Useful Vocabulary
Useful vocabulary and expressions
- turning point
- crucial (adj.)
- decisive (adj.)
- important (adj.)
- graduation (n.)
- marriage (n.)
- marry (v.)
- getting married
- divorce (n.)
- divorce (v.)
- birth (n.)
- promotion (n.)
- death (n.)
- die (v.)
- give up (n.)

I guess my second year at high school was a crucial year for me. 1999 was a turning point in my life. 2001 marked the beginning of my professional career. I was hired by a large company. I was accepted in university for a course in metallurgy. I got married in the summer and I moved to Tehran with my wife in September. I was promoted to sales manager in late November that year. In May, my first child was born and we named her Anahita. 2008 was a great year for me because I gave up smoking and started a new job. My father-in-law passed away in the winter and left us a sizable fortune! My father was diagnosed with cancer and we had to move into my parents’ house to look after him. I think the events of this year made me stronger emotionally. At the end of that year, I was on the road to success in my career. The financial accomplishments I had in 1998 helped me develop a better life for my family.

Talk about an important year in your life.
You should say:
- how old you were
- what important things you remember from that year
- where these things happened
- and say why you think that year was important.
Sample Topic Two

Useful Vocabulary
ancient (adj.)
historical (adj.)
pre-historic (adj.)
antique (adj.)
palace (n.)
castle (n.)
fort (n.)
amazing (adj.)
breath-taking (adj.)
impressive (adj.)
tomb (n.)
burial place

ruins (n.)
statue (n.)
inscription (n.)
monument (n.)
west/east/south/north of Iran
western/eastern/southern/northern parts of Iran
It is located in the western province of Ilam.
It is situated 20 kilometres to the west of Mashad, a major city in the northeast of Iran.
It is in Naghshe Jahan square in the city of Isfahan.
Its historical value is undeniable.
Pasargad is definitely one of the most interesting historical sites in the region.
Persepolis is a symbol of Iranian historical and cultural heritage.
These inscriptions are remnants of the ancient Maad civilisation.

Describe an interesting historic place.
You should say:
what it is
where it is located
what you can see there now
and explain why this place is interesting
Shiraz is located in south-central Iran, about 920 kilometres south of Tehran.
I went there last summer to visit my uncle.
My trip to Tehran was of business nature.
I went there on business.
Isfahan is famous for Zayanderood, a beautiful river that runs through the city.
Shiraz is host to millions of visitors and tourists every year.
There are many museums to visit.
The people are very hospitable and friendly.
The restaurants are fantastic and the local cuisine is excellent.
What interested me most about this city was that it was very clean and orderly despite all the traffic.
I guess what I liked most about Tabriz was the weather.
Getting around was quite easy.
The city had a fantastic countryside with a river and many farms.

Describe a city you have visited which has impressed you.
You should say:
where it is located
why you visited it
what is there to see
and what you liked about it.
Sample Topic Four

Useful Vocabulary

- novelist (n.)
- author (n.)
- popular (adj.)
- character (n.)
- detective (n.)
- crime (n.)
- thriller (v.)
- romance (n.)
- science-fiction (n.)
- fiction (n.)
- novel (n.)
- masterpiece (n.)
- contemporary (adj.)

- major author
- short story

My favourite author is Jules Verne, a French science-fiction writer who lived in the 19th century.

She usually wrote about human connections and relationships.

His stories are mostly concerned with crime and criminals.

She could develop highly-complicated characters.

The plots are very exciting and thrilling.

His stories are quite imaginable and convincing.

The reason why I’m a real fan of his is that he focused on delicate human emotions such as love.

In this masterpiece, he describes the life of a British businessman in India.

The endings of his novels are fantastic and unpredictable.

Talk about your favourite writer (author).

Talk about:

- who he/she is
- what he/she usually writes about
- what his or her best work is
- and why you like this author.
Useful Vocabulary

- publicity (n.)
- commercial (n.)
- advertisement (n.)
- ad (n.)
- promotion (n.)
- promote (v.)
- advertise (n.)
- business (n.)
- plot (n.)
- private business
- non-profit organisation

A commercial I enjoy watching is an ad for a new car from Ford. This commercial advertises a new toothbrush from Oral-B. Sanford is a privately-owned business and makes markers and pens as well as other school or office stationary. The commercial compares their product with ordinary products from other companies. The commercial demonstrates the capabilities of a new tool. The director has employed special effects and animation to display the effects of this new product. The plot is very amusing. The comparison is made in a very interesting way. This commercial has a moral lesson.

Describe a TV commercial you like very much.

You should talk about:

- which business or organisation sponsors it
- what it is about
- whether it has been successful
- and why you like it very much.
Sample Topic Six

Useful Vocabulary

festival
festivities
celebration
parade
carnival
party
firecrackers/crackers
fireworks
bonfire
chant (n)
chant (v)

It is held on the last Tuesday night of the Iranian year.
It is observed on the 30th of the Iranian month of Azar.
This night marks the end of the winter.
This is the longest night of the year.
People go out to the streets and the countryside.
People of all ages indulge in the festivities of the day.
Young people dance around, holding hands and chanting songs.
Bonfires are lit here and there.
It’s a day/night of national pride and happiness.
The reason why I like this day/night is that...
I love this festival because...
I always find this a very delightful and enjoyable celebration.
The reason why this festival holds such significance is that...
The reason why this is such an important festival is that...

Describe a festival that is important in your country.
You should say:
when the festival occurs
what you did during it
what you like or dislike about it
and explain why this festival is important.
Sample Topic Seven

Useful Vocabulary

once
when
greatly
to some extent
in many ways
in a way
somehow
suddenly
nostalgic (adj.)
homesick (adj.)
happy
delighted/delighting
flattered/flattering
amazed/amazing
confused/confusing
depressed/depressing
embarrassed/embarrassing

irritated/irritating
annoyed/annoying
frightened/frightening

One of the things I can remember most clearly is my first day at school.
I remember once I was thrown out of the class for being mischievous.

One Friday morning, when I was 8 years old, my parents took me to the zoo.
This happened about/nearly 20 years ago when I was 9.

When I was at school, I used to chatter with my classmates during class time.
I had barely learnt how to speak then.

It was really frightening.
I was quite frightened.

This experience influenced my life in a number of ways.
This incident greatly affected my later life.

Describe a memory of your childhood.

You should say:
when it happened
what exactly happened
whether you remember it as a pleasant or unpleasant memory
and explain how it affected your later life.
One of the stores I love to shop from is a small boutique, called “Rangarang”, which sells designer items and posh clothes.

There’s a nice grocery store about half a block from my house, which is one of my favourite places to shop at. The store has a beautiful decoration. The store interior is painted in blue and is decorated with stripes of coloured cloth. The windows are full of colourful items like ties and shirts. The shopkeeper is very kind and tactful. The salespeople are polite and helpful. I usually buy my groceries there every week. My family and I love to buy our clothes at this boutique.

Talk about a favourite shop or store.
You should say:
where it is and what it looks like
what it sells
what you like to buy there
and say why you like the shop so much.
Sample Topic Nine

Useful Vocabulary
Splendid (adj.)
exotic (adj.)
distant (adj.)
forest (n.)
beach (n.)
spa (n.)
sunny/windy/cloudy/warm
cold/cool/humid/snowy/foggy
snow-covered mountains
ski slopes
go skiing
play volleyball
relax (v.)
meditate (v.)
go fishing
go horseback riding
read books
go shopping
collect seashells

My best choice for a holiday resort is Kish Island in the Persian Gulf.
I usually travel to Sar-Eyn to spend my holidays.
It’s a 2-hour ride from Tabriz in Western Iran.
It’s located about 55 kilometres north of Tehran on the coast of the Caspian sea.
There are exotic beaches and the sun always shines.
The weather is splendid, usually warm and sunny all year round.
The slopes are usually covered with snow all winter long.
I often go there to relax.
We can go fishing and horseback riding all day long.

Talk about your favourite holiday resort.
You should say:
where it is
when you last visited there
what you can do there
and explain why you like this place very much.
**Useful Vocabulary**

- Admire (v.)
- respect (v.)
- look up to (v.)
- sceptical (adj.)
- fabulous (adj.)
- admirable (adj.)
- approve of (v.)
- make great friends
- study (v.)
- review lessons
- watch films
- go shopping
- chat (v.)
- talk on the phone

Sanaz has been one of my best friends for the past three years. I have known Mehdi for about fifteen years. My parents initially were sceptical about her, but as they got to know her more, they started to like her too. My parents look up to him very much and approve of our friendship. He is a wonderful friend and a brilliant student. We usually get together to review and study university lessons. We like to chat on the phone every now and then to catch up on each other. We go hiking and mountain climbing together on holydays. I admire her very much for a number of reasons. The reason why I respect him is that he has always been very hardworking and responsible in his career.

**Describe a friend whom you admire very much.**

Talk about:
- how long you have known him or her
- whether your parents like him or her too
- what you do together
- and explain what is very admirable about him or her.
1. Advertising

Positives of Advertising

Advertising is a key part of modern business
Companies need to tell customers about their products
Advertisements inform us about the choices we have
Advertising is a creative industry that employs many people
Without advertising we would have less choice
Without advertising there would be higher unemployment
Advertising is a form of modern art
People enjoy adverts

Negatives of Advertising

Advertising manipulates people
It aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier
Advertisers focus on selling a brand image
They use glamorous, successful people
We now live in a consumer culture
We are persuaded to follow the latest trend
We are encouraged to associate certain brands with a higher status
Advertisers often aim their marketing at children
Children can easily be influenced by advertisements.
Children put pressure on parents to buy them things

Opinions about Advertising

Advertising should be regulated
Advertising aimed at children should be controlled or even banned
Unhealthy foods should not be marketed in a way that attracts children
Products that can be risk to healthy should display warnings
In some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television
Warnings must be displayed on cigarette packets
However, advertising is necessary in free market economies
It creates demand for products
Governments should only censor false information or products that are harmful
3. Cities

**Reasons for Urbanization**

People move to cities in search of job opportunities
Cities offer greater employment possibilities and a higher standard of living
People migrate to cities from the countryside
Traditional activities like farming need fewer workers nowadays

**Negatives of City Life**

Life in cities has its drawbacks
The cost of living is higher than in rural areas
Some people do not manage to find work
Housing is usually much more expensive
Homelessness and poverty are common in cities
There is a gap between rich and poor
Life in cities can be extremely stressful
There are problems like traffic congestion and crime
Cities lack a sense of community
People do not even know their neighbor
Cities are sometimes described as “concrete jungles”.

**Pedestrian Areas**

Pedestrian zones in city centre can improve the local environment
Banning cars encourages people to walk or cycle
Many European cities have built bicycle lanes
Dependence on cars is linked to health problems like obesity
People who walk or cycle regularly are generally healthier
Pedestrian areas are safer and more attractive for both residents and tourists
5. Education

Benefits of education

Education gives people knowledge and skills
People with qualification are more likely to find work
They can earn a higher salary
They can contribute positively to society
Schools aim to teach young people moral values such as tolerance and sharing
Schools prepare children to be members of a society

Benefits of Studying Abroad

Foreign institutions may offer better courses
Many students want to attend a prestigious university
The best universities employ teachers who are experts in their fields
Qualifications gained abroad can open the door to better job opportunities
Living abroad can broaden students’ horizons
Overseas students are exposed to different cultures and customs.
They become more independent
They are responsible for cooking, cleaning and paying bills
They will learn a foreign language

Drawback of studying abroad

Living and studying abroad can be difficult
Students have problems with paperwork such as visa applications
The language barrier can be a problem
Students have to find accommodation and pay bills
Studying in a foreign language is challenging
Living alone in an unfamiliar culture can cause homesickness
7. **Family**
   
   **Family size**
   Families in many countries are not as large as they used to be
   We tend to live in small nuclear families rather than large extended families
   Parents tend to have fewer children
   Young children are no longer expected to work
   Nowadays both parents often work
   It costs so much to bring children up
   It is more difficult to raise a large family

   **Working parents (also see “gender” topic)**
   Children and their parents seem to be less close nowadays
   Parents spend less time with their children
   Women traditionally stayed at home to cook, clean and look after children
   Nowadays both parents often work full time
   Children may be left alone, or with nannies or babysitters
   Busy parents have less contact with their children
   Many families no longer eat meals together
   Children spend more time with friends or surfing the Internet

   **Negative effects on Children**
   The lack of closeness in families can have a negative effect on children
   Many parents have no idea how their children spend their time
   Friends, television and the Internet become the main influence on children’s behavior
   Teenagers are influenced by peer pressure
   Some of them join gangs
   Juvenile delinquency is on the increase
   Parents should be more involved with their children’s upbringing
   Young people need positive role models
10. Global issues

Problems in developing countries
Developing countries face a range of problems
Standards of healthcare and education are low
Life expectancy is usually lower than in developed countries
There is a lack of infrastructure, employment and good quality housing
Many people are forced to live in poverty
Food, drinking water and basic medicines are in short supply

How to help developing countries
The best form of help for developing countries is development aid
Richer nations can help by investing in long-term projects
Governments and charities can help by building new houses and schools
Globalization may also help developing countries
Multi-national companies can create jobs in developing countries
On the other hand, many people emigrate to find work in richer countries
They often send money back home to their families
This money helps to improve the standard of living in developing countries

Positives of Globalization
Business of becoming increasingly international
Multi-national companies do business across the world
Companies like McDonald’s can be seen on high streets in most cities
Goods are produced in one country and sold in many others
A global economy means free trade between countries
This can strengthen political relationships
Globalization can also create opportunities for employment
It encourages investment in less developed countries
It could reduce poverty in the developing world

Negatives of Globalization
Globalization is not always beneficial to everyone
Companies can move to countries where labour is cheap
This creates redundancies, or job losses
Employees cannot be confident that they have stable jobs
Companies sometimes exploit their employees in developing countries
Global trade creates more waste and pollution
6. Environment

Global warming

Gases such as carbon dioxide trap heat from the sun
This causes global temperatures to rise
This process is known as the greenhouse effect
Human activity is a major factor in the rise of the greenhouse gases
Factories and vehicles produce emissions and exhaust fumes
Many developing countries are becoming industrialized
The number of cars on our streets is growing
Cheap air travel is allowing more people to fly

Effects of Global Warming

Global warming will have a significant impact on our planet
Rising temperature will cause melting of the polar ice caps
Sea levels will rise
We can expect more extreme weather conditions
Flooding and droughts may become more common

Impacts of humans on the environment

The increasing world population is putting pressure on natural resources
Fossil fuels like oil and gas are running out
We are destroying wildlife habitats
We have cut down enormous areas of rainforest
Government campaigns should promote recycling
Natural areas and wild animals should be protected
Individuals should also try to be greener
We should take fewer flights abroad for holidays
We should take public transport rather than driving
We should choose products with less packaging
We should recycle as much as possible
13. Health

Diet
The human body requires a balanced diet
An unhealthy diet can cause various health problems
Obesity, diabetes and heart disease are on the increase
Many people nowadays rely on fast food or pre-prepared meals
These foods often contain too much fat, salt and sugar
They are cheap to buy and very easy to prepare
Many young people have grown up on a diet of convenience foods
Populations in developed countries are increasingly overweight

Exercise
Regular exercise is essential in maintaining a healthy body
Exercise burns calories and helps to build healthy bones and muscles
Doctors advise exercising at least three times a week for 20 minutes
Most people nowadays lead a sedentary lifestyle
We tend to walk less and do desk jobs
Most adults relax by watching television
Children play video games rather than doing outdoor sports
In the past, people were more active in their jobs and at home

Government’s Role
Governments have a significant role to play in reducing obesity
More and more people, including young children are seriously overweight
They are at risk of heart disease and diabetes
This situation will increase the burden on hospitals and taxpayers
Hospitals rely on the government for money and resources
Governments should promote a healthy diet and regular exercise
There should be more time for sports on school timetables
Unhealthy junk food should be banned from school menus
People need information about what foods contain
Food packaging must show the food’s nutritional content
The British Government recommends eating five portions of fruit and vegetables per day
15. Language

**English as an international language**
- English is widely used around the world
- It is becoming a global second language
- It is the dominant language of technology, science and international business
- International business meetings are regularly held in English
- The most important textbooks and journals are published in English
- The ability to speak English is a necessary skill in the modern world

**Negative of English as an International Language**
- If one language is dominant, other languages may disappear
- The dominant language brings its own culture
- American culture has become popular around the world
- Other cultures may be damaged
- As an alternative to English, a new global language could be invented
- It would have no nationality or culture attached to it
- This could help to promote international peace and understanding
- Esperanto is an example of a language that was invented with this aim

16. Money

**Money and Society**
- Society has become increasingly materialistic
- People aspire to earn more money
- They want a bigger house or a better car
- We connect wealth and material possessions with happiness and success
- Brands like “Armani” or “Mercedes” are status symbols
- Advertising creates new desires and needs
- It persuades us to buy the latest styles
Positives of Consumerism
Consumerism creates employment
It helps to reduce poverty
It encourages innovation and creativity in business
We live in a global economy
We have a better quality of life

Negatives of Consumerism
Consumerist societies create more waste
They use more natural resources
They cause damage to the environment
Consumerism creates a “throw-away” culture
Advertisers tell us who we are and what we want
Wealth does not lead to happiness
Materialism causes greed and crime
We should return to traditional values like sharing

17. Personality
Happiness
Happiness means different things to different people
It can be described as a feeling of pleasure or enjoyment
People enjoy spending time with family and friends
Hobbies, sports and games can be a source of fun and enjoyment
Some people see money as a source of happiness
Other people define happiness as something deeper
In order to be truly happy it is necessary to live a good life
We need to feel that we are doing something useful with our lives
Some people get a sense of achievement from their work
Others find happiness in bringing up their children
Religion or a sense of purpose can also be a source of happiness

Success
People define success in different ways
Some people get a sense of achievement from raising a family
For others, success is defined by wealth or status
We often think of rich and famous people as being successful in life
Positives of the Internet
There are many advantages to using the Internet. It gives us instant access to information on almost any subject. Shops and other services are now available online. People can buy goods and services from the comfort of their homes. The Internet is starting to replace other forms of entertainment. It has revolutionized communication. We can keep in touch by email or instant messenger services. Video messaging is becoming common for business meetings. Parents find it difficult to control what their children see online. They do not always know who their children are chatting to. With so many websites it is difficult to search for good information. Criminals increasingly use the Internet to steal people’s money.

Internet compared to newspaper and books
Newspapers and books are now published online as well as in print. We can read the news in any language from any country in the world. It costs nothing to publish or access information on the Internet. The Internet allows anybody to publish their own writing. Newspaper articles and books are written by professionals. Professionals produce better quality writing than amateurs. People still buy newspapers and books because they are portable. People do not like reading from a screen.
20. Tourism

Positives of Tourism
Tourism is a popular leisure activity
People go on holiday to relax and have fun
Tourists can experience different cultures
They can sunbathe on beaches or go sight-seeing
Travelling abroad opens our minds
We can learn to speak other languages
The tourist trade is vital for some economies
It creates employment in services like accommodation, transport and entertainment
Some areas rely on tourism for their income
Tourists spend money
Tourism attracts investment from multi-national companies
It helps to improve the standard of living
Low-cost airlines are making it cheaper to travel abroad

Negative effects of tourism
Tourism can have a negative effect on the natural environment
The building of facilities and infrastructure can destroy the habitat of wild animals
Beautiful beaches are spoilt by the building of hotels
Tourism creates pollution and waste
It puts pressure on local resources
Local traditional and cultures may be endangered
A rise in the cost of living affects local people
The price of goods, services and housing may increase significantly