

CAE Speaking Test (Parts 1 & 2): New Year's Resolutions & Blue Monday

Part 1: Interview

Interlocutor's Script:

Select one or two questions and ask candidates in turn, as appropriate:

- Do you usually make New Year's resolutions? Why or why not?
- What is the most common New Year's resolution people make in your country?
- Have you ever successfully kept a New Year's resolution? If yes, what was it?
- Do you think setting goals at the start of the year is effective? Why or why not?
- What would you say is the most challenging resolution to keep? Why?
- Do you think New Year's resolutions are more for personal growth or external expectations? Why?
- Do you believe there are better times of the year to set goals than January?
- What kind of resolutions would you suggest to someone who wants to feel more motivated?
- Have you ever heard of Blue Monday? What do you think about it?
- What do you usually do to improve your mood on difficult days like Blue Monday?
- Do you believe Blue Monday is a real phenomenon, or is it just an idea created by the media? Why?
- What advice would you give to someone who feels unmotivated or unhappy on Blue Monday?

Part 2: Long Turn

Interlocutor:

In this part of the test, I'm going to give each of you three pictures. I'd like you to talk about two of them on your own for about a minute, and also to answer a question briefly about your partner's pictures.

Candidate A:

Task: Look at the three photographs. Compare two of them and explain **how these activities might help people build a positive mindset and maintain a sense of purpose throughout the year.**

Follow-Up Question for Candidate B:

Which of these activities do you think is the easiest to sustain over time, and why?



Picture A

Picture B

Picture C

Follow-Up Question for Candidate B:

Which of these activities do you think is the easiest to sustain over time, and why?

Candidate B:

Task: Look at the three photographs. Compare two of them and explain how these situations could encourage someone to maintain motivation and develop a healthier lifestyle throughout the year.



Picture A

Picture B

Picture C

Follow-Up Question for Candidate A:

Which of these activities do you think has the most lasting impact on someone's personal well-being, and why?

CAE Speaking Part 3: Blue Monday

Interlocutor's Script:

Now, I'd like you to talk about something together for about two minutes. (Three minutes for groups of three.)

Here are **some ideas about how people can make Blue Monday more positive** and a question for you to discuss. First, you have some time to look at the task.

(Place the Part 3 booklet in front of the candidates. Allow 15 seconds.)

Interlocutor:

Now, talk to each other about **how these ideas might help people deal with Blue Monday**.

(Candidates discuss for 2 minutes. 3 minutes for groups of three.)

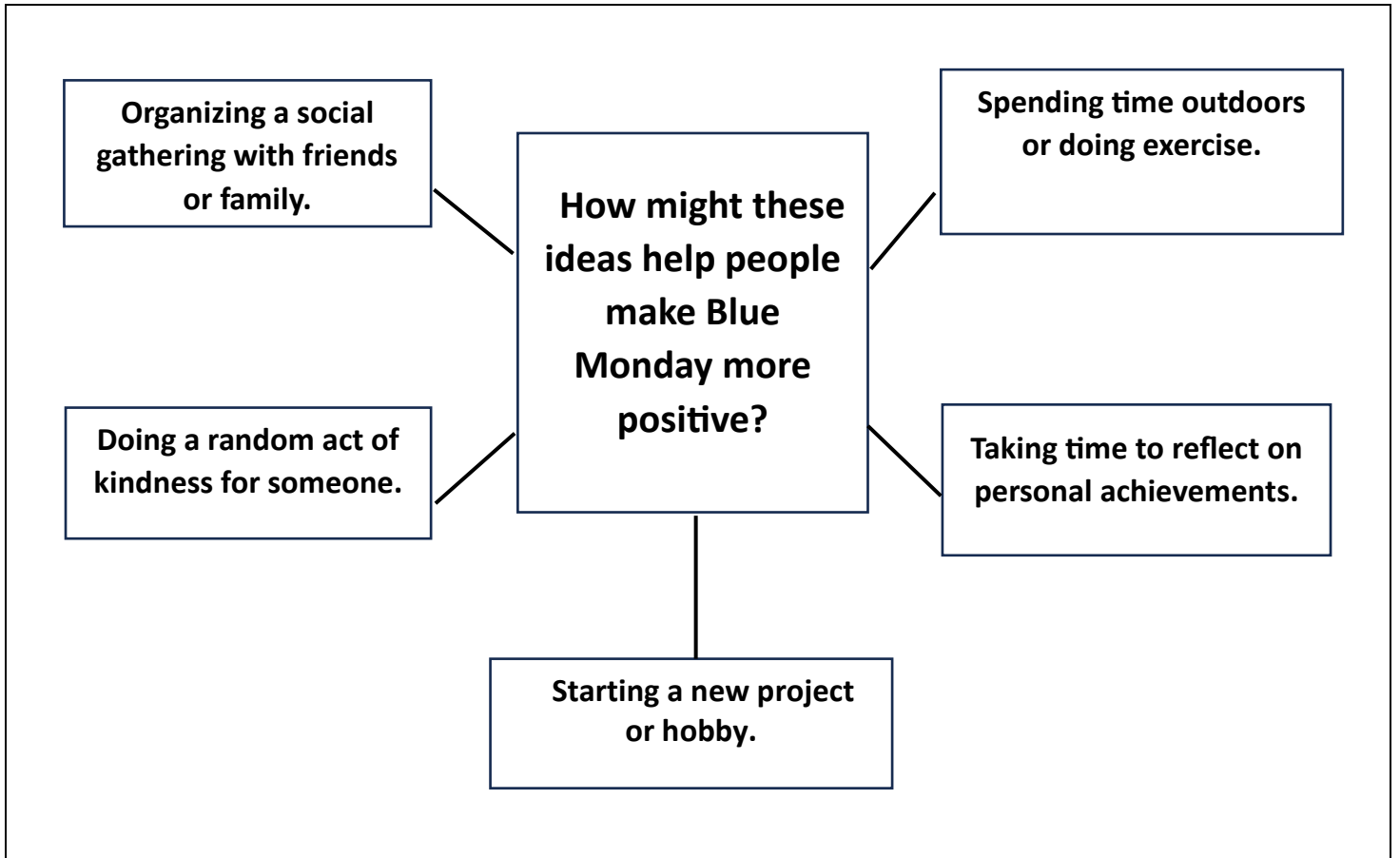
Interlocutor:

Thank you. Now you have about a minute (2 minutes for groups of three) to decide **which of these ideas is the most effective way to improve people's mood on Blue Monday**.

(Candidates discuss.)

Interlocutor:

Thank you. Can I have the booklet, please?



Follow-Up Discussion Prompts (Part 4)

- *Do you think Blue Monday is a real phenomenon, or is it just an idea created by the media?*
- *What kinds of activities are most effective for improving people's mood during difficult times?*
- *How important is it to help others when you're feeling low yourself?*
- *Do you think that focusing on mental health is more important now than in the past? Why?*

Advanced Language Resource Bank: Talking About New Year's Resolutions and Blue Monday
<p>General Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Year's Resolutions: goals, aspirations, commitments, intentions, objectives, ambitions, pledges.• Blue Monday: melancholy, demotivation, seasonal affective disorder, post-holiday blues, lethargy, burnout.• Goal Setting: productivity, perseverance, determination, self-discipline, accountability, incremental progress.• Mood and Mental Health: resilience, mindfulness, self-care, emotional well-being, coping mechanisms.
<p>Expressions for Opinions and Personal Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I firmly believe that...</i>• <i>In my experience...</i>• <i>It seems to me that...</i>• <i>One thing I've noticed is...</i>• <i>Personally, I've found that...</i>• <i>I'd argue that...</i>
<p>Talking About New Year's Resolutions</p> <p>Useful Phrases for Making Resolutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I'm determined to...</i>• <i>This year, I've resolved to...</i>• <i>My main priority is to...</i>• <i>I plan on focusing more on...</i>• <i>One goal I'm committing to is...</i> <p>Discussing Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>One of the biggest obstacles is...</i>• <i>It's difficult to stay motivated when...</i>• <i>The hardest part is maintaining consistency, especially when...</i>• <i>Many people struggle because they set unrealistic goals.</i> <p>Talking About Strategies to Keep Resolutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Breaking goals into smaller steps makes them more manageable.</i>• <i>Holding yourself accountable can significantly increase your chances of success.</i>• <i>Finding a support network or accountability partner can help you stay on track.</i>• <i>Tracking progress regularly can keep you motivated.</i>
<p>Talking About Blue Monday</p> <p>Describing Blue Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>It's often described as the most depressing day of the year.</i>• <i>It's a phenomenon linked to post-holiday fatigue and financial strain.</i>• <i>Many people experience a lack of motivation due to...</i>• <i>For some, it's a combination of gloomy weather and unmet expectations.</i> <p>Talking About Coping Mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>One effective way to combat Blue Monday is by...</i>• <i>Engaging in physical activity can significantly improve your mood.</i>• <i>Practicing mindfulness or meditation can help people stay grounded.</i>• <i>Social interaction plays a crucial role in lifting spirits.</i> <p>Discussing Blue Monday's Validity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Some argue that it's merely a marketing strategy to sell products.</i>• <i>While it might not be scientifically proven, it raises awareness about mental health.</i>• <i>I think it's a useful reminder to take care of ourselves emotionally.</i>

Advanced Idiomatic Expressions

- *Start the year off on the right foot.*
- *Turn over a new leaf.*
- *Bite off more than you can chew.*
- *A weight off your shoulders.*
- *Break the ice (with new habits or activities).*
- *Get into the swing of things.*
- *Keep your chin up.*

Language for Evaluating and Comparing Ideas

- *This approach might work well because...*
- *While I see the benefits of this, I think...*
- *Compared to the other idea, this is more...*
- *On the one hand, this offers... but on the other hand...*
- *What sets this apart is...*

Hypothesizing and Speculating

- *It could be argued that...*
- *Perhaps one reason for this is...*
- *This might explain why...*
- *It's possible that...*
- *If people were to focus more on..., they might...*

VISUAL MATERIAL (PART 2)

Candidate A



Candidate B



VISUAL MATERIAL (PART 3)

