

My granddad loved a pool that was filled with spa water. It was dark brown and stank of rotten eggs. I didn't want to go in but he eventually convinced me. I'm pleased he did because the water was really warm. I'd never swam in water that warm. I didn't want to get out, despite the terrible smell.

I consider it such a happy memory because we enjoyed ourselves so much and I remember so vividly how I felt that day. But there's more to it than just that. When I look back now, I understand how caring my grandparents were and how much they wanted us all to be happy. They would have done anything to help us have a good time. I appreciate that more now that I'm older and have children of my own. I hope we thanked them; I can't remember. But, anyway, they were content, I'm sure, to just watch us have an amazing time, playing and laughing in the water. So, as you can see, it was a wonderful day and is one of my favourite childhood memories.

Examiner: What other activity did you use to enjoy when you were staying with your family?

Candidate: I loved going for walks in the local park. There were people selling all kinds of delicious foods from carts, so my grandparents would invariably buy us some treat, like homemade ice-cream or cakes.

Tracks 15-18

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Track 19

Childhood

Do you think people often idealise their childhoods?

How does a person's childhood influence what kind of adult they become?

When does a child become an adult in your view?

Upbringing

Do you agree with the saying 'children should be seen and not heard'?

Is it good for children to be exposed to frightening and sad experiences or should they be protected from these as far as possible?

Are children in your country generally well brought up?

Sample answers:

Examiner: Do you think people often idealise their childhoods?

Candidate: Certainly they do. The older we get, the more nostalgic we get about the past. It's only normal. And why should we dwell on the negatives? I don't think it does any harm to idealise a bit if it makes us happy to remember things in a more positive light. The only danger is that it may make us unhappy with our current lots to believe that everything was so much better back then.

Examiner: How does a person's childhood influence what kind of adult they become?

Candidate: Well, I suppose the adult you become is influenced by three main factors: firstly, your childhood, that is 'nurture'; then, your genes, that is 'nature'; and last but not least, the choices you make as an adult. To my mind, of all three, nurture has the greatest impact. They've conducted research on twins who were separated at birth and, while there are undoubtedly many similarities between them, they are also very different in many key ways: their success in the world of work, their relationships with other people. I think all this is influenced by the role models we have throughout our childhoods.