

General Questions

1. Where do you come from?
2. Tell me about your home town
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living there?
4. Transport system in your home town
5. The places worth visiting in your home town
6. What are the changes that have come to your home town?
7. What is the one thing you like the most of your home town?
8. What is the one thing you don't like the most of your home town?

I come from Phagwara.

It is about 20 km. from Jalandhar and 40 kms from Ludhiana.

I've been staying there for the last 20 years/ since my birth.

It is on the National Highway.

There are many advantages of staying in my home town.

As it is on the National Highway so it is well connected by road and rail to other places.

Moreover there are good markets and malls where we can buy almost anything.

The transport system of my home town is very good.

You can go anywhere by bus, train, taxi or your own car or scooter.

The disadvantage is that there is no super-specialty hospital here.

There are many places worth-visiting in my hometown.

There is a historical Shiv Mandir and two historical gurudwaras related to the 6th Guru of the Sikhs – Guru Hargobind ji.

Many recent changes have taken place in my home town.

Firstly, a flyover over a railway crossing has been built.

A by-pass on the Jalandhar Phagwara road has been built.

The bus stand and the railway station have been renovated.

Many new shopping malls have opened.

The first private university of my state has opened in my home town.

The first two changes have improved the traffic problems of my home town.

The one thing I like about my home town is that it is virtually pollution free. People are very hospitable and it is a calm and quiet place.

One thing I dislike about my home town is that there is no good cinema hall where I can go with my friends and watch movies.

9. Why do you appear for IELTS?

I appear for IELTS because I want to go abroad to pursue my higher studies/ to get a good job there. This way I hope to earn more and give a better future to my family.

10. Tell me about your family.

(own answer)

11. Who is more important, father or mother?

Both are equally important. For my financial needs I depend on my father and for my emotional needs I depend on my mother.

12. Do you have any brothers/ sisters

(own answer)

13. What are advantages and disadvantages of having brothers and sisters?

Advantages

- a. We can share our feelings with each other.
- b. They are our best guides in times of dilemmas. (situations when you have to make a difficult choice)
- c. They are good companions as nowadays both parents are working so brothers and sisters share each other's solitude.

Disadvantage :

- a. You have to share your things
- b. Love of parents is divided

14. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being eldest brother/ sister?

Advantages

- a. you are respected by younger siblings
- b. you are given importance in family matters

Disadvantages

- a. You have to share your things
- b. Love of parents is divided. Sometimes younger siblings get all the parents love.
- c. when something wrong happens you get all the discredit for it.

15. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being youngest brother/ sister?

Advantages

- a. you are loved and pampered by all
- b. you get what you want from your elder brothers and sisters also.

Disadvantages

- a. you get to wear hand-me-downs.
- b. You are given no importance in family matters.

16. How do people of your home town keep themselves healthy?

The people of my home town are very health conscious. There are free yoga classes in the morning. Many people regularly go for morning walks. Gym culture is very popular with the youth and children play outdoor games.

17. What do most people do in your home town?

All sorts of work are done in my home town. There are government offices, banks, industries and educational institutes in my home town. People run their own businesses and also work in the private and public sector.

18. How do people of your home town spend their free time?

People of my home town spend their free time in various ways. The elderly go for walks and sit in parks

and chat with each other. Women chat with each other, watch TV soaps, men usually join some social clubs and charitable organizations and children play outdoor games and watch TV. Gyms are very popular among the youth.

19. How do children of your home town spend their free time?

Now – Children spend their free time by watching TV. I think they don't get much free time. Whatever time they get they spend in front of TV. They do not play outdoor games. So health suffers. 50 years ago– They had enough time to play. They played with friends and cousins. Their health was perfect.

In future – I don't think children will have any free time. All the time they will get will be in front of computer. It will not be good for their health.

20. Do men and women differ in their ways of spending free time?

Yes, men and women differ in their ways of spending free time. Women chat with each other, watch TV soaps, men usually join some social clubs and charitable organizations

21. What was it, say, some 50 years ago?

50 years ago, people were far more relaxed than today. Life was slower; there was no TV and children had fewer distractions. Women spent free time by chatting with each other while doing embroidery, knitting and crocheting. Men also grouped with men of similar tastes and discussed general topics. Children played with neighbouring children and cousins. The elderly helped in household chores and told stories to their grand children.

22. A festival celebrated in your home town.

Diwali or Deepawali is a Hindu festival of lights.

The word Deepawali literally means rows of diyas (clay lamps).

It is a family festival.

It is celebrated 20 days after Dussehra

It is celebrated to commemorate the return of lord Rama to his kingdom after 14 years of exile.

It is also meant to celebrate the destruction of arrogant tyrant Bali at the hands of Vishnu.

Another reason for the celebration of Diwali is that the 6th guru of the Sikhs, Guru Hargobind Ji, was set free from Gwalior jail along with 52 kings on this day.

On this day twinkling oil lamps or diyas light up every home and there are numerous firework displays.

Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, the symbol of auspiciousness and wisdom is worshipped in most Hindu homes.

Goddess Lakshmi, who is the symbol of wealth and prosperity is also worshipped. Spring cleaning and whitewashing of the houses is done.

Rangolis (decorative designs) are painted on the walls and floor.

New clothes are bought and family members and relatives gather together to offer prayers, distribute sweets and to light up their houses.

There are some bad practices also followed on this day. Some people resort to drinking and gambling which is not good.

23. A famous person of your home town.

I belong to Phagwara.

It is a small but famous town of Punjab.

There are many famous people in my hometown like industrialists, politicians, social workers etc.

Here I'm going to talk about Mr. Hardayal Singh.

He is an octagenarian, in fact in his late 80s(eighties).

He has a medium built and is usually seen on his bicycle.

Even at this age he carries himself very well and doesn't suffer from ailments like hypertension and diabetes.

He has a smile on his face always.

He is always willing to help others.

He is blessed with two sons and runs a shoe store in the main market with them. He took active part in the freedom fight of India in 1947.

He is drawing pension as a freedom fighter from the Govt. of India.

Even today he is honoured at all public events like Independence day and Republic day.

24. An old man of your home town.

Because of better healthcare and better foods available, the number of octagenarians and centenarians is increasing day by day.

There are many old men in my home town but here I'm going to talk about Mr Hardayal Singh. -----

25. What are the superstitions of your home town?

What do you mean by superstitions?

How they spread. = psychological

Superstitions are blind beliefs. People believe them without questioning. These beliefs are handed over from generation to generation. Some are universal.

If a black cat crosses your way then it will bring bad luck or good luck. It has psychological effect.

If you set out on journey and if you are called from behind it brings bad luck.

The number 13 is universally considered unlucky.

There are two superstitions – one type have no logical reasoning. They are irrational

e.g. if you see a crow taking bath you will hear of death soon.

Some have logical validity

e.g. if you spill milk it brings bad luck. So you are careful not to spill milk.

What is the antidote to superstition

Knowledge that brings wisdom is the only antidote to superstition. As knowledge increases superstitions decrease.

Superstition is the religion of the feeble minds. – Edmund Burke

26. Do you think people are less superstitious these days?

As science and technology is advancing, superstitions should become less and less but what is generally seen is that old superstitions are paving way for new ones.

27. What types of TV programmes do most people of your home town watch?

People of my HT watch all types of TV programmes. This varies by age and gender. The elderly watch religious channels like Aastha, shradha and sanskar. Children watch cartoon and movie channels, ladies watch soaps and sitcoms while gents watch business and news channels. Nowadays sitcoms like The great Indian Laughter show and Comedy circus are popular with all ages.

28. What are common health problems of your home town?

Water borne diseases like typhoid and jaundice are very common in my HT. Obesity is a universal health problem these days and my HT is no exception. Problems of old age like hypertension and diabetes are also there.

29. Tell me about your school.

My first school was in the town where I live/lived.

It was built in the 1960s and had large airy classrooms and, next to it, some excellent playing fields.

When you went into the building, there was a huge hall on the left where we had our daily gym class and morning assembly.

On the right was the principal's room next to the reception.

In front of the principal's room was the staff room.

The classrooms were off two large corridors.

Each classroom was identical.

The teacher sat behind a large desk at the front of the class.

Behind her was the blackboard.

Opposite her were six or seven rows of desks where we sat.

When I sat there at the age of four, the school had only one storey, but by the time I left school, at the age of fifteen, there were three storeys and a new wing was also added.

Other things added were

- library
- computer room
- concrete stage for annual functions