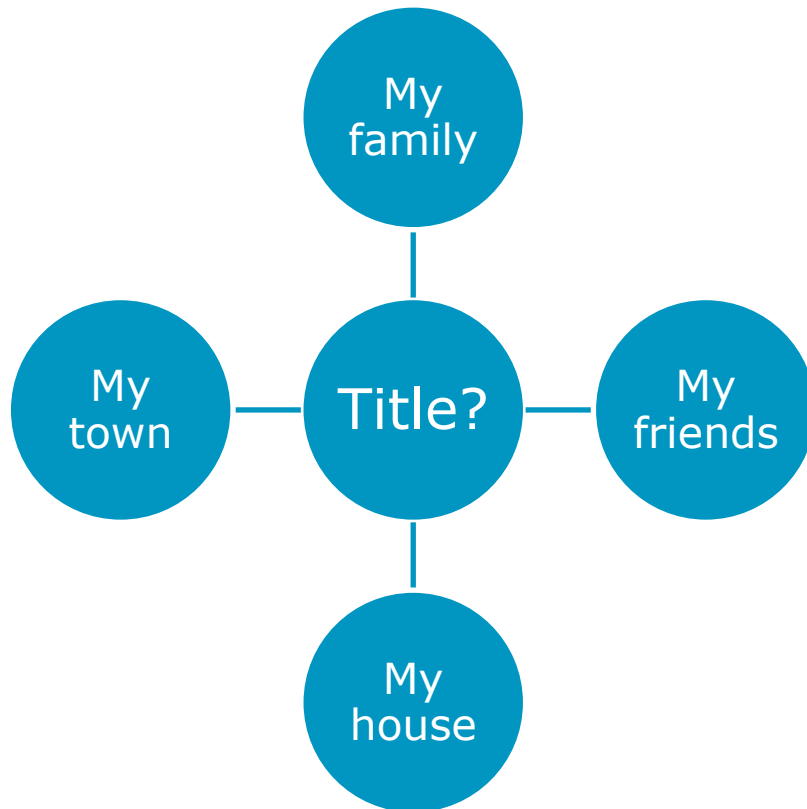
E: Can Giulia play any musical instruments?

C: No, I can't.

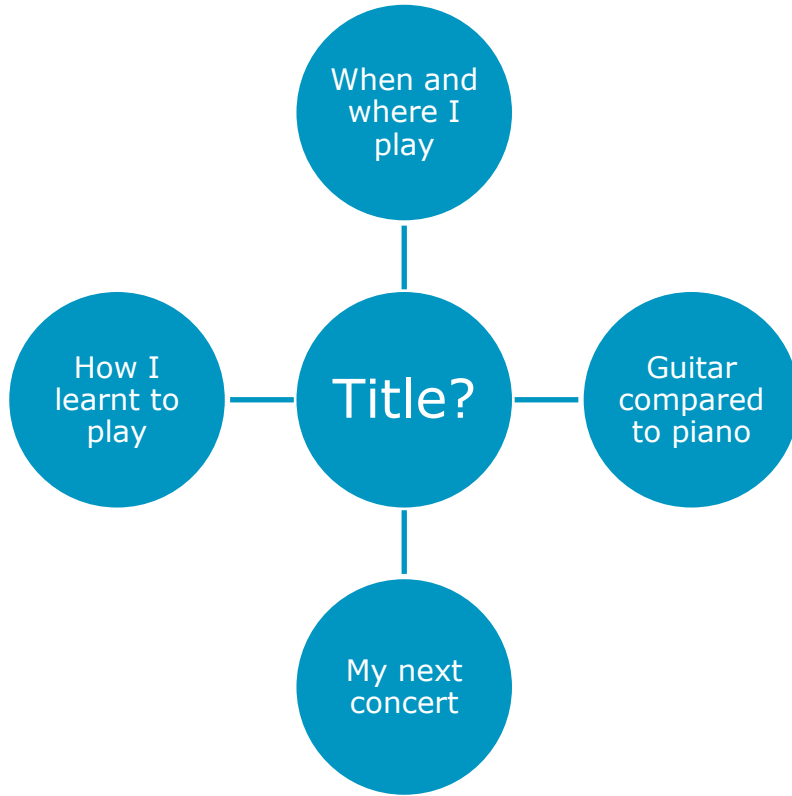
E: Are you going to see Giulia this weekend?

C: Yes.

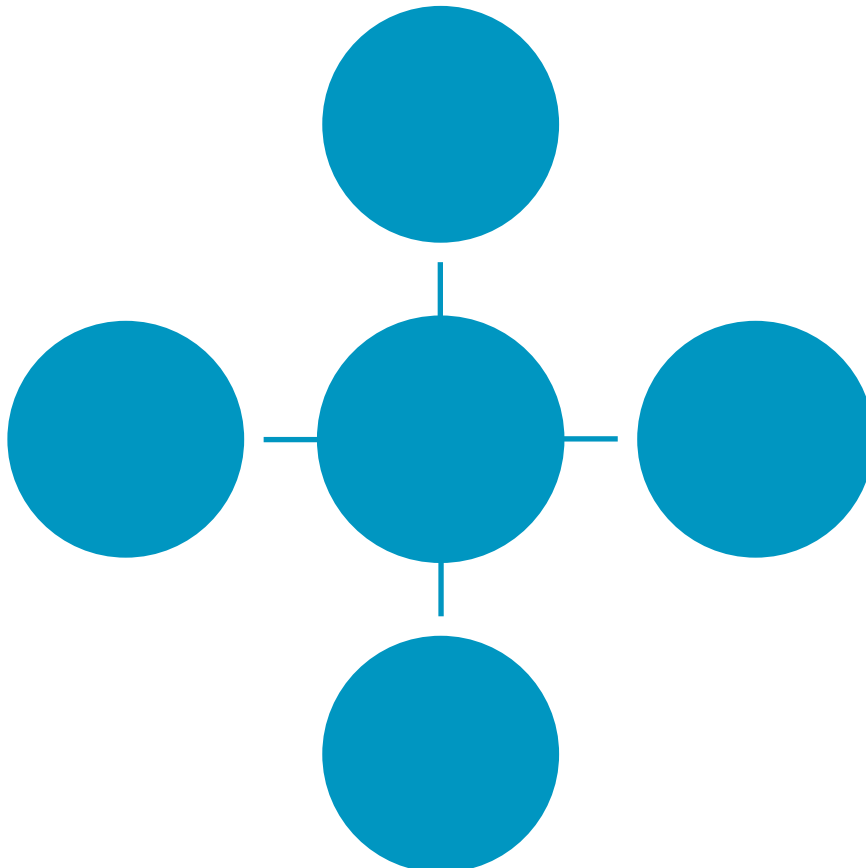
**Topic forms**







**Student Topic Form**  
**Complete the form for your own topic.**



**Student Worksheet** - Completing the topic form

**ISE Foundation Language Requirements**

• Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities
• Describing routines
• Describing ability and inability
• Describing future plans
• Expressing likes and dislikes
• Expressing simple comparisons
• Describing people, objects and places
• Asking for information
• Negotiating meaning

**Task 1: Complete the table for each topic**

1) My guitar

<b>Language function</b>	<b>Covered? Y/N</b>	<b>Example</b>
Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities		
Describing routines		
Describing ability and inability		
Describing future plans		
Expressing likes and dislikes		
Expressing simple comparisons		
Describing people, objects and places		
Asking for information		
Negotiating meaning		

2) My visit to Istanbul

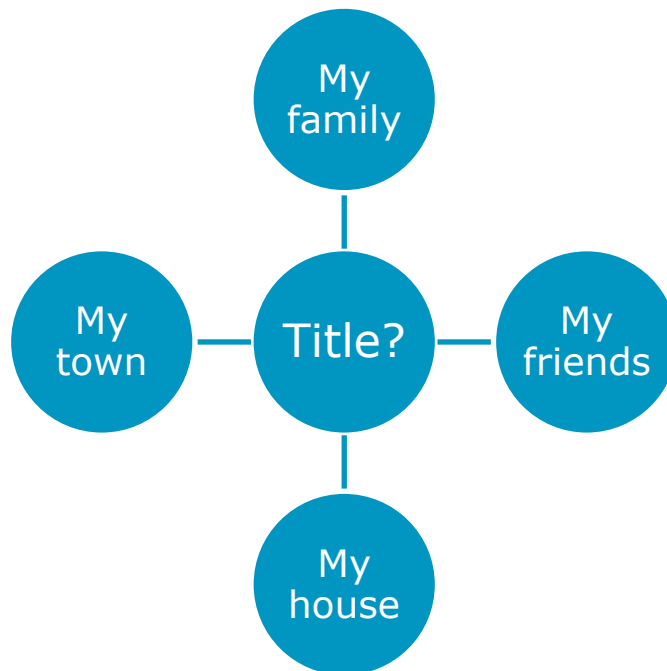
<b>Language function</b>	<b>Covered? Y/N</b>	<b>Example</b>
Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities		
Describing routines		
Describing ability and inability		
Describing future plans		
Expressing likes and dislikes		
Expressing simple comparisons		
Describing people, objects and places		
Asking for information		
Negotiating meaning		

3) My life

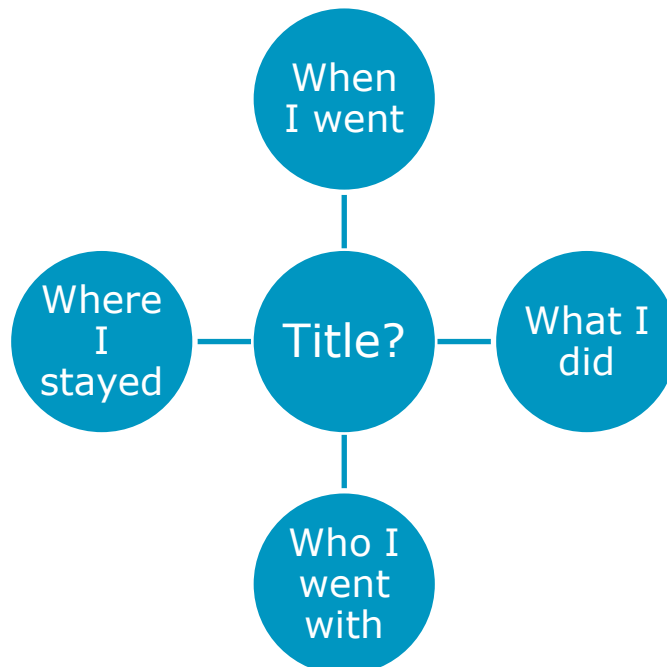
<b>Language function</b>	<b>Covered? Y/N</b>	<b>Example</b>
Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities		
Describing routines		
Describing ability and inability		
Describing future plans		
Expressing likes and dislikes		
Expressing simple comparisons		
Describing people, objects and places		
Asking for information		
Negotiating meaning		

**Answer Key** – Topic Forms

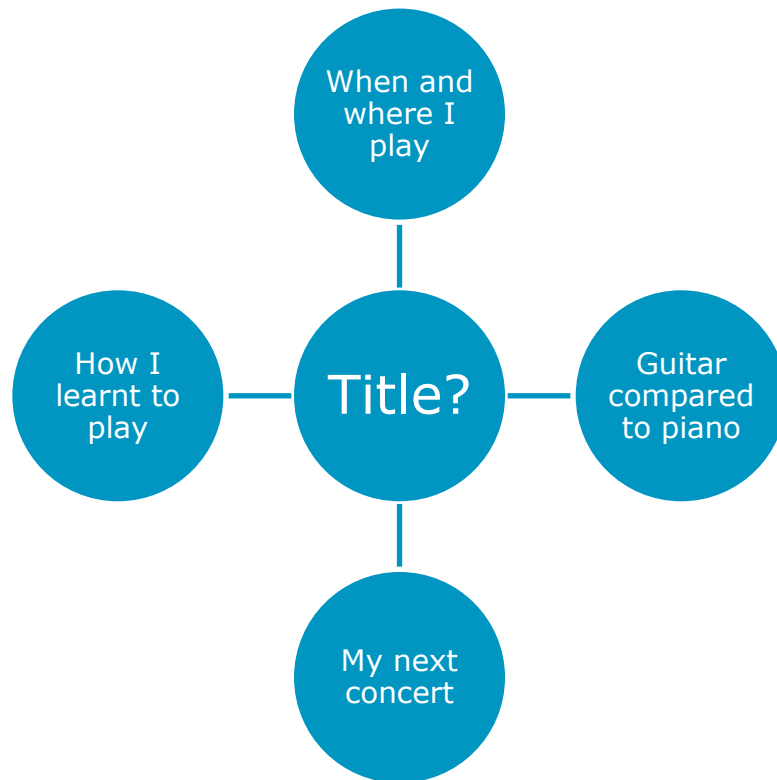
**My life**



**My visit to Istanbul**



**My guitar**



**Answer Key** – Student Worksheet

Complete the table for each topic

1) My guitar

<b>Language function</b>	<b>Covered? Y/N</b>	<b>Example</b>
Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities	Y	I learnt to play the guitar 2 years ago I went to lessons after school Now, I play in a band with my class mates
Describing routines	Y	The lessons were every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6pm We practise every Wednesday evening
Describing ability and inability	Y	Yes, I can No, I can't
Describing future plans	Y	All of my friends are going to watch I'm not going to learn to play it
Expressing likes and dislikes	Y	I liked listening to him I like listening to the piano
Expressing simple comparisons	Y	The piano is more difficult than the guitar. It is also more expensive.
Describing people, objects and places	Y	They are very friendly and funny
Asking for information	Y	Can you play any instruments?
Negotiating meaning	Y	Sorry, did you say when or where?

2) My visit to Istanbul

Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities	Y	I visited Istanbul in July last year. I stayed there for 3 days, then went to the coast of Turkey for one week. It was very hot and sunny. In Istanbul we visited the main monuments of the city. On the first day, we went to the Blue Mosque. On the second day, we went to the market. On the third day, we visited a palace. The hotel was called "Hilton". I went to Istanbul with my mum, dad and sister.
Describing routines	N	The candidate failed to answer the question about what time he/ she got up.
Describing ability and inability	Y	Yes, I can.
Describing future plans	N	The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about the future.
Expressing likes and dislikes	N	Yes, I liked it. The candidate does not actually answer the question asked, i.e. "What did you like?".
Expressing simple comparisons	N	The Blue Mosque and the palace are beautiful Students may offer this as an answer, but it is not really a comparison.
Describing people, objects and places	Y	It is big. Here the candidate could have provided a more detailed description. It is in the centre of Istanbul. It has a swimming pool and a restaurant. Here the candidate could have used some adjectives to describe the hotel.
Asking for information	Y	Do you often go on holiday with your family?
Negotiating meaning	Y	What? Point out that this is not a polite way to ask someone to repeat them self.

3) My life

Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Giving personal information about present and past circumstances/activities	Y	In my family, there are 4 people: My mum, my dad, my brother and me. My hobby is swimming. <b>The candidate does not actually answer the question asked, i.e. "Does your dad have any hobbies?".</b> I live in flat with my mum, my dad, and my brother. I live in Trani. I have three best friends: Giulia, Anna, and Massimo.
Describing routines	N	<b>The candidate does not answer the question about when he goes swimming.</b>
Describing ability and inability	N	<b>No, I can't. The candidate does not actually answer the question asked, i.e. "Can Giulia play any musical instruments?".</b>
Describing future plans	N	<b>The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about the weekend.</b>
Expressing likes and dislikes	N	<b>The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about which room he/she likes best.</b>
Expressing simple comparisons	N	<b>The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about Trani/Bari.</b>
Describing people, objects and places	Y	My mum is tall with brown hair. She is intelligent and funny. My dad is fat and bald. He is quiet and serious. My brother is very handsome. It is a small town near Bari. It is by the sea. Giulia is 15 years old. She is intelligent and pretty.
Asking for information	N	<b>The candidate does not ask a question.</b>
Negotiating meaning	N	<b>I don't know. The candidate probably means "I don't understand".</b>