

inhabitants have become more overtly proud of their city, too. It has received quite a bit of recognition in recent times, which has really placed Graz well and truly on the cultural map; something the inhabitants are always happy to talk to you about. In fact, that is something else I enjoy about going there: the local people are invariably friendly and helpful.

Examiner: When did you last go to Graz?

Candidate: I last went there the year before last. I wish I could go more often, but unfortunately work commitments mean I can't.

Tracks 23–24

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Track 25

Home

Is it only children who experience homesickness?

Do you think it's better for children to grow up in the city or the country?

Why do some people retire to the countryside?

Patriotism

Are people from your country patriotic?

Why do people often feel proud of where they come from?

Does intense patriotism have any disadvantages?

Sample answers:

Examiner: Is it only children who experience homesickness?

Candidate: Children probably feel homesickness more acutely because they may never have been away from home before, and because they are still closely attached to their parents. They cannot appreciate the cultural insights of a new place, or the time off work, the way an adult can. And they are generally less flexible when it comes to coping with unfamiliar food and so on. However, many adults also experience culture shock when they visit a new place, which I suppose can be considered a kind of 'adult homesickness'. We find a place strange and even slightly disturbing, and this is because it is different to what we are used to. So, in a sense, we miss our familiar surroundings and are indeed homesick.

Examiner: Do you think it's better for children to grow up in the city or the country?

Candidate: I think the perfect solution is to live in the countryside close to a major cultural centre, by which I mean a big city. This means that the child can enjoy all the pleasures of country life – the farm animals, the fresh air, the relative safety – whilst at the same time not being too far from all the fun that can be had in the city – musicals, kids' museums, zoos. Kids need to be exposed to a wide range of situations and settings, and experiencing just the city or just the countryside is limiting.

Examiner: Why do some people retire to the countryside?

Candidate: I suppose they crave the peace and quiet after a lifetime of hard work in the hustle and bustle of the city. In fact, in the modern imagination, I think the city is associated with work and the country with relaxation. Of course, people like farmers do work in the countryside, so it's not an altogether accurate picture, but nevertheless it is how the two opposing settings are often regarded.