



STUDY NOTES

EPISODE 23 OCTOPUSES

DESCRIPTIONS

Providing a good clear description of someone may be particularly useful when participating in Part 2 of the IELTS Speaking test.

Using a variety of adjectives, which refer to a person's appearance or provide information about a person's character can make your description more interesting and exciting. It can create a 'word picture' of a person, which may leave a good impression on your listener.

Also, providing such a description allows you to demonstrate your vocabulary range.

These study notes focus on the organisation of descriptions using adjectives.

Describing people: organisation of description – appearance

A. When describing someone's appearance, it is important to think about various headings to help organise your description:

Study Tips

In the IELTS speaking test, when describing someone, make your description more interesting by including information about the person's attitude, behaviour and intellectual ability, in addition to describing their physical characteristics.

This will give you an opportunity to demonstrate a good range of vocabulary.

| Category | Language Examples |
|-----------|---|
| 1. Age | late teens, middle-aged, early twenties, a twenty-one-year-old, mid seventies |
| 2. Height | tall, short, average height * |
| 3. Build | heavy, heavy set, stocky, plump, fat, skinny, slim, long-legged, muscular, broad shouldered, well-built, average build |
| 4. Hair | Colour: blond, brunette, black, red, auburn Length: long, short, a number one [meaning: very short, almost shaved], bald Style: straight, curly, wavy, frizzy |
| 5. Eyes | Colour: blue, green, brown, black |



| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| | Qualities: cold, dreamy, shifty Size: big, tiny Shape: almond, oriental, round |
| 6. Face | long, thin, narrow, with narrow lips, chubby cheeks, huge forehead, no chin, pointed chin, pretty face |
| 7. Skin | Colour: white, pale, tanned, oriental, yellow, dark, black, tanned Texture: wrinkled, lined, aged, pimply, oily, greasy |
| 8. Distinguishing Features | glasses, beard, mole, tattoo, scar, birth mark, bushy eyebrows, freckles, pimples |

*In North America feet and inches are used for height, whereas in many other countries, metres & centimetres are used.

Example: That broad shouldered soccer player is 6 foot 3.

Describing people: organisation of description – character

B. When describing someone's character, think about the following headings to help organise your description for character features:

| Categories | Language Examples | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Intellectual ability | silly, clever, wise, intelligent, bright, dumb, clever, stupid, foolish, cunning, smart | |
| 2. Attitudes | a. towards life : optimistic, pessimistic, introverted, extroverted, sensible, down-to-Earth, sensitive b. towards others : polite, impolite, cruel, generous, kind, mean, sociable, honest, reliable, sincere, jealous, envious | |
| 3. Behaviour | <p>Positive</p> determined economical confident assertive interesting | <p>Negative</p> stubborn miserly, stingy arrogant aggressive weird, odd, strange |