

# 61 Chủ đề thường gặp nhất

## IELTS SPEAKING PART 1

1. Name.....	4
2. Accommodation .....	7
3. Jobs .....	10
4. Hometown .....	12
5. App.....	14
6. Sleep.....	15
7. Leisure time.....	17
8. Daily routine .....	21
9. Colour .....	23
10. Dictionary.....	25
11. Season.....	27
12. Volunteer.....	28
13. School .....	31
14. Swimming.....	33
15. Meal/Eat out.....	34
16. Boat.....	35
17. Animals .....	37
18. Getting Bored .....	40
19. Museums .....	41

20. Cooking.....	44
21. Forests .....	46
22. Musical Instruments.....	48
23. Holidays.....	49
24. Gifts.....	50
25. Secondary School .....	51
26. Pets .....	52
27. Advertisements.....	53
28. Bicycle.....	55
29. Art.....	56
30. Photography .....	58
31. Jewelry.....	60
32. Sleep.....	61
33. Sunshine .....	62
34. Gift .....	63
35. Smart phone app .....	64
36. Transportation .....	65
37. Shoes.....	67
38. Snacks .....	69
39. Study .....	70
40. Work .....	72
41. Newspapers and magazines.....	74
42. Birds .....	75

43. Email.....	76
44. Parks & Trees Parks .....	77
45. Text messages .....	78
46. Patience.....	79
47. Films.....	80
48. Mathematics .....	81
49. Social network .....	82
50. Time management.....	83
51. Weather.....	84
52. Noises .....	85
53. Hats.....	86
54. Bags.....	87
55. News .....	88
56. Reading books .....	89
57. Countryside.....	90
58. Sky .....	91
59. Shopping.....	92
60. Food/Cooking.....	93
61. Happiness.....	94

## 1. Name

### ✍ Who gave you your name?

Traditionally, in Vietnam, the names of new-born children are given by one of their relatives, usually their grandparents. However, in my case, an acquaintance of my parents came up with my name, and mom and dad just instantly agreed, because neither of them had any idea what to name me.

### ✍ Does your name have any particular (or, special) meaning?

Most Vietnamese names do, I suppose, and mine is not an exception. My name can be interpreted as a river in Autumn. In my country, anything related to Autumn is considered beautiful and calm, since this season is the most comfortable one out of the four. So, I assume my parents did have somewhat an expectation when they named me that.

### ✍ Do you like your name?

Answer 1: In the past, no. I used to blame my parents for giving me such a boyish name. I even had a deep, warm voice, just like a mature man, which is why all of my classmates made fun of me back in primary and secondary school. However, as I've grown older, I just don't take these jokes so serious anymore, so I guess it's fair to say yes.

Answer 2: Yes, of course, I do like the name my parents gave me. It's not only a part of my identity but also symbolizes the love from my beloved parents.

### ✍ In your country, do people feel that their names are very important?

There's no doubt about it. In Vietnam, names are not only a means of identification. They also deliver parents hopes and expectations when a new child is born. Besides, many Vietnamese believe that names are blessings for newborns, so most people would consider their names a lucky charm for them.

### ✍ Would you like to change your name?

No, I wouldn't do that, because there are tons of things I would have to do and all kinds of forms to fill in to get a new name. Besides, this thing makes no sense to me. Unless

somebody's a criminal and wants to change their whole identity, there's no point getting a whole new name.

 **Is it easy to change your name in your country?**

I would say you can change it, but I'm not very sure if the procedures are easy because I've never known anyone who tried to do such a thing. However, I do think the paperwork required would be quite complicated and the whole process may cost you a lot of time.

 **Who usually names babies in your country?**

As I've mentioned earlier, in most cases, grandparents would name their children's babies. Sometimes, a name is also given by a person who's done a special favor for the baby's family, or a close relative.

 **Do you have any special traditions about naming children?**

Well, I can't come up with anything, honestly. Maybe there were some in my grandparents' generation, but we millennials don't seem to acknowledge any of these traditions.

 **What names are the most common in your hometown?**

I'm definitely not an anthropologist, so I have no statistics on names. But I would say names that start with an M are, for sure, very popular. It's easy to explain. The first word a baby can make is, in most cases, 'momma', so I bet the M sound is very easy to pronounce. That's why people tend to unintentionally name their babies like that.

 **Is your name common or unusual in your country?**

If someone shouts my name on any crowded streets at any time of the day, I'm sure more than 5 people will turn their heads back to find out who's calling them. So, basically, my name is very popular in Vietnam.

 **Does your name have any special meaning?**

Yes, it does. Well, you know, almost every name in Vietnam has a meaning behind it. Mine is the South. My father named me after the loss of the Southern Vietnam regime. Besides, it can be also used for someone who is really manly.

✍ **What kinds of names are popular in Vietnam?**

I don't know much about preferences when giving names to babies in Vietnam, but I guess some neutral names that can be used for both men and women are pretty trendy these days.

✍ **Are there many Vietnamese people who have the same name as you?**

I guess so. You know, since my name is very easy to think of, it is suitable for some parents who are struggling to find the perfect name for their offspring.

✍ **Is there any tradition about naming babies?**

Well, normally the father will name his child, but in some cases, grandparents also want to join in the process of naming. Apart from that though, the family name of newborn babies must follow their father's family name.

## 2. Accommodation

### ❖ Do you live in a house or an apartment?

I live in a flat in a 25-storey apartment building with my family. I enjoy my life there, because all facilities and services are available within walking distance, which means I can easily grab anything I need in just a few minutes.

### ❖ What is your favorite room in your home? Why?

Definitely my own bedroom. It's the personal space where I can do whatever I want without getting scolded by my mom. Besides, my bedroom is an ideal place for me to avoid noise, so I tend to lock myself up in my bedroom whenever I need to concentrate on my study.

### ❖ Would you change anything about your home? Why / why not?

Well, perhaps I would expand the dining area. It is the common space for family members to gather, so I think it would be nice if my house's dining room could be a little more spacious.

### ❖ Would you like to move to a different home in the future?

Although my current accommodation is perfectly fine, I would love to experience living in a villa once. Since it was my childhood dream to have a swimming pool and a garden of my own, a villa seems like an ideal house for me.

### ❖ How is your apartment decorated?

My home is styled in a minimal way. Almost everything is painted in plain white, and a few landscape paintings act as a delicate touch. The interior design is simple, but very pleasant to look at.

### ❖ Do you plan to live there for a long time?

Answer 1: My answer would be yes. I have nothing to complain about with my current accommodation. Everything is up to par, from the neighbours to the vicinity to amenities. That's why my family has no intention of leaving this wonderful neighbourhood.

Answer 2: That was never my plan. Two years ago I decided to rent a room here because my house was too far and it took me forever to get to my office. But I only stay here for maybe 1 or 2 years more before I can afford a house of my own.

 **Do you have a garden?**

Unfortunately, no. There is not enough space for a garden in our flat, but I would love to have one in the future. I think every household needs a green space, not only because it is aesthetically pleasing, but also because it is a good way to get in touch with the natural world.

 **Are there many amenities near your home?**

My house is located in a residential complex, so everything is within reach. There is a gym, a park, as well as a wide variety of shops, which are more than enough to cater for all residents in my area.

 **Who do you live with?**

I live with one of my coworkers, who was also my college friend. We share the rent and other expenses like electricity and water, so it's not really expensive.

 **How long have you lived there?**

I've been living here since 2016, so it's 2 years more or less although I did spend 6 months living in HCM city. I thought about moving somewhere else, but living here is pretty great and fun. Besides it's really close to my office.

 **What's the difference between where you are living now and where you have lived in the past?**

There're quite a few differences. My parents' house is huge with separate rooms, each of which has its own bathroom so it's really convenient and private. However, my apartment right now is much smaller and I have to share a bathroom with my roommate.

 **Which room does your family spend most of the time in?**

Probably the kitchen where we eat together. Unlike other families in town, we don't watch TV very often, at least I don't watch TV so we never sit together in the living room. Dinner is the only time of day that we all sit together and enjoy our meals.

 **Are the public transport facilities to your home very good?**

Not even slightly! The bus stations are always crowded with people who are really inappropriate and always talking out loud. The floors are so dirty that I don't even want to step inside a station.

 **Do you prefer living in a house or a flat?**

Each type has some things to offer me but I would have to go for a house. There's usually more space, and the water supply is much more reliable.

 **What part of your home do you like the most?**

My room. It's big to begin with. There's a bookshelf attached to the wall which is my favourite spot for reading. And you know what's best? The bathroom. I have my own bathroom in my own room.

### 3. Jobs

#### ⊕ Why did you choose that job?

Frankly speaking, my major at university had nothing to do with what I'm doing at the moment. I selected this job mainly because it suits my personality as a sociable and friendly person. Besides, my boss offered me a high salary.

#### ⊕ Do you enjoy your job?

Despite its heavy workload and strict requirements, I still find it satisfying since it facilitates me in the process of my self-development. I have experienced a great transformation in myself ever since I got this job.

#### ⊕ Do you get on well with your co-workers?

Well, I guess the answer is yes. This is because we have a lot of things in common. You know, we are nearly the same age as each other and are all crazy about board games and travelling.

#### ⊕ What was your first day at work like?

Well, I have been working there for more than 2 years, so it's quite difficult for me to remember clearly my first day at work, but from my vague memory, it was fantastic since my colleagues were really nice to get along with and the students were pretty bright.

#### ⊕ What responsibilities do you have at work?

As a teacher, I'm in charge of teaching English for a group of around ten pupils and making sure that they reach their target band scores by the end of the course. I also work in a team with other co-workers to design the material for our courses.

#### ⊕ Would you like to change your job in the future?

As I said before, I'm very satisfied with my job, so I guess in the future I will still stick with it. Right now, I'm doing a master's degree in teaching, which I think will assist my career a lot. So, you see, there is no reason for me to quit.

#### ⊕ What is your typical day like at work?

Well, normally my work day won't start until the afternoon since I often have to attend my own classes at university in the morning. My first class lasts for 2 hours, from 2 to 4 pm and then I have a two – hour break before having another class at 6:30 and finally get everything done at around 9 pm. To be honest, I find this schedule quite exhausting but I can still handle it.

#### 4. Hometown

##### ❖ What kind of place is it?

My hometown is Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. As one of the main metropolises in my country, it is a densely populated area and faces traffic congestion all the time.

##### ❖ What's the most interesting part of your hometown?

I suppose it might be the Old Quarter, the most ancient part of my city. If people, especially foreign tourists come here, they will have a chance to immerse themselves in a combination of traditional and contemporary architecture, which they can hardly find in other regions of Hanoi.

##### ❖ What kind of jobs do people in your town/ village do?

As I said before, my hometown is the capital of Vietnam, so there is a wide range of jobs for people, including blue-collar and white-collar jobs.

##### ❖ Is your hometown changing?

Yes, of course, every day. Our government invests so much in Hanoi's economic growth. The public transport system is being upgraded and skyscrapers are springing up like mushrooms.

##### ❖ Would you say it is a good place to live in? Why?

Don't get me wrong, but Hanoi is not a good place to settle down. To be honest, I think people get really sick and tired of its hustle and bustle. Living here means people have accepted to face health problems every day. Being stuck in traffic jams and breathing in polluted air on a daily basis is detrimental to their mental and physical health.

##### ❖ What changes would you like to make to your hometown?

If I could make a change for the better, I would adopt some solutions to control population growth in Hanoi, like imposing limitations on immigrants. Also, I would find more ways to reduce traffic jams.

##### ❖ What are the advantages of living in your hometown?

Let's me see. Street food is the first thing that comes to my mind. Hanoi is famous for its yummy street food, so one of the benefits of living here is the chance to immerse in its special cuisine. Another thing is the nightlife. People will never feel bored in Hanoi, with different places to chill out at night, such as bars, clubs and juke joints.

 **What are some problems that your hometown is faced with?**

Actually there are so many. But the most pressing issue is air pollution, I suppose. You know, the air is severely polluted due to a massive amount of exhaust fumes released from private vehicles into the atmosphere every day. People living in Hanoi also suffer from unhygienic food, a major cause of sickness and disease. Almost everything in Hanoi is served at roadside stalls and most do not have clean settings.

 **Compare your hometown with a nearby city.**

Compared to Hung Yen, a neighbouring town of Hanoi, my hometown's economy is more developed. However, Hung Yen's got fresh air and lots of natural scenery, which children in Hanoi rarely have a chance to enjoy

 **What are some environmental problems in your hometown?**

One serious environmental problem we are facing is tons of non-biodegradable plastic waste. Even though the government has conducted several educational campaigns to raise the public's awareness, the residents still use plastic products every single day and unintentionally destroy the environment.

## 5. App

### ❖ What kinds of apps do you often use?

Communication apps like Facebook, Viber and Zalo are what I cannot do without. I use them on an hourly basis to stay in touch with the world. To me, using these apps is no longer a hobby, but more like a habit now.

### ❖ What kinds of apps would you like to have in the future?

I am trying to think of one, but nothing comes to mind at the moment. Perhaps it's because in this era of information, there is an app for just about anything. Even the simplest tasks like booking a taxi or ordering food can be facilitated by mobile applications.

### ❖ What's the most popular app in your country?

Facebook is no doubt the most frequently used app in Vietnam. I would say the biggest reason is its user-friendly layout. Besides, Facebook has created such a solid virtual community that people just can't help but use it.

### ❖ What was the first app you used?

I don't remember precisely, but one of the first apps I installed on my smart phone was Google maps. I relied on it a lot, and I still do now, since it helps me get around the city by showing the shortest route.

### ❖ Do old people in your country like to use apps?

Based on my observation, I would say no. Most old people in my country are technology illiterate, which means they can't even use a normal cell phone, not to mention complicated mobile apps.

## 6. Sleep

### ✚ How many hours do you sleep every day?

Well, it actually depends on my work deadlines. I never go to bed at the same time every day. Whenever I work to meet a deadline, I have to stay up until ungodly hours and just get 4 or 5 hours sleep. However, at the weekend, I can let my hair down and sleep in.

### ✚ Is it necessary to take a nap every day?

Yes, definitely. I think taking a nap is a way for people to recharge their battery after working hard in the morning. A 30-minute sleep would be enough to refresh their energy.

### ✚ Do old people sleep a lot? Why?

Yes, I suppose. I mean, somehow these people enjoy sleeping, but in most cases, they have to. When people reach an old age, they often face loads of health problems such as heart disease or diabetes. Therefore, taking a deep sleep is beneficial to their health.

### ✚ How to have a good sleep?

I guess people have different ways to get a sound sleep. But if you ask me, I would say that drinking chamomile tea before you go to bed is really effective. This type of tea will calm you down and let you sleep easily.

### ✚ Do you like to get up early in the morning?

Actually, I'm a night owl and getting up early is like torture to me. I love sleeping in and will never get out of bed before 11 a.m.

### ✚ Can you sleep well if you are in a noisy environment?

Definitely no. To be honest, I'm a light sleeper and noisy places will destroy my night. I may go through a night of broken sleep and feel exhausted the next morning.

### ✚ How many hours do you sleep at night?

I wish I could spend 7 or 8 hours sleeping. But unfortunately, I have to deal with a heavy workload and only get about 4 hours sleep.

✍ **What time do you go to bed?**

Around 1 or 2 a.m. As I said before, I'm always up to my ears in work so I often stay up late to finish my tasks.

✍ **Do you have a nap during the day?**

It really depends. At the weekend, when I get off work, I often take a nap for around 20 minutes before hanging out with my besties. But during weekdays, I'm just as busy as a bee.

✍ **Do you think sleep is important?**

Yes, of course. From my perspective, sleeping plays an important role in people's physical health. It's the time for our body to take a rest after a long day. A good night's sleep also helps us release our emotions and forget all the bad things that happened during the day.

## 7. Leisure time

### ✚ What do you do in your spare time?

It varies, I mean, it depends on the amount of free time I have. A few weeks ago, I would normally immerse myself in a light novel during lunch breaks or after dinner, but these days, I'm just too busy with my work that the only thing I crave is some sleep, so all my spare time would be devoted to taking a quick nap.

### ✚ What do you do to relax?

These days, I've been suffering from severe stress and depression due to the excessive amount of workload I have, and the only time I can relax is during my 4 – 5 hours of sleep every night. So, it may sound a little bit weird, but the only thing I can do to relax is, sadly, sleep.

### ✚ How do you usually spend your weekends?

I'm not a party animal, so during weekends, I always refuse all the party invitations from my friends. Instead, I would visit a café on my own and indulge myself with a nice cup of earl grey and some new book I've found on Amazon. That couldn't be more perfect for a Sunday afternoon.

### ✚ What do you usually do after work or classes?

I work evening shifts, so on a daily basis, I stop at around 9 p.m. and leave work 15 - 30 minutes later. At that time, most shops have already closed and there're not many recreational activities left to do if you don't want to hang around bars, so I often go straight home to take a hot shower and have a late dinner. Once in a while, my boyfriend would take me to the movies after work, but I would fall asleep half way through the film.

### ✚ How much time do you have each week for doing these things?

If you're asking for a specific number of hours, I guess I'd have to say just a couple of hours per day probably.

✍ **Why do you like doing these activities?**

I don't. I mean... who would like to go back home right after work just to have a late, cold, and sometimes leftover dinner? That's just what I have to do since I have to work until late in the evening. I'm not allowed to choose, that's the problem.

✍ **How did you start doing this activity at first?**

Actually, my life didn't used to revolve around work. A few years ago I used to lead quite a busy social life, back in university, so it took me a whole year to get used to my current lifestyle. So, I think everything has just become a routine to me now. Not in a natural way, but it has.

✍ **Is there some other hobby or sport you would like to try? Why?**

I'm crazy about music and all kinds of musical instruments. It's such a miracle how each instrument makes a different sound, but when they're performed together, they can create perfect combinations of melodies. Perhaps, in the near future, I would learn about the mechanism behind this miracle. This is also a hobby, isn't it?

✍ **How do you spend your time in the evening?**

It's the same every day. I just keep running around in circles: going to work, coming back home, working at home, then going back to work the next morning. That's why the evening is, somehow, just another chance for me to satisfy my workaholic self. That's it.

✍ **Do you prefer staying at home or going out during evenings?**

It's like an everyday dilemma. My heart always insists me to go out and have some fun, but my mind would say no to that seemingly irrational idea. Well, my deadlines are there, my work isn't finished. So, most of the time, I would reluctantly stay home.

✍ **Do you do this every evening?**

I hate to admit, but yes, every evening when I have work left unfinished. Sometimes, I've even done all my make-up and already gotten dressed. However, while waiting for my boyfriend to pick me up, I often change my mind and go back to my work instead.

### ✚ What do you like to do on the weekends?

As I've mentioned earlier, I'm quite a loner and I really enjoy that part of myself. So, during weekends, I would usually find something to do on my own, like redecorating my room, going to a café all alone, or just find a quiet spot in my house to do some crosswords and quizzes. I just really love to enjoy time by myself.

### ✚ Is there any difference in your life now from when you were a child?

This is an intriguing question, since I honestly don't know what to tell you. But overall, my life has changed considerably compared to what it was throughout my childhood. Everything, from my feelings, my thoughts to my relationships or accommodation, is so different now that I nearly have no recollections about the past.

### ✚ Do you think modern lifestyles give people enough time for leisure?

It's hard to say. Nowadays, people can have access to more and more entertainment facilities, and these facilities can accommodate our demands for recreation at any time. That's why it's become harder to distinguish between working hours and leisure time, which means you can't really tell whether the current lifestyles can give people an adequate amount of time for leisure.

### ✚ Do you think people today have more time to relax compared to the past?

We do have more time to relax now compared with the amount we had in the past thanks to a great number of technological advances, which are gradually replacing people's involvement in many fields. However, many people now are refusing to take a break, perhaps because they just don't want to be made redundant in the modern society.

### ✚ What do you think is the importance of leisure time in life?

Adequate and frequent leisure time keeps our lives balanced. What I mean is if we just stay focused on our work and study without proper relaxation, we would eventually find ourselves exhausted and may suffer from all kinds of mental conditions related to stress, like depression or bipolar disorder. So, I do believe that leisure time plays an integral part in people's lives.

✍ **Do you think old and young people spend their leisure time in the same way?**

Unfortunately, no. Family bonds would be strengthened significantly if this happened in real life. However, it's no surprise that the youth and the elderly hardly ever share the same interests due to the huge generation gap, so there's no chance they would do the same thing in their spare time. You're most likely to find youngsters on their phones, and on the other hand, old people would often be found doing some conventional activities for leisure like playing chess or knitting.

✍ **Do you like to travel in holidays?**

As long as it's a long holiday, for example, Tet, or summer holiday. I just honestly don't want to go away for just 2 – 3 days because that would leave me no time to enjoy myself.

✍ **If you had a child, what leisure places would you go with your child?**

Well, I know children are often crazy about amusement parks and if I had children I suppose they would definitely beg me to take them there. Unfortunately, I can't stand crowded and noisy places, so maybe instead of that, I would take my kids to some leafy area, like a national park or botanic gardens, where we could discover more about nature.

## 8. Daily routine

### ✚ What is the busiest part of the day for you?

I am a procrastinator, so I tend to get extremely busy at night, when all my work piles up. I love working at those hours though, because no motivation is as good as the urge to sleep.

### ✚ What part of your day do you like best?

My favourite time of the day would be 7 p.m., which is when I come back from work and gather around the dinner table with my family. Seeing them after a long hard-working day can help me feel recharged, so I look forward to this time of the day the most.

### ✚ Do you usually have the same routine every day?

Answer 1: I used to, back when I was still a student. Now that I have started working, I don't have a fixed schedule anymore. Since my working time is quite flexible, there are days I can just sleep in, but there are also days I have to wake up really early in the morning.

Answer 2: Pretty much yeah, although there's a slight change on Sunday. I usually wake up really late on Sunday and I don't have any coffee either. I just want to spend my weekend in my warm bed.

### ✚ What is your daily routine?

Answer 1: My daily activities depend on my work schedule, so nothing is fixed. The only routine I never skip is writing in a diary, which gives me time to reflect on my day.

Answer 2: I'm an early riser so I wake up at around 6 o'clock, then I have a cup of coffee 30 minutes after that before I go to the gym. I stay at home for pretty much the whole afternoon and I teach English classes in the evening.

### ✚ Have you ever changed your routine?

Yes, lately I am trying to change my sleeping habit. In the past, I pulled a lot of all-nighters, and would often doze off in class during the day. These days, I force myself to go to bed early, and you know what, I have never felt so refreshed in the morning!

✍ **Do you think it is important to have a daily routine?**

Answer 1: I honestly think it is essential to have a daily routine. Human bodies have a biological clock that works according to routine. By sticking to that fixed schedule, we can prevent our body from getting shock.

Answer 2: It's not something that a person can't live without I think. It's important to me but it doesn't mean that everyone should follow a routine everyday. It's fun to have changes once in a while.

✍ **What would you like to change in your daily routine?**

If time permits, I would love to make exercise a part of my daily routine. It's not like I am not aware of the wonders exercise can do to my health, I just can't seem to fit a workout into my tight schedule.

✍ **What is the busiest part of the day for you?**

It's the evening. All of my English classes are in the evening, 7 days a week. In the morning and the afternoon, I just spend my time relaxing by going to the gym or playing computer games.

✍ **What part of your day do you like best?**

Probably the morning. I do exercise regularly in my room when the sun rises, and sometimes I go to the gym. What's best about the morning is coffee time. I just love it because coffee keeps me active all day long.

✍ **What would you like to change in your day to day routine?**

Well if I can, I want to cancel 1 or 2 classes in the evening because I really could use some nights to go around the city. Working 7 days a week is not a great idea.

## 9. Colour

### ❖ What's your favourite colour?

My preference varies for different purposes. For example, when choosing clothes, I tend to go for blue, since blue goes well with my skin tone. For house decorations, I would prefer white as it creates a peaceful vibe for the room.

### ❖ Are there any colours you dislike (Why?)

I am not a fan of brown. All shades of brown look sort of dull to me. In terms of fashion, it is really hard to put on a brown item, unless you are extremely gorgeous.

### ❖ Are colours important to you?

To me personally, colours are indeed important. Not only can colours make our life more vivid, they can also indicate feelings. For instance, I often wear yellow clothing when my mood is up, but go for black if I am feeling down.

### ❖ Were colours important to you when you were a child?

They were definitely more important to me than they are now. When I was small, I used to judge objects by their colour, like pink stuff was for girls, while blue things were for boys. As I grew up, I realized that things are a lot more complicated, and that colours don't matter that much.

### ❖ Are there any colours that have a special meaning in your country?

In my country, almost all colours are associated with something. Take red as an example, red symbolizes happy events, like victories or weddings. In contrast, black is seen as the colour of death, which explains why Vietnamese people often wear black clothes to funerals.

### ❖ What colour would you choose to paint the walls of your room?

I am a big fan of simplicity, so white is my go-to colour when it comes to choosing wall paint. Scientists have proved that white can make a room seem more spacious. Plus, looking at this colour will help us to ease our mind.

✍ Do you think different types of people like different colours?

In my view, a person's favourite colour does not necessarily reflect his or her personality.

In fact, it really is up to one's own preference, so we should not make any assumptions just through people's choice of colour.

## 10. Dictionary

### ✚ How often do you use your dictionary?

Countless times a day, and seven days a week, I have to say. I work as an English teacher, and in my working environment, I encounter new or strange word combinations all the time, so that's why I always need a dictionary by my side.

### ✚ Do you like paper dictionary or electronic dictionary?

Answer 1: Either of them sound fine to me. The paper version is quite original, but I'm not very keen on the idea of carrying a heavy, thick book here and there just to look up some words occasionally. I'd much rather use the built-in dictionary in my Kindle e-book reader, so that I wouldn't have to bring too many things with me.

Answer 2: E-dictionary, absolutely. It's very convenient and portable. I can use my smartphone and look up new words whenever and wherever I want without having to carry a heavy book with me all the time.

### ✚ What kinds of dictionaries have you used before?

There are several types of dictionaries: paperback, electronic, built-in, online, monolingual, bilingual, or even multi-lingual, and perhaps I've tried every single one of them. Each version has its own special features, but technically, they all serve the same purpose.

### ✚ How will dictionaries change in the future?

Answer 1: Actually, many different prospects have come to mind, but I believe the most possible one is what I would call 'dictionary implantation'. It's indeed a little bit scary, but just think about it: you can instantly learn a new language just by having a minor operation. How cool is that?

Answer 2: Given that technology has become more and more developed, it is highly likely that unique kinds of dictionaries like a visual dictionary will be created and developed, which allows users to acquire vocabulary quickly and effectively.

### ✚ What kinds of dictionaries have you used before?

I've used quite a lot of dictionaries; but 3 dictionaries that I make use of the most are Cambridge Dictionary, Collocation dictionary, and Thesaurus dictionary. All of them are absolutely necessary for any English learner, I believe.

## 11. Season

### ❖ What's your favourite season?

That's summer. I am really into sunbathing at the beach and eating ice. These activities make me feel more alive after shivering with cold for so long during the winter.

### ❖ What do people in your country like to do in different seasons?

Well, in summer, Vietnamese people tend to take part in water sports, which helps them to cool down. In contrast, they often stay indoors and drink hot chocolate to keep themselves warm through winter.

### ❖ What's the least favourite season in your country?

I guess it is summer even though it is my favourite season. Most people don't like soaking with sweat. Besides, Vietnamese women are obsessed with pale complexion, so they always worry about being tanned in summer.

### ❖ What are the differences between different seasons?

I think the biggest difference is the temperature. While summer has a higher temperature, around 35 degrees, winter is colder with temperatures between 5 – 15 degrees. In different seasons, people also pick different types of clothes. They love wearing light clothes during summer, while in winter, the use of woollen clothes increases.

### ❖ What season is good for travelling in your hometown?

It is definitely summer. This is when children get off school and families can spend time together. Besides, it is also suitable for most types of activities, from energetic activities to relaxing ones. That's why summer is the best choice for travelling.

## 12. Volunteer

### ✚ Why do you think people volunteer?

I believe each person has his or her own motives when signing up for voluntary work. Some want to offer their help to people that are less fortunate in life, while others just look for memorable experiences. Oddly enough, some individuals volunteer to earn certificates as a way of polishing their CVs, so they would have a better chance of being accepted when applying for jobs or scholarships.

### ✚ Would you like to work as a volunteer?

Currently, I don't. I'm too busy finding out a way to balance my life and my work, so if there is an occasion when I have time for myself, I'd rather use that time on entertainment activities rather than some other kind of work.

### ✚ Have you ever done any voluntary work?

No, I haven't. As I said earlier, all those work-life things pretty much occupy my mind, so I have never considered volunteering as a way of spending my days in the past.

### ✚ Is volunteering worth the time it takes?

I think it depends on your schedule. If you have a lot of spare time, then signing up for voluntary work is a good idea since you can easily broaden your social circle and have a great time helping out other people. On the other hand, if your work costs a lot of time and is causing you troubles, then you'd better focus on that aspect before thinking about volunteering.

### ✚ What could you do to help if you had no money?

There's plenty of things you could do. For example, donating clothing or serving free food in a soup kitchen are great ways to help out people in need. Or else, you can sign up for a volunteering program in need of manpower.

### ✚ What situations need voluntary workers?

Well, in my country, when a charity organization needs manpower to distribute supplies of food and clothes to people in disaster areas, they would recruit volunteers. Or else, places like a soup kitchen where poor people come to get free food always need voluntary workers to keep things in order.

❖ **Can you think of different types of voluntary work?**

No, sorry. Nothing comes to mind right now. I guess that's because I lack real-life experience in doing voluntary work so I don't have an in-depth understanding about this aspect.

❖ **Would you volunteer to help people outside your community?**

I think I would. Some of my friends, who do voluntary work regularly, told me that they always had an immense feeling of satisfaction after contributing to something that a lot of people can benefit from. So, if people need help, no matter where they are, I would like to lend them a hand.

❖ **Have you read a book about voluntary work?**

No, I haven't. In all honesty, I don't even know that kind of book actually exists until you asked me. I suppose they are about fascinating experiences that the authors had when they did voluntary work, which sounds pretty intriguing to me. So, I think I might try check one out after I leave this room.

❖ **What types of voluntary work would be unpleasant for you?**

I think I don't like doing anything I have not been fully trained to do. There were a few times in the past when I was thrown into group activities with no preparation, and then the leaders didn't show up and suddenly I was in charge, with no real training or help. Those situations brought me terrible feelings.

❖ **What benefits other than personal satisfaction could you personally get by volunteering?**

First of all, volunteering can give you tons of valuable work experience and, in some cases, open doors for potential employment. Moreover, you will get to work with other people

outside your usual sphere of contacts. This, in turn, allows you to expand your social circle, which, in my opinion, will greatly benefit your life in the future.

## 13. School

### ✍ How old were you when you started school?

I began my formal education at the age of six. I studied in a small local primary school and that was my only choice back then because that was the only school in town. To be honest, the authorities in my hometown didn't care much about children's education.

### ✍ How did you get to school each day?

Well, normally, my father or mother would drive me to school. But sometimes, when they were occupied with their jobs, they would just ask a relative, or even an acquaintance to take me instead. People really trusted each other back then.

### ✍ Tell me something about your school.

Well, it was located only 10 minutes away from my house, so I was never late for class. And because it was a school for gifted students, the competition was fierce, which, somehow, was a great source of motivation for me to try my best in studying.

### ✍ Did you enjoy it? (Why?/Why not?)

Yes, I did. As I said earlier, my school was extremely close to my house so I wasted no energy on travelling. Moreover, all teachers were wonderfully supportive and always available to help me with my problems.

### ✍ What were some of the most popular activities at primary school?

Well, at that time, mostly children played together in the playground. Besides studying in class, sometimes we had ceremonies to commemorate national heroes who died fighting for our country's freedom. These events often included a singing contest, which I enjoyed tremendously.

### ✍ Have you ever returned to see your old school again?

Well, in all honesty, ever since I graduated from primary school, I never had a chance to go back. My old school has been reconstructed, so it might be significantly different now

from the one I knew. However, I'm planning to visit it in the near future with some old friends, and I bet that will be amazing.

✚ **Are you still in contact with any of the friends you had in primary school?**

Yes, but not so many. This is mainly because most of my childhood friends have left town to find career opportunities in other parts of the country. I rarely go back home, but when I do, there are still some friends from primary school that I contact and we always have wonderful time together.

## 14. Swimming

### ❖ Do you like swimming?

Yes, especially in summer. I love immersing myself in cold water to get me in good shape. Somehow, I also have a feeling that swimming gives me a chance to escape from the hustle and bustle of the city.

### ❖ Where do (or can) people go swimming in your hometown (or, near your home)?

It may sound strange, but people in my hometown often swim in the Red River, which makes them feel close to nature. It is a popular outdoor activity and people do this on a daily basis, even though they may possibly drown.

### ❖ Is swimming very popular in your country?

Yes. You know, Vietnam has a very long coastline, so Vietnamese people often learn how to swim when they are small. However, they are not trained professionally at school, they just learn from mimicking their father or siblings. This leads to the tragic fact that thousands of children drown each year.

### ❖ Why do many people like swimming?

I'm not sure but most people around me enjoy swimming because it helps them keep fit and cool down on boiling hot days.

### ❖ What do you think are the benefits of swimming (or, the benefits of knowing how to swim)?

First, knowing how to swim definitely helps me to protect myself, especially when I'm near the beach, and maybe even save someone else's life.

## 15. Meal/Eat out

### ❖ What kinds of meals do you like?

I love brunch. It's definitely unhealthy, I know, but this kind of meal saves me quite a lot of time for a longer sleep in the morning, which I really desire.

### ❖ Do you often have dinner with your family or friends?

Well, I live far away from home, so I don't usually have a meal with my family. Instead, I always dine out with some of my close friends. Honestly, one can hardly ever see me eating alone.

### ❖ When do you usually have dinner?

I usually have my work finished at around 9 p.m., so it's likely that my dinner will start at about 9:30. It's quite late, I know, and I'm attempting to rearrange my schedule to make it easier to have an earlier dinner.

### ❖ Are there any fruits or vegetables you don't like? Why?

Well, I'm a hearty eater, so basically, I can eat nearly all kinds of food. However, there is a sort of fruit that I really detest. It is durian and the reason is pretty simple – I can't bear its terrible taste and smell.

### ❖ And what is your favourite cuisine?

It's kind of weird but I'm a die-hard fan of Vietnamese cuisine. It seems like I will never get tired of eating dishes like Pho or spring rolls. The taste, smell and texture of all the ingredients in these dishes are perfect to my taste buds.

## 16. Boat

### ⊕ Have you ever travelled by boat?

Yes, I've been on a boat so many times. If my memory serves me well, the first time I ever set foot on a boat was in my first year of high school when my family went on a cruise in Ha Long Bay. It was a truly amazing experience for me.

### ⊕ Do you often travel by boat?

Well, not really often, maybe once or twice a year. I live in a mountainous area, so I only got on boats and yachts in my summer vacation when I go to the beach.

### ⊕ Are boat trips popular in your country?

Yes, they are. My country has an extremely long coastline, so journeys at sea are really common. Tourists to any beach always have plenty of options of boats to get on, they are all affordable and offer wonderful sightseeing experiences.

### ⊕ Would you like to have your own boat?

I'd love to. I have been dreaming of owning a yacht ever since my first trip on water. It doesn't have to be a huge boat, but it must be tough enough to withstand the most hazardous weather so that I don't have to worry about storms when enjoying my journey.

### ⊕ If you had your own boat, what would you do with it?

I would go on a cruise whenever I had time. I often picture myself standing behind the wheel of my own boat, discovering the vast ocean and enjoying scenery that could take my breath away.

### ⊕ Where in your country do people most often use/travel by boats?

Well, I suppose it is the central part of the country since this region is famous for the long coastlines, which are really convenient for water travel and fishing on boats as well.

### ⊕ Do many people in your country own their own boats?

I don't think so. Boats are often used commercially so most boat owners are fishermen and people who use them for rent. Other than that, I don't think there are many individuals in my country that are wealthy enough to afford to own a boat themselves.

## 17. Animals

### ❖ Do you like animals?

To be honest, I only like friendly animals such as dogs, cats and birds. I consider them human's friends and keeping them as pets will help me release my negative emotions.

### ❖ What's your favourite animal? Why?

Dogs, definitely. I am actually raising two dogs at present. Whenever I head back home from work, they are waiting to welcome me at the door. Also, they make me feel better when I'm down in the dumps. That's why I love dogs.

### ❖ Are people in your country fond of animals?

Actually no. It's sad to admit but this is the truth. Instead of loving animals, most Vietnamese people enjoy torturing them and taking photos to show other people or put on Facebook to get satisfaction.

### ❖ What kinds of animals as a pet do the people have in your country?

Just like other countries in the world, we tend to keep dogs and cats as companions. This is because these animals are tame and easy to live with humans.

### ❖ Do you think cities are suitable places for keeping a pet?

I don't think so. This is because cities are areas of bumper to bumper traffic and heaps of construction, causing harm to pets' health, and they are likely to face road accidents or a lack of playing space.

### ❖ Do children in your country like animals?

Yes. Vietnamese children are keen on playing with animals, especially dogs and cats, which are so friendly and have soft fur. They can hug and stroke these pets.

### ❖ What kind of animals do you think children like?

I think it really depends on their personality. I can't say for sure. For the most part, children love dogs and cats since they can play and roam about with them. Some children, however,

adore birds because of their beautiful voice. Also, there are some who always enjoy teasing or hurting animals.

 **What was your favourite animal when you were a child?**

I was a big fan of dogs. If my memories serve me right, I used to play with a neighbour's dog called Kiki whenever my parents got into an argument. That was a way I chose to escape from the uncomfortable situation. For this reason, I love dogs so much and now I own a dog with the same name.

 **Did you have any pets when you were a child?**

Unfortunately, no. My parents didn't allow me to keep a pet as they were worried that I could be bitten by them.

 **What do you think are the benefits of a child having a pet?**

Well, there is a wide range of benefits for children if they have a pet. The most obvious advantage is that they can learn how to show love to other animals by hugging or stroking them. In addition, they could probably take responsibility for some household chores by feeding their pet or taking it for a walk.

 **If you have children in the future, will you allow them to keep a pet?**

Yes, of course. I suppose keeping a pet is beneficial to a child's development. By living side by side with them, pets can become their friend and give them emotional support.

 **Why do some people keep pets at home?**

Well, there are a number of reasons, but I think the most important one is having a pet is like having a comforting companion. They can help relieve stress and cheer people up when they are upset or tired. That is why many people treat pets, such as cats or dogs, as a member of the family.

 **What kinds of animals do you like?**

I am into all kinds of birds. For me, they are beautiful and lovely creatures. In fact, some of them may be naughty, but watching their behavior can be something really relaxing to do.

✍ **3. Have you ever had a pet before?**

I used to have a bulldog. You know, it was a present from one of my buddies. I had had it for more than a year before it was stolen. Since then, I have never wanted to have any pet again as the feeling of losing something you love dearly is terrible.

✍ **4. Do you like to see animals in the zoo?**

To be honest, I have to say “no” because I always feel sorry for animals that are kept in the cages. Although they are well looked after and are provided with food, they don’t have the freedom like living in their natural habitat.

✍ **5. What is the most popular animal in Vietnam?**

Well, it is dogs, perhaps. In the countryside, each household typically has a dog to watch their house as dogs usually bark when they see strangers. In the cities, many people, especially the young, do not hesitate to spend money on buying a dog and take care of them like babies.

## 18. Getting Bored

### ✚ Do you often get bored?

Unfortunately, I do. And I feel extremely terrible whenever boredom comes and occupies my mind. That's why I always try to make things a little bit more interesting, like creating some challenges or games in tasks that I have to complete.

### ✚ Do you think you get bored more often now than you did when you were a child?

That's exactly what I feel. I think it's partly because my childhood was full of joy and excitement since I still lived with my family and had tons of friends to keep me laughing all day long. Now, even though I've been far from home for a long time, I still miss those days and the nostalgic feelings seems to exaggerate my boredom. You know, all the work-money things are not very amusing.

### ✚ What things do you find boring?

Most activities that cost a lot of time seem pretty boring to me because I'm not that kind of person who can sit still and work for 10 hours straight. Also, I am easily bored by the same routine every day, so I change my schedule regularly to keep myself energized and enthusiastic.

## 19. Museums

### ❖ Are there many museums in your hometown?

Honestly, I have no clue. Museums and historical sites are places that I couldn't care less about, so I don't really notice if there are any in Hanoi. Maybe there're a couple of museums somewhere, I think.

### ❖ Do you think museums are useful for visitors to your hometown?

If they want to know more about our traditional activities and culture, sadly, no. If they find our history and the colonial wars that took place in Vietnam interesting, then yes. I think whether a place is considered 'useful' or 'suitable' for tourists depends on what they want to achieve from their visit.

### ❖ Do you often visit a museum?

It's like... never. For me, one should not ever go to a museum unless they are already bored to tears. Maybe I'm a little bit biased against all kinds of museums in Vietnam ever since I last visited one. I guess it's just very boring having to walk all the way through a building just to see some pictures and odd-looking things I'm not allowed to touch.

### ❖ Did you go to any museums when you were a child?

It was hard not to. I mean, it's one of the 'compulsory' extra-curricular activities that we had back in primary school. We went to a different museum each year with the whole school, and nobody was allowed to be absent from this annual activity, even if you were sick that day.

### ❖ Do you think museums are important?

Though I'm not really a fan of museums, it's quite impossible to deny the importance of these places. They hold all forms of evidence of a country's historical development, such as artefacts or documents... you name it. Besides, what makes museums very special to our society, in my opinion, is the way they teach us to have gratitude and appreciation for things that happened in our country in the past.

### ❖ Do you think it's suitable for museums to sell things to visitors?

Yea, why not? In fact, most museums are free of charge, so apart from the often inadequate government funding, these museums virtually have no other source of budget to cover operating and management expenses. So, revenue from selling souvenirs can act as additional income to help maintain them.

 **When was the last time you visited a museum?**

I can't really think of the answer for this question off the top of my head, perhaps because it's been such a long time since the last time I went to a museum. But I don't think I've ever paid a visit to any place of such a kind after primary school.

 **Are there many museums in your country?**

There are! Museums in Vietnam are quite diverse, and they cover almost every field, namely the War Remnants Museum, the Fine Art Museum and plenty more. However, museums are not so appealing to the young, which is unfortunate, they could have been much more educational.

 **Do you think museums are useful for visitors?**

I don't think so I'm afraid. Museums are more like tourist attraction, because if tourists wish to search for information on a place, the Internet would be a much better option.

 **Do you often visit museum?**

I don't. I wish I do but I never have the time. My parents took me to Vietnam Museum of Ethnology every Lunar New Year festival so that I have better understanding of Vietnamese's culture. My memories of that place are truly invaluable.

 **Did you go to any museums when you were a child?**

I did, very often actually. As I said before, The Vietnam Museum of Ethnology was my childhood! If my memory serves me well, it was 2007 Spring when I first visited the place. I still remember vividly how amazed I was stepping into the museum!

 **When was the last time you visited a museum?**

Ever since I graduated and worked as a researcher, I've never had a chance to visit any museum much as I wish to. What a pity!

✚ **Do you think museums are important?**

Absolutely! Museums are where knowledge and culture are preserved. Apparently, museums are of paramount importance and play an irreplaceable role in our educational system.

## 20. Cooking

### ❖ What are some of the things that you can cook?

I am not a skilled cook, I only know the basics, like fried egg and boiled veggies. The sad thing is, I can't even make these dishes very well. Most of the time, they would be either undercooked or burnt.

### ❖ Do you like cooking?

I am not interested in cooking, nor do I have a gift for it. However, I do enjoy watching cooking shows on TV, Master Chef for example, since I love seeing footage of food being prepared.

### ❖ How often do you cook?

I don't cook on a daily basis; just when my mom, who is in charge of cooking, is on a business trip. To me, cooking is not a pleasure, but rather a chore, so I don't do it very often.

### ❖ What dishes are you best at cooking?

I can proudly say that instant noodles is my signature dish. I have cooked it so many times that I know all the necessary techniques to make a restaurant-quality bowl of noodles.

### ❖ Does anyone in your family like to cook?

My mom is very keen on cooking. She loves experimenting with new ingredients and collecting recipes on the internet. Her home-cooked meals are not only full of nutrition, but also appetizing. My brother and I like her cooking so much that we rarely eat out.

### ❖ Do your parents know how to cook?

My mother has a knack for cooking. She always does a good job at seasoning, and her knife-work is no joke. My dad, on the other hand, knows nothing about cooking except for frying eggs.

### ❖ Do you think that it's important to know how to cook well?

As much as I hate to cook, I must admit that people who can cook well, especially girls, are very charming. It often means that they can take good care of themselves and those around them.

 **Who is the best cook you know?**

I don't know much about the culinary world, so I can't name any famous chef. To me, the best cook is no one other than my mom. She knows the recipes for almost all dishes like the back of her hand, and her food is always so tasty.

 **What cooking experience have you had?**

Like I mentioned before, I don't cook very often. The only memorable cooking experience I had was when my mom sent me to a short cookery course. I got a minor burn right on the first day, so my mom pulled me out immediately.

 **Who taught you to cook?**

My grandmother was my cooking teacher, as I spent most of my childhood in her kitchen. She was skilled at making the dishes not only taste good but also look good. For example, she taught me the art of vegetable carving and table setting, which I still remember clearly.

 **When you were a child, did you ever help your parents to prepare a meal?**

Yes, I did, but rather than cooking, I helped my parents with simple chores, like washing the vegetables and setting the table. I enjoyed such times, since it was a great bonding opportunity for my family.

## 21. Forests

### ❖ Do you like trees?

I'm quite a nature enthusiast, so yes, I do love trees. Of course I acknowledge their beauty and importance in our lives, but that's not all. I believe that there's a close connection between human beings and trees, and I think people have a genuine affection toward all kinds of plants.

### ❖ Are there any important trees in your country?

The bamboo tree is widely considered the Vietnamese national tree. It is, in fact, a kind of tree which is very strong and straight from its root to the top. Many believe that this particular tree symbolizes our country and its people, especially during our great wars.

### ❖ Is there a forest near your hometown?

Hanoi lies in the centre of a plain, so there are no forests to be found near the city. In Vietnam, if you want to go into the woods, you'll have to travel all the way to mountainous areas, or at least to plateaus like those in Lam Vien or Moc Chau.

### ❖ Would you like to live in a place that has a lot of trees?

Only in the summer, I have to say. Although trees mean the world to me, I still feel the chill whenever I walk across a leafy area during winter. I just don't have great physical endurance when the weather is extreme.

### ❖ Where can one find trees (or forests) in your country?

You can easily find all sorts of trees or even evergreens everywhere in Vietnam. They're planted alongside a lot of streets, in parks and zoos, and around most building complexes. However, it's a bit harder if you need to find forests, since these areas are often far away from metropolises and also often more difficult to reach due to the underdeveloped transport facilities nearby.

### ❖ Do you think places with trees attract more visitors than places with few trees?

Without question. As I've already mentioned, people tend to be attracted to nature as a whole, and particularly, trees. Since trees provide oxygen, they are a kind of fresh-air-generator, so I think that people feel more refreshed when they are around them. This partly explains the attraction I think, you see, we don't just go to all the attractions just to stare at trees, but we are indeed attracted to leafy areas for our comfort.

❖ **Did you ever climb a tree when you were a child?**

Sadly, even 'till now, I still can't manage to climb a tree. This has been the most challenging task for me ever since I was a 5-year-old. Actually, I really envy those who can reach the top of a tree and look down from the top. I did try to climb a tree once, I really did, but it's a shame I fell so hard on my face that now I've still got a scar above my mouth.

❖ **Have you ever planted a tree?**

Well, I love trees, but it's a pity I'm just not cut out to be a gardener. My gardening skills are so terrible that all my friends and family call me 'the plant-killer'. I tried planting trees several times, but they all end up dying for some reason.

❖ **Do you think people should plant more trees?**

I couldn't agree more with that idea. We are so badly in need of trees these days, since a large number of plants in urban areas have been cut down to make way for the construction of new infrastructure. You know, fewer trees in the city means higher levels of air pollution we have to bear with. I'm afraid if we don't take immediate action by planting more trees, it will soon be too late.

## 22. Musical Instruments

### ❖ What types of musical instruments do you like to listen to?

I like to explore all genres of music, but currently, I am learning how to play the guitar, so most of the time, I like to listen to guitar songs and melodies. Besides that, I also enjoy listening to piano music, especially when I need to concentrate on my work.

### ❖ When do you like to listen to music?

I love being immersed in pleasant, harmonious sounds. Therefore, I would turn some music on whenever I am alone, except for when I am sleeping of course. In a typical work day, I usually listen to music in the morning, right after I wake up, so that I can boost my energy and prepare myself for the day.

### ❖ Did you learn to play a musical instrument when you were a child?

No, I didn't. The town where I was born was extremely poor, and people back then were too busy trying to just get by. They, including me, literally worked all day long, leaving no time for entertainment or self-improvement activities. That's why as a kid, I was not given the chance to even touch an instrument, much less learning to play it.

### ❖ Do you think all children should learn to play a musical instrument?

Yes, of course. I strongly believe that when a kid learns how to play an instrument, he or she will be able to develop positive traits like patience, discipline, and commitment. I am learning one myself and I've seen huge benefits from it. The only thing I regret is that no one encouraged me to do so throughout my childhood.

## 23. Holidays

### ❖ Do you like travelling?

Honestly speaking, I'm not really into travelling. In fact, I rarely leave town unless there is a family vacation or a company trip. I guess the main reason I dislike travelling is the burden of booking tickets and finding accommodation. I'd rather stay home than go through all of that.

### ❖ What is your favourite holiday?

Of all public holidays, I like Independence Day the most. Vietnam's Independence Day is celebrated on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, which is right before the beginning of the school year. Around this time of the year, the atmosphere on the streets is always super vibrant and lively.

### ❖ Are there many tourists visiting your country during that holiday?

As far as I know, there are tourists visiting during Independence Day, but rather than because of the holiday, it is mainly due to the lovely autumn weather in September. It's the perfect time to stroll around the city while taking photos of the autumn leaves.

### ❖ What do you often do on holidays?

I don't do much during holidays. Since I'm a family-oriented person, I tend to stay home on these days and spend some quality time with my family. We love hosting big parties and inviting relatives over.

## 24. Gifts

### ❖ Do you like to receive gifts? (Why? / Why not?)

Yes, especially on special occasions like my birthday. I think it's a way for other people to show their love and respect towards me.

### ❖ What kind of gifts do you like to receive? (Why?)

I don't have a particular gift that I'm fond of. I love getting surprises from other people's gifts.

### ❖ What gifts did you receive in your childhood?

The gift I remember the most is a big doll. I still remember vividly my dad gave me that doll on my 8<sup>th</sup> birthday party. At that time, the doll meant the world to me because it represented my dad's love for me.

### ❖ Do you like giving gifts to people? (Why? / Why not?)

I only love giving gifts to my relatives or close friends. I consider gifts as a symbol of love, so I only give my love to my loved ones.

### ❖ What gifts did you give to others in your childhood?

Just some non-material gifts because at that time, I only received a little pocket money from my parents. I just could afford some small gifts like pencils, notebooks and things like that.

## 25. Secondary School

### ✍ What was your favorite subject in secondary school?

That was literature. I'm a bookworm, so literature was a way for me to immerse myself in books.

### ✍ And which subject did you like the least? (Why?)

That's definitely physical education. Not because of the subject itself, but it was my teacher who made me disinterested in it. He was so irresponsible, and he often got drunk before teaching us. I had no idea why the principal put up with him for so long.

### ✍ Which secondary school subject do you think is most useful for people in adult life?

I'd go for English. This is because it is the key skill we need in this globalized world. For example, there are tons of international companies located in Vietnam. This leads to an increase in job opportunities, but Vietnamese people must be fluent in particular languages, like English, to stand a chance at gaining one of these jobs.

### ✍ What part of your secondary school education did you enjoy the most?

Actually I have some bitter memories from my time in secondary school. I used to suffer from bullying so those years were like a dark chapter of my life. I wish I had a delete button to erase them from my head.

### ✍ How do you feel about your secondary school?

As I said before, my time in secondary schools wasn't peaceful. So, in other words, I still hold a grudge against that school.

### ✍ Why did you choose to attend that particular school?

Actually it wasn't my choice, that was my parents' choice. At that time, I was too young to make any decisions about my education.

## 26. Pets

### ❖ Do you have any pets?

Yes. I'm raising two dogs at the moment. They are my best buddies and always guard my house for me.

### ❖ Do you like animals?

To be honest, I only like friendly animals such as dogs, cats and birds. I consider them human's friends and keeping them as pets helps me to release any negative emotions I'm feeling.

### ❖ What pet would you want to keep if you could choose one?

I would go for a dog. They are so friendly and can possibly help me to stay away from thinking negatively. Walking a dog is the best remedy for me to release stress after a long day.

### ❖ How do the rest of your family feel about pets?

They are fond of pets, too. My parents would love to have a spacious yard to raise 10 dogs. That's the reason why we have just moved to the outskirts of Hanoi to make that dream come true.

### ❖ Have you ever had a bad experience with an animal?

No, I haven't. My childhood was full of blissful memories of animals. I once lived with my grandmother on her farm, which was home to a lot of animals. That time played an important role in my emotional development. Thanks to those experiences, I am now an animal lover and working part time in an animal rescue organisation in Vietnam.

## 27. Advertisements

### ❖ How do you feel about advertisements?

I'm sick and tired of them, so I always try to find ways to bypass ads on any media platform. For example, when I use the Internet, I make use of a program that blocks advertisements and pop-ups on any web page. As for TV, I don't watch it that often, so commercials are not really a problem to me.

### ❖ Are there many advertisements in your country?

There are more than anyone could ever ask for. Seriously, it's hard to go anywhere without seeing or hearing some kind of product commercial. It doesn't help that advertisers in my country aren't very good when it comes to making funny or clever content.

### ❖ What are the various places where we see advertisements?

I think we are exposed to them mostly through media platforms such as TV, newspapers or the web. However, ads also take on some physical forms. Sometimes it could be a giant billboard, sometimes it could be your neighbour who gets commission for promoting a product.

### ❖ Why do you think there are so many advertisements now?

I think there could be various reasons advertisements are so commonplace these days. Personally, though, I guess when businesses are competing so hard with each other, bringing the image of their product to the customers is as important as the product itself.

### ❖ What kind of advertisements do you like the most?

Like I have mentioned, I don't like ads. Though if I must pick one kind, then I would choose TV commercials, for the simple reason that I don't watch TV, so they don't bother me.

The types of commercials that win me over must be creative and clever in some way. For example, I love shampoo ads for Old Spice because they feature an angry muscular man screaming at the audience about the product's superiority. The tongue-in-cheek humor and over-the-top effects never fail to catch my attention.

✚ **Do advertisements influence your choice about what to buy?**

They do and I don't like that fact. I'd prefer to be informed about my purchase, do research, price-match and all that stuff. Still, the number of products and brands are overwhelming, so exposure through ads inevitably impacts my buying habits.

✚ **Do you think advertising plays an important role in today's world?**

I don't think so. I agree that they are being plastered in every imaginable part of our lives, however we could and should live without them. No one ever says "I'd love a commercial to interrupt my favorite TV show, man".

✚ **What sorts of advertisements leave the deepest impression on people?**

I can't speak for everyone, but in general there are two kinds of ads that get talked about: those with catchy tunes and those that are designed to trigger sympathy and compassion in its audience.

## 28. Bicycle

### ❖ Do you know how to ride a bicycle?

Yes, of course, I love cycling. When I was in high school, I used to ride my bicycle to school every day since it was very near to my house. You know what...it is a good way for me to keep fit.

### ❖ How old were you when you first learned to ride a bicycle?

Well, I guess...around 5, when my father first taught me how to ride. He bought me a pink bike with fairy pictures on it and encouraged me to try. I was very scared at first, but then gradually enjoyed and learnt quickly.

### ❖ Are bicycles popular in Vietnam?

Yes, definitely, Vietnam is still the country of two-wheel vehicles so bikes and motorbikes are still pretty popular here. However, people are switching to cars nowadays and that is why we may see less bicycles than before.

### ❖ Would you say it's difficult to learn to ride a bicycle?

No, it is way too easy. You can learn to ride one in just 5 minutes. Every child, including myself, may be a little bit nervous the first try but they will eventually be fascinated by the speed and movement. The only problem is keeping balance, but it's not really a big issue though.

### ❖ What kinds of people ride bicycles?

I suppose most riders are older people, since bicycles are very slow and time-consuming, it is more suited to people with lots of free time.. you know – retired people. Besides, it is also an excellent way to exercise.

### ❖ Do you think it's safe to ride a bicycle in the city?

It can be safe if you drive in the park or on less crowded roads, but it can be dangerous to ride on large streets with too much traffic. For example, I would not choose the main street to ride a bike since a car may accidentally crash into cyclists without even noticing.

## 29. Art

### Do you like art?

Yes, I do. It is a great way to escape from the busy daily life. Some forms of art that are worth mentioning are painting, dancing, singing and even writing, out of which dancing is probably the most enjoyable activity for me.

### Do you think art classes are necessary? (Why?)

As I mentioned before, the busier life is, the more necessary it is to get lost in an artistic activity. I personally believe that modern people should learn to balance their lives between materialistic and spiritual values. Everybody should go to art class once in a while.

### How do you think art classes affect children's development?

Nobody can deny the effect of music on brain development of babies which is the reason why pregnant women usually let their children listen to instrumental music. It is believed that the right brain will become more developed under the influence of soft and melodic sounds.

### What kind of paintings do people like?

I don't have lots of knowledge about painting but what I know is people enjoy what they draw themselves. For example, we sometimes keep our first drawings from first grade as a memento or reminder. When we grow up, we have less time for activities like painting or drawing so we usually just buy them to decorate our houses.

### What benefits can you get from painting as a hobby?

Well, I have never thought about it before... give me a minute to think.. well, painting can be a fun way to escape from your current busy schedule and reward yourself after a hard-working day. Besides, maybe you can discover an inborn talent as an artist when you try painting since most people do not have chance to ever try it.

### How often do you visit art galleries?

It is so embarrassing to admit that I have never been to an art gallery because I am not really the artistic type of person. However, I have a friend who is a designer and she is fascinated with pictures and paintings. She told me many things about the galleries that she had been to all over the world which sounds quite intriguing.

 **What kinds of things do you like to draw?**

I'd like to draw natural landscapes since painting requires hours of looking at the same thing over and over again. It would be nice to look at something beautiful, and to be honest, I find it hard to take my eyes off a stunning scene in nature.

 **Is it easy to learn how to draw?**

It is too easy to learn to draw. The fact is even a child can draw something on paper like a house, a cat, a toy or something like that. However, being able to draw professionally and earn an income out of it is not an easy task. I think it requires inborn talent and a huge passion in art to do this.

## 30. Photography

### ❖ Do you like to take photographs? (Why?)

Yes, definitely. I think photography is great since it helps us to document our life and keep our memories from fading, and the photographic process is also fun.

### ❖ Do you prefer to take photos yourself or to have other people take your photo? Why?

To be honest, I like to take photos by myself so that the precious moments are captured from my perspective. Moreover, as I'm not really good at posing for pictures, I always find it embarrassing when being a model for someone.

### ❖ What kind of photos do you like to take? Why?

Well, I think the kinds of photos do not matter. I tend to capture things that are not moving, since it is easier for me to catch the right angle to make the picture more eye-catching.

### ❖ How (why) did you become interested in photography?

Well, my father, who is a very seasoned photographer, has taught me many principles of photography. Thanks to him, I won first prize in a photography contest when I was 10 years old and have fallen in love with it ever since.

### ❖ Do you prefer to take pictures of people or of scenery?

Oh I could say without hesitation that landscape photography is more appealing to me as I was born and lived for quite a long time in Can Tho, a small city whose population is low but the scenery is gorgeous. I've shot lots of great pictures there.

### ❖ How often do you take photographs?

In the past, I used to take photos on a weekly basis as I was really addicted to it. However, as I've grown up and have had many tasks to deal with, I rarely use my camera anymore.

### ❖ How do you keep your photos?

I usually print them out and keep them in albums so they will be protected. Besides, I also store my photos on my computer disk and on the internet for backup.

 **Do you frame (or have you framed) any of your photos?**

No, I don't. To me, photo frames can take up lots of space so I would rather use albums or just save them on my phone.

 **Do you prefer to send postcards to people or to send photos that you took yourself? (Why?)**

Sending photos which I have taken might be more valuable because I can use the contents of the photos to express my current feelings towards the receiver. Take beaches as an example. When I'm happy, I often shoot the scene of children running around and playing water sports, while I like to capture a peaceful sunset when I am feeling down in the dumps. In contrast, postcards are made by other people so they are just meaningless to me.

## 31. Jewelry

### ❖ What do you think about jewelry?

Without a shadow of doubt, jewelry is a crucial accessory for people to beautify their appearance or even show their social status.

### ❖ What kind of jewelry do you like to buy?

As you know, there is a wide range of jewelry including necklaces, rings or earrings, but the one which always comes out on top of my list is bracelets since it makes my wrist look more graceful. I often buy them in PNJ store, the place selling bracelets for reasonable prices.

### ❖ Why do so many people choose to buy expensive jewelry?

As the general GDP of citizens is increasing much more compared to the past, people can now spend more money to buy pricey jewels to make themselves more beautiful. It is undeniable that a shining ruby necklace can really make people stand out from the crowd.

### ❖ How often do you wear jewelry?

Not very often, to be honest. I tend not to wear jewelry very often when going out as I'm afraid of robbery. However, I do wear bracelets and earrings on some formal occasions such as wedding parties or weekly meetings at work.

## 32. Sleep

### ✚ How many hours do you sleep every day?

It depends on how heavy my workload is on that day. But I usually try to get around 7 to 8 hours of sleep so that I can always be wide awake and work effectively for the whole day.

### ✚ Is it necessary to take a nap every day?

Yes, I believe that people need to have a snooze after lunch because after eating, we can start to feel sleepy and lose focus. Therefore, a quick nap can bring our energy back and help us become more productive after that.

### ✚ Do old people sleep a lot? Why?

Actually, I think elderly people generally have the same amount of sleep as young people. But the thing is they often find it hard to fall asleep, so they go to bed earlier than young adults, which makes us think that they sleep a lot.

### ✚ What time do you usually go to bed?

To be honest, I'm a night owl. I usually go to sleep at around 1 or 2 a.m. I know it is not a healthy habit but if I can't get all my work done, it's very hard for me to get to sleep.

### ✚ Do you always have a good sleep?

I'm a busy person. I go to work from 9 a.m to 9 p.m, so at the end of the day, I often feel extremely exhausted and sleep like a rock.

### 33. Sunshine

#### ✍ Do you like sunshine?

Definitely, I do. Summer days always bring me a lot of energy and excitement. I really love the moment when I open the curtains, let the soft warm rays of sunshine in and abandon myself to the soothing dawn chorus. Besides, on sunny days, I can go out and enjoy many activities with my friends.

#### ✍ Do you like a place with more sunshine or less sunshine?

I don't know about other people, but I would go for a place with more sunshine. As a matter of fact, the sun can strongly affect our mental health. I have read somewhere that exposure to natural sunlight can energize and protect us from negative emotions.

#### ✍ What do you think of when we mention the word “sunshine”?

Wow, this question really stirs my imagination. Actually, the word reminds me of an old song named “You Are My Sunshine”. Throughout my childhood, the melody haunted my mind because I heard it thousands of times, though my English at that time was not good enough to understand the lyrics.

#### ✍ Do you like to sun bathe?

Of course, I do. An ideal summer day would be when I could indulge myself on a sandy beach, feeling the warm sunrays beating down on my skin and enjoying my favorite smoothie.

### 34. Gift

✍ **How often do you buy gifts for other people?**

I have been in the habit of buying gifts on important occasions such as birthdays or house-warming parties because I consider it as a way to express my affection to others.

✍ **Do you like to buy expensive gifts?**

Actually buying high-cost gifts is a no-no for me. In fact, I'm really into giving hand-made gifts so that receiver can feel my love and care for them.

✍ **What kinds of gifts are popular in your country?**

Birthday gifts such as clothes, flowers, cakes, books or jewelry are some kinds of popular gifts that adults prefer to give in my country, whereas children tend to choose teddy bears or souvenirs for their friends.

✍ **Why do people send gifts?**

In my opinion, sending gifts is considered a way to convey love and care for each other, which means that the relationship between the two people is precious to cherish. Besides, this act may show affection, gratitude or asking for forgiveness.

### 35. Smart phone app

#### ❖ What kinds of apps do you often use?

Well, like anyone else, I use social media networks on a daily basis to communicate with people who have similar interests with me. In addition, these platforms also help me to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the world at the moment.

#### ❖ What kinds of apps would you like to have in the future?

I guess my future preference is health-tracking apps. Because of the increasing risk of physical as well as mental health problems, I want to monitor my health, checking in with an app to make sure that everything from my diet to my workout regime is on track.

#### ❖ What's the most popular app in your country?

That's definitely Facebook. Some people use Facebook so excessively that they do not talk to each other. For example, whenever I go to a coffee shop, it's really common to see a couple checking their newsfeed rather than talking to each other.

#### ❖ What was the first app you used?

If my memory serves me right, the first app I used was a mathematics game. This app is not only entertaining but also educational. It helped me to improve my academic performance pretty much, particularly in math.

#### ❖ Do old people in your country like to use apps?

I would say no to this question. The elderly are usually reluctant to use smart phones because having weak eyesight becomes a hindrance for using these phones. Therefore, it is kinda obvious that apps on smart phones are not preferred by the old.

## 36. Transportation

### ❖ What form of transport do you usually use? And Why?

I always travel around by my car because I don't wanna get exposed to the sun and heat outside. Therefore, my appearance is always perfect and the skin on my face won't dry out or experience sunburn and heat shock.

### ❖ 2. What vehicles (or, what means of transport) do people in Vietnam most often choose to use?

Motorbike, absolutely and I believe if you ask any Vietnamese person this question, you will receive the same answer as mine. Due to traffic congestion and small roads, riding bikes is the fastest choice to get to work or school on time.

### ❖ What will become the most popular means of transportation in Vietnam?

From my perspective, motorbikes will be gradually replaced with subways in the future. Subway systems are under construction at the moment and they are the most feasible remedy to the increases in traffic jams and air pollution nowadays.

### ❖ What do you think about the transport system in your hometown?

My hometown is HCM city which has a terrible traffic situation. Due to the dense population, you are likely to get stuck in traffic jams in rush hours and waste a lot of time getting home. Plus, some people are drunk while driving, which causes many severe accidents on the roads.

### ❖ Would you say transport costs are high in your hometown?

Well, it depends on what means of transportation you are using. If you use public transport such as buses to commute, the fees are quite affordable. There are even some discounts for students and older people. However, when it comes to cars or other high-quality transport, you have to pay much higher costs.

### ❖ How has the transport system in your hometown changed in the past few decades?

In my opinion, there are some remarkable advancements in the transport system in my country these days compared to the past. Road safety has increased because the government has imposed stricter punishments such as fines as well as encouraged citizens to use public transportation instead of private vehicles.

## 37. Shoes

### ⊕ Do you like shopping for shoes?

Yes, I love to do so. I can go on a hunt for a pair of the latest Nike or Adidas sneakers, just to make an addition to my shoe collection and not to be old-fashioned.

### ⊕ How often do you buy shoes?

Well, I can say that I get new shoes every month. Whenever I get my salary, I always try to keep my collection updated with a new pair of trendy shoes. I have such a big love for shoes and I cannot stand wearing old ones.

### ⊕ What kinds of shoes do you usually buy?

I spend most of my money on trainers and boots. Mostly I'll choose trainers and I've got around 20 pairs of them so far because they bring comfort and performance, but for formal occasions, I definitely go for some boots, especially leather ones because it feels more posh and elegant.

### ⊕ Do you prefer comfortable shoes, or good-looking shoes?

I think I do like comfy shoes better than good-looking ones. I'm a pretty active person and I'm always up for adventures so I move and run a lot the whole day. Because of that, I would love to have comfortable running shoes as my companion.

### ⊕ Do you have a pair of shoes that you especially like?

Yes, and it is a white pair of Converse. I got it on my 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday from my mother and they were very light and durable. Sadly, my beloved dog bit and tore them to pieces the other day. The left shoe was nowhere to be seen.

### ⊕ Have you ever bought shoes online?

Yes, I've tried that once before and it was a huge disappointment. I didn't have to wait for so long to receive the package. But when I opened the box, I was immediately let down by the color because it seemed to be brighter than the crimson red color that I selected. I was not even able to fit my foot into it though I ordered my usual size.

✍ Do you think men and women are equally interested in buying shoes?

I believe women are bigger fans of buying shoes. I don't mean to stereotype but maybe it's because clothing for women is much more diverse and complicated and so is their footwear. It's likely men and boys don't have so many options that drive them nuts to choose from.

## 38. Snacks

### ✚ What kinds of snacks do you like to eat?

I have quite a long list of favorite snacks I always seem to be chewing, from ones found in a fast food restaurant such as french fries and mashed potatoes, to sweet cakes like tiramisu or cupcakes.

### ✚ Is it healthy to eat snacks?

I have to admit that even though I have a sweet tooth I don't think it's a good habit to take in so many snacks. Most of the snacks we consume are fried and sweetened and they have been proven to be harmful to our health and can later lead to some diseases such as diabetes or heart attacks.

### ✚ Do your parents allow you to eat snacks?

When I was still a little boy, my parents were rather overprotective and to me, eating candies and crackers meant being punished by a hard hit on the hands. Now, they are easier on me so I can eat whatever I want as long as I remember to brush my teeth carefully afterward.

### ✚ What was the most popular snack when you were young?

As I remember, the most common snack at that time was Poca crackers with spicy and prawn flavors. They were packed in colorful wrappers and the price was really reasonable so almost every kid in my class was able to afford them even when our pocket-money was so little.

### ✚ What kinds of snacks do children in your country like to eat nowadays?

Well, I have a feeling that kids nowadays eat a lot of french fries because the taste is quite delicious and can be found almost everywhere from restaurants to street vendors. Even their parents love to eat it too so sometimes they might buy and enjoy a big pack of french fries with their children.

## 39. Study

### ✍ Describe your education.

I had my first 5 years at a local primary school on the outskirts of Hanoi, then I was sent to a school in the center of the city which was very far from my house. I went to college to get my degree in Environmental Science a few years ago.

### ✍ What is your area of specialization?

I'm now a freshman at The University of Hanoi, studying environmental engineering. My parents tried to persuade me into pursuing Teacher Education at first but I decided not to.

### ✍ Why did you choose to study that major?

I've always been into environmental issues, and it's my dream to receive the Nobel prize in this field. Studying this major is a stepping stone to fulfilling my ambition.

### ✍ Do you like your major?

Absolutely yes. I get to study what I like and I know that I can apply my knowledge into helping the environment. Studying has never felt so good!

### ✍ What kind of school did you go to as a child?

I didn't go to school when I was small, I was homeschooled by my mother. My parents were not financially adequate to afford my study.

### ✍ What was your favorite subject as a child?

Math, definitely Math. I loved it when I could solve a difficult equation, much like an achievement to myself.

### ✍ Do you think your country has an effective education system?

I don't think so. Looking at the astonishing dropout rate in Vietnam you can partly tell how challenging and frustrating studying in Vietnam can be. We are in desperate need for change.

### ✍ Are you looking forward to working?

Not really. To graduate and get a job means that I'll be under great financial pressure since I cannot rely on my parents' support anymore. To be honest, I don't think I can even graduate, let alone finding a job

## 40. Work

### ⊕ What do you do?

I now work as a scientist at the National Laboratory. I used to be a professor in the University of Hanoi but I changed my profession 5 years ago.

### ⊕ What are your responsibilities?

I'm responsible for discovering and analyzing new chemicals. My job can be demanding and frustrating at times, but it is really rewarding. My work can save lives of thousands.

### ⊕ Why did you choose to do that type of work (or, that job)?

Even though working on new elements can be pretty dangerous, I just cannot quit my job. I have always been interested in science and chemistry ever since I was a child, so doing this job is really pleasing.

### ⊕ Are there some other kinds of work you would rather do?

Not really. But if I have to choose, I would go back to my former job – being a professor. Even though I didn't earn much from being a professor, knowing that my lessons can help students achieve their goals is priceless.

### ⊕ Describe the company or organization you work for

I now work for the National laboratory, which is located in the city center, just about a mile from my house. My lab is on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the building.

### ⊕ Do you enjoy your work?

Most of the time, yes, I do enjoy my work. When I first came here I didn't like it much. I felt like I couldn't fit in, but now that I'm used to my work, things are much easier.

### ⊕ What do you like about your job?

I like my job a lot, knowing that the result of my research can save lives. If I and my colleagues succeed, we'll find a cure for brain cancer.

### ⊕ What do you dislike about your job?

I don't like the environment, to be frank. I mean, I like my coworkers but our safety is never ensured. Even though there are regulations, you never know what can happen in a lab.

 **Do you miss being a student?**

No I don't. I didn't have great memories with schools and teachers. I'm glad that I graduated and got to do the kind of work I like.

## 41. Newspapers and magazines

### ✚ Do you often read newspapers?

I do, I usually read news after I get home in the evening. I used to buy printed newspapers but now I have a habit of reading online newspapers since it's much more convenient.

### ✚ Do you prefer to read local news or international news?

I don't really favor one over another. I will read whatever I'm interested in, regardless of whether they are local or international.

### ✚ Which is more popular where you live, newspapers or magazines?

It depends. People around my parents age tend to prefer newspapers, while magazines seem to be more appealing to the young.

### ✚ Do many people today read newspapers?

I don't know, really. I think people who need to get updated of the latest news or trend will have to read newspapers a lot.

### ✚ In the future, do you think more people than today will read magazines, or fewer people?

I myself don't think I'll read magazines much in the future since newspapers are much more convenient.

### ✚ Do you think newspapers will be very important to you in the future?

Definitely, I always want to be informed of events around me so I'll have to rely on newspapers for information.

## 42. Birds

### ❖ How do you feel about birds?

I think they are adorable, but their singing can be annoying at times. I know people who are absolutely obsessed with birds. My uncle is an example, listening to birds singing is his hobby since it makes him feel relaxed

### ❖ How do Vietnamese people feel about birds?

It depends, to some people, birds are like dear pets but to others birds are more like food.

### ❖ Are there many birds near your home?

Birds near my house? I don't think so. I live in an apartment, it's on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of a building in the city center. I rarely see birds around.

### ❖ Have you seen many different kinds of birds?

Like I said before, I rarely see birds. My uncle took me on several bird watching trips but I never grew fond of them. I don't know much about birds and I don't think I'll ever bother to find out more about them.

## 43. Email

### ❖ Do you like to write a letter or email?

I do. I have relatives and friends who live far away so I cannot have face-to-face conversations with those people, letters and emails help me keep in touch with them.

### ❖ Do you think emails are useful?

Absolutely. Instead of having to go meet people in person to get things done, I can just simply send emails. Things have been much easier since the advent of emails.

### ❖ What sorts of letters (or emails) do you think are the most difficult to write?

The formal ones I think, like CV and the alike. Since there is a long list of regulations that you have to follow, not to mention the differences between cultures. What you write maybe acceptable in a country but can be considered rude in another.

### ❖ Do you prefer to write letters or emails? Why?

Definitely emails. Writing a letter can be very expensive and time-consuming. You'll have to wait about 2 weeks for your letter to reach your friend, and another 2 weeks to receive his/her reply. Just thinking about it is frustrating enough.

### ❖ Do you think email might one day replace handwritten letters?

I do think so, yes, emails will replace handwritten letters someday. As I said before, writing letters can be really annoying, while writing an email is much more convenient.

## 44. Parks & Trees Parks

⊕ Do you like going to parks and/or public gardens?

I do, having a walk in the park can be relaxing at times. As much as I want to, I never have time to go to parks.

⊕ When was the last time you went to a park?

I'm not quite sure. Almost a year I think, my brother usually exercised with his friends there, I was reluctant, but he forced me since I always stayed indoor.

⊕ Do you think the parks and the gardens where you live could be improved in any way?

Yes, I think parks now are not as appealing to people as they used to be. Park managers should really consider working on some new attractions like a playground for children, I think?

⊕ Would you like to see more parks and gardens in your home town?

Of course, I never had a chance to go to many parks and the environment is always polluted. I really hope the younger generations will be more fortunate.

⊕ Do you prefer to relax with your friends in a park or an indoor space?

I'll have to choose indoor space much as I like parks. Hanging out with friends in a park means that we'll have to rely on the weather, while in a building, weather wouldn't be a problem anymore.

## 45. Text messages

### ❖ Do you text someone if he doesn't answer your phone?

Sometimes. It depends on the situation. If I really need him to call me back immediately, I'll leave him a message asking him to do so. But most of the time, I just wait for him to call me back.

### ❖ Is there any occasion when texting someone is better than calling him?

Maybe he is in the middle of something important, like a meeting, and you know it, it's better to just send a message. Calling him in such occasions is inappropriate and he can get annoyed and angry.

### ❖ Have you ever had difficulty replying?

No I haven't. I'm using an iPhone, which is very user-friendly and I can send my message really fast.

### ❖ How often do you send text messages?

All the time. I personally don't prefer calling people because sometimes when they cannot answer my call, it will be very rude. Instead, I always send a message, or if I want to talk to someone, I'll text him first before making the call.

## 46. Patience

### ✚ What do you think "patience" is?

Well patience is a quality that means you are able to spend a lot of time doing something difficult, even if it means you have to do it over and over again.

### ✚ Do you think patience is important?

Yes absolutely. If you want to be successful, patience is the number one factor. For example, when teaching children, you really need to be patient in order to teach them because they are usually very energetic and not willing to listen easily.

### ✚ Do you think being patient is an important part of being polite?

Yes, being polite means that you avoid hurting someone else's feelings. Sometimes it takes a lot of patience to have a conversation with a person who is talkative. If you are not patient, you can end up being rude and offending the other person.

### ✚ Would you say you are a patient person?

I'm a teacher, and being patient is part of what I do everyday. So yeah I can say with confidence that I am a patient person.

### ✚ Have you ever lost your patience?

There've been a few times when my students were too naughty and didn't do their homework. One time, I just lost it and gave the whole class detention.

## 47. Films

### Do you like to watch films?

I really do but I wish I have more time for it. I've been very busy recently due to my job so I only have time for one or two new movies each month.

### Do you prefer foreign films or Vietnamese films?

I enjoy both of them as long as they convey meaningful messages. But if I have to choose between those two, I will probably go with foreign films, especially Hollywood films because most of them are well-acted, with lots of celebrities and good effects.

### How often do you go to a cinema to watch a movie?

Not very often actually. I used to go there at least once a month but now I have lots of things to worry about so I rather focus on my work and just choose a movie to watch at home.

### Do Vietnamese people like to go to a cinema to watch a film?

It's kind of hard to say but I think the young generation enjoys it more. People around my parents age tend to stay at home and watch TV.

### What kinds of movies do you like best?

As for me, I like sci-fi movies the best because they usually have fascinating story lines and a lot of thrilling action scenes. Also, because I study in the science field so I always find this kind of films interesting.

### What was the first film that you watched?

Titanic was the first movie that I saw in the cinema. It has been quite a while but the movie was so good that I can remember all the details until now.

## 48. Mathematics

### ✚ When did you start learning math?

Math is an official subject for Vietnamese students since first grade so I have studied Math for at least 16 years.

### ✚ Do you like math?

Math is actually not my strongest suit. I prefer Chemistry and Biology. In fact, in high school I was in the National Biology Olympic team but all science subjects involve using Math so it still plays a crucial part in my study.

### ✚ Who's your favorite teacher so far?

I was very lucky to have a lot of experienced and supportive teachers in my life so it's really hard for me to say who is my favorite. I am grateful to all of them. Each of them had certain influence on different stages of my life.

### ✚ Is math difficult for you to learn?

It certainly is but I enjoy the challenging nature of Math. Even though it's hard, studying Math will benefit you in many ways.

### ✚ Do you like to use a calculator?

Calculators are indeed one of the greatest inventions of human kind in my opinion. It has helped me a lot when dealing with complex equations and advance mathematic problems.

## 49. Social network

### ✚ What kinds of social networking websites do you like to use?

I believe the most common and also the most famous one that young people like to use nowadays is Facebook. I, myself, use Facebook everyday as a means of communication with my friends and updating news.

### ✚ Are you a social person?

I see myself as an extrovert. I really enjoy making new friends and taking part in social activities.

### ✚ What kinds of people do you like to be friends with on those websites?

I rarely accept stranger's friend request to be honest. I prefer getting to know someone in person, rather than making friends based on what they display on the Internet.

### ✚ Is it easy to find real friends on a social networking website?

I personally don't think so. There're a lot of people with different purposes on the Internet. You can't always be sure if they have good intention with you or not.

### ✚ What kinds of chatting app or software do Vietnamese people like to use?

There're plenty of them but I guess Zalo and Skype are the most common among all. It's very easy to use and very convenient, even old people can get used to them quickly.

## 50. Time management

### ✚ How do you organize your time?

As we all know, time is gold and no one can rewind the clock, so being able to manage time effectively is my top priority. In order to get things done and work efficiently, I carry a schedule notebook with me and update on tasks I have to work on every week.

### ✚ Do you think people organize time in the same way?

I can't tell. I mean, I'm used to writing my schedule down, kind of old-fashioned. My friends, however, install an app to control their time and their spending as well. I've never tried one, to be honest, I'm not that good with technology so I don't think I'll ever bother to install one in the future.

### ✚ Do you think it is important to be on time?

100%! Being punctual is like a must, like a foundation for mutual trust. Arriving late, in any circumstances, can be disrespectful to your partner.

### ✚ How do you feel when you are late for an appointment?

Frankly speaking, I feel ashamed. Before when I was younger, I wasn't that serious about being punctual. Now that I'm older, fully aware of my responsibilities, the weight of my very actions, I rarely make such mistakes anymore.

### ✚ How do you feel when others are late?

Well, it depends. If a person is involved in an unprecedeted or unavoidable event, then it's understandable. However, if a person is late purely because he or she is careless, then it's hard to ignore.

## 51. Weather

### ✚ What's the weather like today?

I'm not quite sure since I have been indoor the entire day. But I guess it's raining, I checked the weather forecast yesterday and it said so.

### ✚ What's the weather like in your hometown?

My country, Vietnam, has tropical climate. It explains a lot why Ho Chi Minh is boiling hot all year round and where I live, Hanoi, is only slightly chilly in the winter.

### ✚ What's your favorite season?

Autumn is my absolute favorite! Just the right amount of rain, neither too hot nor too cold, perfect for outdoor activities. I can fall in love with the season, seriously, exactly that kind of weather when there is sunshine but you can still put on a hoodie!

### ✚ Do you like snow?

I don't know, I have never seen snow my entire life to actually know whether I'll like it or not actually. My friends in England told me snow isn't that fascinating to watch, but I guess I still want to try once.

### ✚ Do you watch the weather forecasts?

I don't watch the weather forecast on a daily basis, but my mother does. She always keeps me updated and tells me when to bring an umbrella.

### ✚ Does the weather ever affect what you do?

Most of the time, really. I'm easily affected by the weather. Even when I have tons of work to do, I tend to procrastinate I get in bed – my favorite place – and sleep my day away whenever it rains cats and dogs.

## 52. Noises

### ✚ Do you mind noises?

Absolutely yes. I like my space and am likely to be distracted whenever there is noise. It feels like my personal space is being disrupted when I hear noises and it drives me crazy.

### ✚ What types of noise do you come across in your daily life?

The noises of vehicles whenever I sit in usual traffic jams are those that I usually come across, and unfortunately are the most unpleasing ones to hear. I can barely keep my sanity with those noises.

### ✚ Are there any sounds that you like?

I'm not sure. I mean, if music is counted, then yes, I do like music. Listening to soothing melodies can be healing at times, especially when I'm under great pressure.

### ✚ Where can you hear loud noise?

On the street, mainly. Maybe from my neighbor who turns up his speaker at midnight once in a fortnight as well.

### ✚ Do you think there's too much noise in modern society?

Absolutely, I can still hear the noise of a truck horning while I'm on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of a building. I think it is high time people considered noise pollution a real problem that needs to be solved.

### ✚ Are cities becoming noisier?

Well yes. As our society grows crowded and more advanced, more people than ever before can afford their personal vehicles, which contributes much to noise pollution nowadays. To be honest, actions to alleviate this problem should be taken as soon as possible.

## 53. Hats

### ✚ Do you like to wear hats?

Not really, I'm not that fascinated about hats or hat fashion. I do like helmet though, since I have to wear it almost every day.

### ✚ What kinds of hats do you have?

As I said before, I have helmets, lots of them since I have to constantly buy new ones, I always forget my previous helmets at home! So yes, I have numerous kinds of helmet, including full face helmets and half face helmets.

### ✚ Where do you like to buy hats?

I rarely buy hats, my sister, on the contrary, is obsessed with hat fashion. Therefore, once in a while, whenever I need to buy a new hat, she would take me to her favorite hat shop downtown.

### ✚ Is wearing hats popular in your country?

I'm not quite sure, actually. If helmet is counted, then of course whoever rides a motorbike needs one. But other types of hats like beanie or boater, I think, are not that famous to people.

## 54. Bags

### ⊕ Do you like bags?

As someone who is really keen on fashion, bag is a necessary accessory to me. I am particularly interested in bags so I purchase many different bags to match my outfits.

### ⊕ What types of bags do you like?

Besides backpacks to use for school, I have a lot of pretty handbags and clutch bags. To me, handbags might be the most useful one since it can be easily carried around and still have enough space for my necessities.

### ⊕ Do you usually carry a bag?

Absolutely. I need to carry a lot of stuff when going out so bags are a crucial item. But above all, carrying a bag always makes me feel fashionable.

### ⊕ What do you put in these bags?

Well, of course there will be my self-phone and money. Also, any girl would have lipsticks and other cosmetic products such as perfume or eyeliner. I sometimes carry an extra charger in case my phone runs out of battery.

### ⊕ What sorts of bags do women like to buy?

As I had mentioned before, pretty bags like clutch bags or handbags are women's favorite choice since they are usually beautiful and useful at the same time.

## 55. News

### ✚ Are you very interested in the news?

Yes I am. But I am only interested in news about science and health because I'm not a fan of politics. Besides, news about science and health are both fun and useful.

### ✚ Why do you want to know the latest news?

To be well-informed I guess. I don't want to be someone who doesn't know anything that is happening around the world. And news about science and health is really awesome with new discoveries and facts, which is a great way to relax.

### ✚ How important is it to you to get the news every day?

Well it's hard to say because it's not the same for everyone. I myself have to read the news every single day because it's fun and relaxing, but it's not something that I can't live without. Some other people even don't bother reading the news at all.

### ✚ What sorts of news are you most interested in?

As I said before, I'm into news about science and health. I love reading about new inventions, discoveries about the universe. News about health is fun to read too. But sometimes, I also read articles about crime which is kind of scary.

### ✚ How do you usually find this news?

Most of the time, I read these kinds of news online. There're a few websites that I visit frequently like New scientist or National Geographic.

### ✚ Do you prefer to read newspapers or watch TV to get your news?

I haven't watched TV since high school. That's 8 years. So between these 2 options, I would have to go with reading newspapers.

## 56. Reading books

### ✚ What kinds of books did you like to read when you were young?

When I was young, I didn't like reading because textbooks at school were very boring, which made me think that all books are boring. However, I did read Japanese manga like Naruto or One Piece. It's a great way to chill out.

### ✚ Do you still keep these books?

Unfortunately no. When I got into college and my mom asked me to clean my room and either throw away or donate unused items, I decided to give those comic books to children at a local kindergarten.

### ✚ Have you ever given others books as gifts?

Yes once in a while, even if it's not any special occasion like birthday or something, I still buy books as presents for other people.

### ✚ What's your favorite kind of books?

Now I read all kinds of books: novels, fictions, science all sorts of stuff. Each kind has its own values and gives me different feelings. So I can't think of one particular kind of book right now.

## 57. Countryside

### ✚ Would you like to live in the countryside in the future?

Not in a million years. I love it here, in Hanoi. Busy and pretty disorganized as it is, Hanoi is a really good place to settle down. The countryside is little boring and too quiet for me.

### ✚ What do people living in the countryside like to do?

I have never lived in the countryside long enough to answer this question, but my grandma told me that people there like to get up early in the morning and gather under the shade of a big tree to smoke and chat before getting to work.

### ✚ What are the benefits of living in rural areas?

I guess it has something to do with the atmosphere and lifestyle. Some people prefer the quietness and slow pace of life in rural areas. And the fresh air is also something a lot of people like about these areas. It's much better for human health than in big cities.

### ✚ What's the difference between living in the city and living the countryside?

The differences between these places are mainly about work opportunities and the environment. In the city, you have access to all kinds of work, from blue-collar to white-collar jobs, while in the countryside you don't have much choice. However, the environment in the countryside is cleaner, which is much better for your health.

## 58. Sky

### ❖ Do you like to watch the sky?

No honestly. I know some people do, like my uncle. He said looking at the sky in the autumn made him feel relaxed and it's a good way to kill time if you are feeling bored and have nothing to do.

### ❖ What is the sky like at night in your hometown?

Nothing special I guess. I don't usually look at the sky but sometimes I do when I'm thinking about my life. It's dark and there's lots of cloud with a few sparkling stars.

### ❖ Do you like to watch stars?

Not really. Staring at stars is a little bit scary, but I like watching videos about outer space and stars.

### ❖ Have you ever taken a course about stars?

I'm not that big of a fan. Although I do like to watch fun videos about stars and to read books about astronomy. But spending money and time attending a course about this, it's not such a good idea to me.

### ❖ What's your favorite star?

Hmmmm... my favorite star? I guess the sun. You know why? Because it's the only star in the entire universe that I know so ... haha

## 59. Shopping

### ✚ Are there many shops near your home?

Yes. There's one right in front of my house that sells almost everything a human being would need to live comfortably. In my neighborhood, there're at least a dozen like that, so you can guess the competition here is really intense.

### ✚ Do you like shopping?

Who doesn't? It's a fantastic way to let off some steam. I work almost everyday from morning to evening so whenever I have some free time, I will go to a shopping mall and have a great time browsing around.

### ✚ Who usually does the grocery shopping in your home?

My mom. Sometimes when I'm at home on Sunday, I'll go with her. I'm pretty sure that my dad doesn't go shopping with my mom during weekdays because he has his own hobby, which is fishing. So from Monday to Saturday, my mom will do the grocery shopping alone.

### ✚ How often do you buy something in a shop?

Maybe once a week. I love shopping, but my free time doesn't allow me to go to shopping malls to buy things too often. Sometimes, when I'm too busy, maybe only once every two weeks.

## 60. Food/Cooking

### ❖ Is food important to you?

That's a no-brainer question. Food is vitally important to everyone because no one can survive for a week without eating. If you want to live happily, you have to eat properly with healthy diets.

### ❖ What kinds of food do you particularly like?

Fast food I guess. Although people say it's not good for your health, it still is very convenient and yummy. Especially Mc Donald's Royal Cheese Burger, you just cannot say no to it, absolutely mouth-watering.

### ❖ Is there any food you don't like?

Hmmm ... I'd say sea food. I used to be addicted to sea food when I was a child. Maybe I ate too much sea food that I became allergic to it unfortunately.

### ❖ What kinds of food are most popular in your country?

In Vietnam, it's absolutely nice noodle soup with beef, usually known as "Pho bo" among the locals. Its broth is sweet and nutritious. Every person who comes from a foreign country just have to try "Pho bo" just once when he or she visits Vietnam.

### ❖ Do you like cooking?

I do. In fact, I did the cooking everyday when I was a college freshman. I enjoyed it so much that I invited my friends to my room and had parties with food that I made once in a while.

### ❖ Who usually does the cooking in your home?

When I lived with my parents, it's my mom who's the main cook. All of my family members and other people agreed that her food was simply awesome and that she should become a professional chef. Sometimes, I helped her with the cooking and we had a lot of fun preparing the meals.

## 61. Happiness

### ✚ What do you think of happiness?

That's a tough question. Happiness is a really abstract and complicated concept and how each person perceives happiness is also different. Some people think happiness is when they are loved by other people, while others think happiness has something to do with money and reputation.

### ✚ What do you like to do when you are happy?

I sing and do stupid stuff like chicken dancing. I'm a horrible singer but who cares. I'm happy then I'll sing, it doesn't matter whether other people think of me as a freak or not.

### ✚ What kinds of things make you happy?

Money and stuff. Some people say that it's too materialistic but come on, admit it, money does make you happy. You can buy a lot of things with money and have a comfortable life. You can make other people happy if you have money too.

### ✚ What kinds of things do people in your country feel happy about?

We're all living in the world where materialism prevails so money always makes people happy. Also, in Vietnam, there's something else that usually accompanies money, and it's power.

### ✚ Is it easy to make you happy?

Yes, I'm a simple man. Small things like a book can make me satisfied. Well, if anything, I'd love it if someone gives me a car or something.