

Track 44

Historical sites

Are historical sites in your country popular with visitors?

Is it more important to preserve historical sites or make way for the developments of the future?

What do you think will happen to your country's historical sites in the future?

Culture – past, present and future

What is 'culture' for you?

Do you think that it is important for a society or culture to have a sense of continuity with the past?

How will your country's culture have changed in fifty years' time?

Sample answers:

Examiner: Are historical sites in your country popular with visitors?

Candidate: They seem to be very popular, yes. The last time I went to visit a historical site myself, I was struck by the number of families there with young children. I don't think these sites are popular with young couples, necessarily, but it looks to me as though when those couples have children they suddenly develop a new appreciation for those places and I suppose they think that finding out about the history of their region and country is an important component in bringing up their children.

Examiner: Is it more important to preserve historical sites or make way for the developments of the future?

Candidate: When a developer wants to build a new shopping centre in my country, for example, they are obliged to conduct an archeological survey. If any remains are found, archeologists have to be given time to study it. I think this is marvellous. So I think old and new can work side by side and you don't necessarily have to choose between them.

Examiner: What do you think will happen to your country's historical sites in the future?

Candidate: I think many of them will continue to be given funding because people realise that you can make lots of money by attracting visitors to historical sites. On the other hand, some are so dilapidated that they require enormous amounts of investment and I'm not sure they will survive into the future – some old manor houses, for example.

Examiner: What is 'culture' for you?

Candidate: Culture can be defined as the way of life of a particular society or section of society. It involves their customs and traditions, and so in some senses culture is what distinguishes us from others, what makes us unique. I think culture is also what connects us to our past, to our heritage. We mustn't forget modern culture either, though. Youth culture is often very vibrant and powerful, with its new and inventive forms of music, dress and art.

Examiner: Do you think that it is important for a society or culture to have a sense of continuity with the past?

Candidate: Yes, definitely. Change is necessary, but it is also frightening. For this reason, people continue to rely on their traditions to give them a sense of their roots and to remind them of where they've come from. Commemorating the past is also a way of bringing people together, such as during Independence Day.

Examiner: How will your country's culture have changed in fifty years' time?

Candidate: We are becoming more and more multicultural, so I'm not sure that all of our traditions will survive in their current form. For example, can we continue to regard Christmas as our major annual celebration if perhaps half of the country does not have Christianity as its religion? It would be a shame to lose our traditions. However, if that is indeed the case, something new will I'm sure have replaced them in fifty years' time. And maybe it is better to develop new customs and celebrations that more accurately reflect modern society.