

Examiner: When does a child become an adult in your view?

Candidate: That's a difficult question to answer and all societies grapple with this issue. It is, of course, critical for the criminal justice system to define an 'adult' correctly, or at least try to, because if somebody commits a crime as a child, they get treated more leniently than if they commit a crime as an adult. So I suppose you have to decide when you think people become fully responsible for their actions. I wouldn't want to be the one making that decision. I just don't know.

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

Candidate: I'm assuming this means that children should respect their elders and not create havoc by being noisy and answering adults back. I have some sympathy with this view. However, moderation is usually the best course to take in all things, as with upbringing. Children should respect their elders, which involves doing as they're told. Too many children nowadays think they run the household, making demands, etc. However, it is also true that a child is part of the family, too and also deserves respect. I think this means they should be allowed to express their points of view and they should be listened to and consulted. It's a fine balance, I suppose.

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

Candidate: I don't think they should experience too many sad or terrifying experiences, if it can be helped. Nevertheless, what is very useful for teaching children about these darker sides of life without scarring them is stories. In stories they can learn about evil and the dangers in the world around them, but in a controlled way where the 'baddies' are punished and everyone ends up happy. This gives them a focus for the fears that all children have but it is a fictional one so doesn't upset their peace of mind.

Examiner: Are children in your country generally well brought up?

My instinct is to say 'no' because you see many misbehaving children when you're out and about. In reality, there are probably many more well brought up children than badly brought up ones, it's just that the good children don't attract your attention as much.

Track 20

- 1 Back in the 1960s, this was a nice place to live. Everyone knew everyone and people looked out for each other. I'm sorry to say that, since the 60s, the population has risen dramatically and this has led to a breakdown in the community ties that used to unite us. Also, second-home owners buy holiday homes here, and that has meant that the price of property has escalated in recent years, forcing young people to move away from the area.
- 2 My city is becoming more and more vibrant as time goes on. I love it! It used to be really dull, with nothing much for young people to do, but now bars and clubs have begun opening up. The city's no longer just for the older generations, with theatres and museums – it's got a new lease of life, with a great nightlife and an increasing student population to enjoy it.
- 3 A century ago, this town was a hive of activity, with its many factories and its port. Nowadays, however, it's nowhere near as bustling, as manufacturing has moved elsewhere. But I, for one, don't bewail the changes. There's a certain poignancy and beauty to the disused industrial architecture. And, in fact, many of the old factories are being converted into flats, and they're extremely popular with trendy young couples who are now moving into the town.

Track 21

Tell me about your hometown.

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