

- Examiner:** Are people from your country patriotic?
Candidate: On the whole, I would say yes they are. I think most people in the world are patriotic. You can see this at the Olympics where thousands of people go to support their countries' sportspeople and millions if not billions more watch from the comfort of their own homes, cheering their countrymen on and willing them to win. It's a very powerful force, patriotism, and has been responsible for much good and bad. But I think the Olympics shows us the best and most inclusive side of patriotism.
- Examiner:** Why do people often feel proud of where they come from?
Candidate: People feel the need to belong, to a club, to a family, to a group of friends, to a region, and to a country. Where you come from is tied up with so many other things that it says an awful lot about you, and so is of the utmost importance in defining who you are. For example, it affects what you eat, what language you speak, and how you behave towards others. Being proud of where you are from is therefore an extension of being proud of who you are.
- Examiner:** Does intense patriotism have any disadvantages?
Candidate: Oh, undoubtedly. The flipside of patriotism is xenophobia, people disliking others who are from another country and associating all kinds of negative characteristics with them. People are capable of believing that everyone from 'that country over there' is mean, rude, dirty et cetera. It's quite frightening, really, because it could be argued that xenophobia has made it easier for governments to justify going to war with other nations over the centuries.

Tracks 26–29

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Track 30

What is the most important festival in your country?

Do you think this festival will still be as important in the future?

Tell me how weddings are celebrated in your country.

What are some forms of traditional dancing in your country?

Sample answers:

- Examiner:** What is the most important festival in your country?
Candidate: Our most important festival is without doubt Christmas. We all look forward to it for months, buying presents for our loved ones and decorating our homes. It's magical for everyone but for children especially. When we knew Father Christmas was about to visit, my sister Samantha and I were always too excited to sleep.
- Examiner:** Do you think this festival will still be as important in the future?
Candidate: Yes, I think so. I think people often forget the true meaning of Christmas, though – I mean, they don't think about the story of the birth of Jesus – and in the future they'll probably remember it even less. They see it more as a time for buying and receiving presents.
- Examiner:** Tell me how weddings are celebrated in your country.
Candidate: Well, the wedding party is the most interesting bit. After the ceremony, everyone has a huge meal and then dances all night, sometimes to traditional music played by a band, sometimes just to pop music played by a DJ. I prefer the traditional music because you can hear pop music any time, and the old, traditional songs have so much meaning and history behind them. The older generation always know all the words so they sing along!
- Examiner:** What are some forms of traditional dancing in your country?
Candidate: Folk dancing is quite popular, even among young people. The dancers wear traditional costume, which looks beautiful. My favourite is a circle dance performed by women, but there's also a marching dance and a couple dance. I'm afraid I don't know anything about the choreography of these dances. I just know I like watching them.