**TOPICS FOR SPEAKING**

(10th grade)

1. If you could travel in time, how do you imagine Ukraine in 20 years? Still locked in the existential battle against Russia or trying to build a prosperous democratic country? Do you see it joining the EU and/or NATO? Where do you see Ukraine’s place and how do you envisage its role in the international community after the war?
2. Discuss the impact of technology on family relationships and friendships.

How has social media changed the way we form and maintain friendships?

Should smartphones be banned in schools? What are the pros and cons?

Does technology bring families closer together or push them apart?

1. Which musical instrument do you like listening to most? Have you ever learned to play a musical instrument yourself? Who encouraged you? Do you think children should learn to play musical instruments at school? How easy/difficult do you think it would be to learn to play an instrument without a teacher?
2. There is increasing social and economic inequality in the world today. The gap between rich and poor is widening. Do you think wealthy nations should be required to share their wealth among poorer nations? Should they provide such things as food and education? Or is it the responsibility of the governments of poorer nations to look after their citizens themselves?
3. News editors decide what to broadcast on television and what to print in newspapers. What factors do you think influence these decisions? Do we become used to bad news? Would it be better if more good news was reported?
4. Now that the Covid pandemic is over, does it mean that we all have to go back into offices and classrooms? Is the era of Zoom and other virtual platforms over?

What, in your view, are the main arguments in favor and against remote work/learning?

Reflect on whether working from home boosts or hinders

productivity.

Discuss how reduced in-person interaction impacts mental health of students/employees.

Does it make sense to adopt a hybrid model?

1. A famous person once said, “The only impossible journey is the one you never begin”.

Do you think it may have something to do with overcoming fear of failure?

How important is being able to take initiative (‘take the bull by the horns’, ‘take the plunge’ etc.)?

Can people who never take risks be successful in life?

1. Discuss the role of social media in today’s world. Is it generally good or bad? In what contexts and situations can it be a force for good? Has its role changed over the years? In what way can bad actors take advantage of social media? Are you an active user of Facebook/Twitter/Instagram/TikTok etc.?
2. What do most people in Ukraine do to keep fit? How important is it for people to do some regular physical exercise? What could be done to encourage people to take up exercise? Should individuals or governments be responsible for making people lead healthy lives?
3. We have become completely dependent on computers and the Internet. They are used in business, hospitals, crime detection, navigation and even military operations (as we are currently finding out). What things will be used in the future? Is this dependence on the internet a good thing or should we be more suspicious of its benefits? What are the downsides, if any?
4. Describe a game or sport you enjoy playing. Who do you play it with and how regularly do you play it? Why do you think children like playing games? Do you think competitive games are good or bad for children? Why is competition often seen as important in today’s society?
5. What role does a mobile phone play in your life? Would it and how would it complicate your life if you had to do without a mobile phone for a week? Do you believe we have become too dependent on our phones? Are there dangers involved in our use of mobile phones? (selfies?)
6. Are you someone who regularly follows news, whether on TV, newspapers or social media? Has Russia’s war against Ukraine been a factor in how often and how closely you follow news? What kind of news are you most interested in? How important do you think it is to keep up-to-date with what’s happening domestically and internationally?
7. It is often said we live in an increasingly globalized world. But what is globalization? How has it benefited countries and communities? Has it disadvantaged others? Does globalization threaten a country’s traditional culture? Do you think there is a way for globalization and a nation’s cultural identity to co-exist?
8. Life is often described as being about making choices. How true do you think it is? Describe an important choice you had to make in your life. Did it ultimately prove to be a good choice or did you regret making it? Give your reasons why in either case.
9. John Lennon is known to have said, "Life is what happens while you're busy making other plans."

What do you think the famous musician meant by this?

Do we sometimes miss out on important things while being preoccupied with trivial ones?

Do some people struggle to find joy in daily experiences? How important is it to be present in the moment?

1. As you probably know, Elon Musk would like to establish a colony on Mars.

What are the arguments for and against colonizing the Red Planet?

Where do you stand on the following: “Should we prioritize space exploration when we have unsolved problems on Earth?”

Reflect on the dangers and challenges involved in relocating a million people to Mars by 2050, as Musk projects.

1. How important are clothes and fashion to you? What kind of clothes do you dislike? How different are the clothes we wear today from those people wore 10 or 20 years ago? What do you think clothes we wear say about us?
2. Volunteering as a way of life and self-expression. Do you have any experience of volunteering your work, time etc. for a cause? Tell a story about a time in your life when you have volunteered. How did you feel when you were doing something that involved helping others? What role do volunteers play in Ukraine’s war effort?
3. Some people believe that a sense of competition in children should be encouraged. Others believe that children who are taught to cooperate rather than compete become more useful adults. What is your take on this issue? Which do you think – cooperation or competition – is encouraged more in Ukrainian schools?
4. Schoolchildren, as well as university students, have been increasingly using video-conferencing platforms for learning. Do you like or dislike distance learning? Which platform(s) (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet etc.) work(s) best for you? What gets lost when you study remotely? Conversely, what are the benefits?
5. It’s been almost three years since Russia waged war on Ukraine.

How have these three years affected the lives of Ukrainians?

Have many of your friends moved abroad?

What has this war demonstrated about Ukraine?

What has it revealed about Russia?

1. How do you relax? What is your idea of quality leisure time? What is your parents’ preferred way of letting their hair down? Do you think relaxation is important for effective work?
2. Discuss what types of music are popular with young Ukrainians today. What do you think influences a young person’s taste in music? How has technology affected what we listen to? How important is it for a country to have musical traditions? What role do national anthems and songs play? Can you think of examples?
3. In some countries young people are encouraged to take a year or two off after graduating high school in order to travel (or work) before going on to university.

Is it something you might consider doing? Do you think it might catch on in this country? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages for young people who decide to do this.