Activity 1. Read the questions below and prepare your own answer. Remember to give a direct answer to the question first, then extend your answer by adding extra information in a couple of sentences.

Activity 2. Read the answers below carefully and highlight expressions, vocabulary or idioms that you wish to remember. Make sure you practice them in your speaking, so that you can make use of them in your speaking test.

Part3. Housing/finding a place to live

Q: What is the most common kind of home in your country?

In my country, an apartment is the most common and popular kind of home. This is because my country is quite small and there is a large population living in the country. So, the population density is high. We have lots of very tall apartments, especially in the major cities and this effectively solves the land size issue and provides homes to people.

Q: What are the advantages of living in an apartment if you compare it with living in a house?

Living in an apartment has a number of advantages. Firstly, people don't have to worry about security as much because there is a guard on duty and a reliable security system is always up and running. Secondly, an apartment usually has a gym or a swimming pool that residents can use. Therefore, it provides convenience for people living there. Also, as an apartment is usually smaller in size than a house and you don't really have to worry about landscaping, the cost for maintenance is low. Thus, it's reasonable to say that living in an apartment clearly has advantages compared with living in a house. I think I answered the question.

Q: What are the factors people should consider when they buy a property to live in?

There are a few factors that people should consider when they buy a place. Well, anybody who has tried to find a place online on real estate websites must have seen this phrase, 'location, location, location'. I totally agree and location is one of the most important factors that people have to consider when they buy a place. You have to think about accessibility to the city centre, major highways, motorways and shopping centres, to name a few examples. Other important factors can be how costly the property is and how well the property has been maintained. Both these factors are related to your finances, so you have to consider these carefully before you purchase a place.

Q: When do you think is the right time for someone to leave their parents and family home and start living somewhere else independently?

This is an interesting question. To be honest, I haven't thought about it much. Well, I think it's very different person by person because there are a few factors that we need to take into consideration. Everyone is different and some people are mature earlier than others and some people take longer to become mature and responsible for their life. Therefore, I think the age for young people to leave their parents and live on their own is different individual by individual. In my own case, I think it was pretty much the right time to leave parents and start living alone and I was 21 years old back then. I could support myself financially and I reckon I was mature enough to make the right decisions about my life. In my view, for most people, the age to leave their parents should be no less than 18 years old, generally speaking, although again, there can be a huge individual difference.