

How could your town or city be improved?
Are there any traffic problems where you live?

Sample answers:

Examiner: Tell me about your hometown.

Candidate: It's a bigish town in the south of the country, with a population of about 150,000. When I was growing up, I always thought my hometown was all right but now that I've travelled more widely, I know I wouldn't want to live there anymore.

Examiner: In what ways has your town or city changed since you were a child?

Candidate: Well, crime has been on the increase since the early 90s. My friends who still live there no longer feel that safe. Also, it has become very congested and traffic is a real problem. When I visit it now, it makes me quite sad thinking how things used to be.

Examiner: How could your town or city be improved?

Candidate: The city where I live now is beautiful and it's hard for me to think of any way in which it could be improved. I suppose if I had to find something, I'd say that it has mainly chain restaurants and shops, so we could do with a greater range of independent places. It would make eating out and shopping more enjoyable.

Examiner: Are there any traffic problems where you live?

Candidate: Yes, but I think there are traffic problems everywhere in this country, certainly in all the towns and cities. Here, public transport is really expensive, so everyone drives and that means we have standstill traffic during the rush hour. They should increase the affordability of the buses.

Track 22

Sample answers:

Candidate: A place that I enjoy visiting is Graz. It's the second-largest city in Austria, with a population of around 300,000. It lies in the south-east of the country, in the state of Styria, which is a green, lush part of Austria.

There is lots to do in Graz. It has several universities, so first and foremost it's a fantastic place to be a student. It's buzzing, with a good nightlife, good restaurants and a lively cultural life. In fact, it's a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Europe's capital of culture a few years back.

If you climb up to the hill overlooking the old town, you have an amazing view of the city. What strikes me most when I go up there is all the traditional, pale buildings with their red roofs, and then right in the middle of it all, a remarkable piece of contemporary architecture, the museum of modern art. It looks like a huge sea cucumber, completely out of keeping with all the architecture around it, but of course totally *in* keeping with what it houses – modern art. I always think how brave it was of the Austrians to put it there, in the heart of the city, and how unlikely it was that that sort of thing would ever be allowed where I live! I really admire them for it and I think the building has its own kind of beauty.

The last time I went to Graz, they were having a wine festival. People were tasting all kinds of wines from stalls on the street, very informally and chatting with friends while they drank. It was wonderful.

How has it changed since I first visited it? Well, I would say it has undoubtedly become more trendy. Like I say, they have built a stunning new museum. They have also built an island in the river, which is actually a floating platform holding a café and a playground. To go with the sea-cucumber theme, this one is shaped like a sea shell. I would say the local