

TOEFL® EXAM ESSENTIALS

Test of English as a Foreign Language™

- Test-targeted lessons
 - Focused practice
 - Practical advice

The logo features the word "TOEFL" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A vertical grey bar is positioned to the left of the "T", and a horizontal grey bar is positioned below the "T", "O", and "E". A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the upper right of the "L".

TOEFL[®]

EXAM ESSENTIALS

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LearningExpress



New York

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Contents

Introduction		vii
Chapter 1	How to Use This Book to Get a Top Score	1
Chapter 2	Listening	23
Chapter 3	Structure	49
Chapter 4	Reading	85
Chapter 5	Writing	113
Appendix A	Test Details	139
Appendix B	Resources	149

Introduction

This essential guide to the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam is perfect for studying on the go and tackling the exact kinds of questions tested on your upcoming official exam. Information is presented in an easy-to-follow, straightforward manner so you can find what you need, learn the information, and move on—it's that simple.

Each chapter covers the essential facts and practice you need to get prepared for your exam, as well as tips on where to go to for more detailed practice and further information. Whether you need to review all parts of the TOEFL exam or just skip ahead to the sections where you need extra practice and review, *TOEFL Exam Essentials* has just what you need for focused, targeted practice.

- Chapter 1: About the TOEFL exam—signing up for the test, study schedules, how to prepare with this book
- Chapter 2: Listening skills—lesson and practice
- Chapter 3: Structure skills—lesson and practice
- Chapter 4: Reading comprehension skills—lesson and practice
- Chapter 5: Writing skills—lesson and practice

Good luck!

Chapter 1

How to Use This Book to Get a Top Score

If you are planning to take the TOEFL exam, you are not alone. Worldwide more than 700,000 people will likely take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) this year. Native speakers of 145 different languages—representing more than 220 countries and regions—take the TOEFL exam annually. And, over 4,500 colleges, universities, programs, and agencies in the United States and Canada will use the TOEFL exam to evaluate applicants who are not native speakers of English. This important test measures your ability to read, write, and understand English so you can succeed in a college classroom or professional program.

To prepare for the TOEFL exam, unlike other standardized tests, you can't just memorize a list of vocabulary words or math formulas and expect to do well on the exam. You need to understand conversations and other spoken English, know grammar rules, understand and process what you read, and be able to

express yourself effectively in writing. As you sharpen your English-language skills to prepare for the exam, this book will highlight what you need to know to get your best score.

If you have looked on the shelves of your local bookstore, you know the volume of test-preparation tools and guidebooks can be overwhelming. That's why this guide is designed to focus on the most important parts of studying for the TOEFL exam, without weighing you down. *TOEFL Exam Essentials* pulls together all the pieces of test preparation for you:

- what to expect on the test
- successful test-taking strategies
- how to make your own study plan
- a review of the content and skills you need to know

You can take this book with you wherever you go. Take it out while you wait for the bus, during a work break, or while you exercise at the gym. It fits in your pocket or purse so you can fit your study time into a busy schedule. By using this book, you are taking your first steps to earning a top score on the TOEFL exam. Good luck as you prepare for the exam and pursue the education you need for a successful future.

WHAT THE TOEFL EXAM IS ABOUT

The TOEFL exam has two formats: a computer-based test and a paper-and-pencil version. You can take the computer-based test (CBT) at test centers around the world throughout the year. In some areas, the CBT is not available and the paper-based TOEFL exam is offered instead. The paper test is offered six times a year at specific locations. Although the test designs for the

CBT and the paper-based test are different, both versions measure the same skills and use similar content for reading passages and recorded conversations.

The computer-based TOEFL exam has four components: listening, structure, reading, and writing.

- The **listening** section tests your ability to understand North American English. You will use headphones to listen to conversations and lectures and then answer multiple-choice questions about them. You will be asked to locate main ideas, supporting ideas, and understand inferences made in the conversations that you hear.
- The **structure** section measures your knowledge of grammar and usage in standard written English. You will read sentences and locate grammatical errors or complete sentences with an appropriate word or phrase.
- The **reading** portion of the exam will measure your ability to read and understand short, written passages. The passages will have a style and subject matter similar to that of college-level academic texts.
- The **writing** section will ask you to compose a short essay on a general topic selected by the computer from a large set of possible topics. It measures your ability to write in English and develop and organize ideas about an assigned subject.

You will have about four hours to complete the CBT. Before you begin the test, you will go through a tutorial about basic computer skills, including how to use a mouse, how to scroll, and how to use testing tools. Each test section also begins with a tutorial that

Computer-Based TOEFL Exam			
Section	Number of Questions	Time Limit	Computer Adaptive?
Tutorials	7 tutorials	No time limit	No
Listening	30–49	15–25 minutes to answer questions 40–60 minutes total (You will not be timed while you listen to recordings; only while you answer questions.)	Yes
Structure	20–25	15–20 minutes	Yes
Reading	44–55	70–90 minutes (This includes the time it takes you to read passages <i>and</i> answer questions.)	No
Writing	One topic	30 minutes	No

will demonstrate how to answer test questions in that part of the exam. These tutorials are not scored, and you can spend as much time on them as you need. You can also take these tutorials prior to the test for no charge at www.toefl.org or purchase a downloadable file. It is a good idea to practice your computer skills ahead of time and become familiar with how to answer test questions using a computer—this will be an advantage to you on exam day.

The paper-based TOEFL exam has three sections: listening comprehension, structure and written expression, and reading

What Is Computer-Adaptive Testing?

Some sections of the computer-based TOEFL exam are computer adaptive, which means the computer selects your questions based on your level of proficiency. Your first question will have an average level of difficulty. Your next question will either be easier or harder, depending on how you answered the first. The listening and structure parts of the exam are computer adaptive, but the reading and writing sections are not.

comprehension. Each section consists of multiple-choice questions with four possible answer choices for each question. Although the test format varies from the CBT, the skills measured are the same.

- **Listening comprehension** tests your ability to understand North American English, including use of idiom and vocabulary.
- **Structure and written expression** tests your ability to recognize grammatical errors in standard written English and complete sentences with an appropriate word or phrase.
- **Reading comprehension** asks you to read and answer questions about short passages like those used in college-level texts.

The **Test of Written English (TWE)**, a 30-minute writing test, is a required part of the paper-and-pencil TOEFL exam on

Paper-and-Pencil TOEFL		
Section	Number of Questions	Time Limit
Listening comprehension	50	30–40 minutes
Structure and written expression	40	25 minutes
Reading comprehension	50	55 minutes
Test of Written English (TWE)	One topic	30 minutes
Note: Number of questions and time limits may vary.		

most test dates. There is no separate fee for the TWE. You will write a short essay about an assigned general topic.

What about your test score? The TOEFL exam has no single passing score. The college, university, or agency to which you are applying decides the minimum test score that it accepts. To learn more about *how* the TOEFL exam is scored, see Appendix A.

MANAGE YOUR TIME

If your life is busy, you may wonder how you will find the time to prepare for the TOEFL exam. You can't make each day longer, but effective time management—how you organize and use your time—can help make the most of the time you have to get ready for the exam. Managing your time *during* the exam is also an important skill.

To manage your time before the exam, evaluate how you currently use your time. Follow these steps to better organize your time:

- **Review your current activities and obligations,** including recurring ones like classes, your work schedule, your exercise or sports schedule, or religious services.
- **Prioritize your activities.** Which are the most important to you? Are there any activities you can eliminate to make more time to prepare for the TOEFL exam?
- **Work out a weekly schedule.** Make a list of your major weekly events, including your TOEFL exam study goals for the week. (See more about creating a successful study plan later in this chapter.) List any major social, work, or school-related events (for example, a vocabulary test in

Register Right Away

Test centers fill up quickly, so begin the TOEFL exam registration process right away. Registration information is available online at www.toefl.org or in the TOEFL exam *Bulletin*, available at English language centers or at the international student center at the university to which you are applying. You can also request a *Bulletin* by writing to:

TOEFL/TSE Services
P.O. Box 6151
Princeton, NJ 08541-6151
609-771-7100

English class). Ideally, create this schedule for each week of your test preparation period.

- **Create a daily “to do” list.** Write down your activities, including your TOEFL exam study goals for the day. Make this list daily, before bed, or first thing in the morning. Carry it with you and cross out the items that you have accomplished.

Managing your time effectively while you are actually taking the TOEFL exam is a crucial skill. As outlined earlier in this chapter, each section of the TOEFL exam has a specific time limit. You are expected to complete each section within that given amount of time. Because you know how much time you have, you can pace yourself and budget the amount of time you would like to spend on each question.

If you are taking the computer-based TOEFL exam, an onscreen clock display will keep track of the current question number, the total number of questions, and the time you have left to answer them. For example, if you are halfway through a section with 30 questions, you may see a display that shows question 15 of 30 and 00:09 minutes remaining. The display continuously changes as you go through the section.

To help you manage your time during the exam, review these guidelines:

- **Sharpen your computer skills** if you are taking the computer-based exam. Even if you use a computer every day, taking a test on a computer may be unfamiliar to you. Go to the TOEFL exam website (www.toefl.org) for free online tutorials before exam time.

- **Take a practice test and time yourself.** For a 20-question practice test with a time limit of 40 minutes, give yourself about two minutes for each practice question. This will help you learn to pace yourself.
- **Read the directions before you begin each section.** The total number of questions and the time allotment are listed at the start of each section—carefully review it, even if you think you already know the information. The number of questions may vary because the test developers sometimes add questions for research purposes. They do this to determine whether a new question for a future test is sufficiently clear. These questions are not scored and you will not know which ones they are.
- **Eliminate incorrect answer choices.** Most of the questions used in the TOEFL exam are multiple-choice. For each question, you will have a set of four possible answers. Read the questions carefully and eliminate the answer choices you know are incorrect. This will make it easier for you to find the correct answer.
- **Do not spend too much time on any one question.** If you do not know the answer, eliminate as many answer choices as possible and then choose your best answer. Do not make a random guess unless absolutely necessary for you to move on to the next question. On the computer-based exam, the listening and structure portions of the test (the computer-adaptive parts of the test), do not allow you to skip questions or return to them later. Once you click the “Confirm Answer”

button on your computer screen, you cannot change your answer. Random guessing, however, can reduce your score. Fortunately, in the reading section, you can make note of a difficult question and go back to it after you have completed the rest of the questions. Likewise, on the paper-and-pencil version of the test, you can answer questions in the order that you wish.

- **Try to finish each section if you are running out of time.** This does not mean you should make random guesses—again, doing so can significantly lower your score on the CBT. However, evidence shows that most test takers will score higher if they answer all the questions than if they do not try to complete the test.

Here are some other tips for answering multiple-choice questions:

- **Watch for tricky wording.** Some questions use wording such as “All of the following are true *except*” or “Which of the following is *not* a likely outcome?” You will find answer choices that are accurate, but do not fit the question.
- **Look out for absolutes.** Be careful answering questions that use words such as *always*, *never*, *none*, or *all*. You may find answer choices that sound correct but are not true in every circumstance.
- **Beware of silly answer choices.** Test makers often include silly or easily confused answer choices. When you are under pressure, these choices can become

appealing if you are not reading closely. Eliminate these options first.

CREATE A STUDY PLAN

Have you ever crammed for a big test, trying to learn everything at the last minute? If you have, you know that you can't learn all the material for a major exam in one study session. And if you stayed up all night cramming, you probably found out that you were too tired to study effectively. A study plan creates a framework for you to follow as you prepare for the TOEFL exam. By planning ahead, you can break down your studying into smaller blocks of time that are easier to manage, less intimidating, and more effective.

To implement a study plan, first consider your study environment. You will need a place to study that has a minimum of distractions, a location where you can concentrate and spread out your materials. Your study environment should also be well lit and

Should You Guess?

In most cases, the answer is yes—if you can eliminate at least one answer. On the computer-based TOEFL exam, random guessing will lower your score. Only guess if you can cross out at least one answer. On the paper-based TOEFL exam, however, your score is based on the number of questions you answer correctly. Because there is no penalty for wrong answers, you should guess even if you can't eliminate one or more answer choices.

What You Need Before You Start

To make your TOEFL exam study time more effective, get the right study tools. Here are some suggestions:

- a good English-language dictionary, such as *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition*
- paper or legal pads
- pencils or pens
- highlighter pens in different colors
- index or note cards
- notebooks and folders
- calendar or Personal Digital Assistant, such as a Palm Pilot™

comfortable for you. A corner of your bedroom, a study in your home, the local library, or your school are all possibilities. Once you have a place to work, collect the study tools you will need.

With study tools in hand and a place to study, it's time to collect the information you need to make decisions about what to study and how much time to allocate to each area of study.

Follow these five steps to create an effective study plan:

1. **Get the information you need.** Find out the details about the TOEFL exam, including:
 - When will it be held?
 - Where is the test center nearest you?
 - How do you register?
 - What do you need to register?
 - How much does it cost?

What do you need to bring with you on exam day?

What exactly will be tested on the exam?

Some of this information is covered in this chapter and in Appendix A at the back of the book. For more information, you may need to contact your nearby test center or university or go to www.toefl.org.

- 2. Find out what you already know and what you need to learn.** For your study plan to be useful, you need to decide which subject areas require the most of your attention. Take a practice TOEFL exam. Your score will show both your strengths and the areas in which you need improvement.
- 3. Set a time frame.** Now that you know where to focus your study, you can decide how much time you can give to each subject area. First write down a list of specific study goals. Be realistic—try to make goals that you can accomplish. Now use a calendar to set deadlines for these goals. Break up your studying into small time blocks so you can reach your goal one step at a time. Avoid making goals that are too big and too general—for example, “Learn everything by May 1.” Instead, set dates to learn material throughout March and April and your study plan will *enable* you to learn everything by May 1. For example, if you have three months for test preparation and need to focus on building your reading comprehension skills, you might create a schedule like the one on the next page.

In this study plan, the first five weeks focus solely on reading comprehension. However, the plan also allows for time to study other test materials and complete an

Week 1	Review basic reading comprehension strategies. Start vocabulary list.
Week 2	Practice vocabulary in context questions and specific detail questions.
Week 3	Practice inference questions.
Week 4	Practice finding references.
Week 5	Take reading comprehension practice test.
Week 6	Review grammar and usage rules. Start reading novel.
Week 7	Continue reviewing grammar and usage rules.
Week 8	Take structure practice test. Finish novel.
Week 9	Review writing strategies. Write a practice essay.
Week 10	Write two more practice essays.
Week 11	Start overall review.
Week 12	Continue overall review until test day.
Every day:	Read several articles in an English-language newspaper.
Every week:	Watch or listen to a TV show, news program, or movie in English to build listening skills.

overall review before the exam day. It sets specific weekly goals as well as smaller, daily goals.

- 4. Stick to your plan.** Write it down and post it where you can see it. Unexpected events—such as coming down with the flu or a problem at work—may interrupt your plans. Don't waste time worrying—just pick up

where you left off. Try to put in extra time during the next few weeks to catch up. You may need to adjust your schedule to make deadlines more realistic, but be sure to give yourself enough time to finish everything before the exam.

5. **Modify your plan.** Most likely, you will need to adjust your study plan as you proceed. Review your progress every week. Did you reach your goals? If not, where did you fall short and why? The more you assess what is working in your plan and what is not working, the more it will address your actual study needs.

It may go without saying, but the key element to doing well on the TOEFL exam is mastering the material covered on the test. Proficiency in English-language skills is crucial for success. How can you best improve your listening, grammar, reading, and writing skills? Knowing *how* to study can be as important as how much time you spend studying. Effective study strategies are *active* rather than *passive*, meaning that you *do* something, such as the following:

- **Ask questions** as you study, read, or listen to a conversation in English.
 - What is the main idea being expressed?
 - What is the author or speaker trying to prove?
 - What is fact and what is opinion?
- **Locate what is important.** As you read, use a highlighter or pencil to underline key information, such as:
 - terms that are defined in the text
 - main ideas

- words or grammar rules you want to remember
 - new ideas
 - vocabulary words or expressions you need to look up
- **Make connections.** If you can make connections between ideas, you will better remember the material. For example, if Spanish is your native language, you might connect the word *dormir* (“to sleep” in Spanish) with *dormitory* (the English word for a room or building where students sleep).
- **Make notes.** Note taking can help you remember material, even if you never read your notes again. That’s because it’s a muscle activity, and using your muscles helps you remember. While reading or listening, make note of main ideas, supporting details, authorities, opinions and facts, and key terms.

BEAT TEST STRESS

Your palms sweat, your breathing quickens, and your heart races. Most test takers recognize these common symptoms—the signs of stress. However, by following a study plan and taking concrete actions to reduce the stress in your life, you can boost your confidence on exam day and lower your test stress.

Keep your general stress levels low. Take note of the factors in your life that cause you stress, such as family, work, or school problems. Try to deal with those stresses that interfere with studying and preparing for the exam. For example, if you can’t study at home because it is loud or chaotic, make plans to find a quieter, calmer location like a friend’s house or the library. Taking

specific actions can help you limit stress. The result will be that you will feel more relaxed when you sit down to take the exam. Here are seven ways to better handle stress.

1. **Get plenty of sleep.** Most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep a night. Being deprived of sleep will make you less able to cope with stress, less able to concentrate, and less likely to perform well. If you have a hard time falling asleep, try these tips:
 - Keep a regular schedule. Go to sleep and get up at the same time every day.
 - Take a relaxing bath or read a book.
 - Stay away from caffeine after lunchtime (coffee, tea, cola, and chocolate may contain caffeine).
 - Exercise earlier in the day (at least two to four hours before bedtime). A tired body will need more sleep (but a workout just before bed will keep you awake).
2. **Eat well and exercise.** Good nutrition and regular exercise are important for your complete health. Stay away from high-sugar, high-calorie, low-nutrition snacks and meals. Instead of donuts, potato chips, or cookies, for example, try low-fat yogurt, fresh-squeezed fruit juice, or carrot sticks. Also, try to fit some exercise into your busy schedule—even a brisk walk can improve your mood, reduce stress, and boost your energy level.
3. **Study.** Review and improve your skills ahead of time and you will feel calm and confident when you walk into the testing room. If you fall behind in your study plan, do not worry—just try to get back on schedule.

4. **Be prepared.** New situations can make people nervous. Find out where the TOEFL exam test center is and plan how you will get there. Organize the materials you will need for the test the night before. Use this book to learn about the format of the exam and what types of questions to expect. If you prepare well, the TOEFL exam will not be new to you.
5. **Create realistic goals.** Break up big goals into smaller, easier-to-manage tasks. Instead of telling yourself what you “should” do, do the best you can. Keep things in perspective—the TOEFL exam is an important test, but don’t lose sight of the other important parts of your life.
6. **Think positively.** Imagine yourself doing well—picture yourself at the exam, calmly answering each question. If you *believe* you can do it, you will be more likely to achieve your goals.
7. **Reward yourself.** Give yourself rewards throughout your preparation for the TOEFL exam. This can make studying less burdensome. Set up realistic rewards for following your study plan and, eventually, for your well-earned test score.

COUNTDOWN TO EXAM DAY

After months of preparation, your hard work will soon pay off. The test is just a week away. How can you make the most of your final days? Here’s a countdown plan that will help you reach your goal and reduce unnecessary stress.

The week before

- Get detailed directions to the test center. Take a practice drive or practice commute so you know how long it takes to get there.
- Do an overall review of your material.
- Get plenty of sleep every night.
- Picture yourself doing well on the test.

The day before

- Go to bed early.
- Get light exercise. Avoid heavy workouts—you do not want to be physically exhausted on exam day.
- Pack everything you need: pencils/pens, admission materials, identification, mints, or snacks for break time.
- Set your alarm and ask a family member or friend to make sure you are up on time.

Exam day

- Get up early.
- Eat a light, healthy breakfast. (Don't drastically change your diet on exam day. For example, if you drink coffee regularly, don't skip it because you may get a headache. But don't overdo it, either.)
- Dress comfortably in layers so you can adjust to a room that is too hot or too cool.
- Arrive at the test center early.
- Think positively. Remember, you are prepared.

USE THIS BOOK WITH OTHER TEST-PREPARATION MATERIAL

TOEFL Exam Essentials gives you key information about the TOEFL exam in a quick, easy style and format. Unlike other test-prep books that use a question-and-answer format, *TOEFL Exam Essentials* offers strategies for studying and test taking that can make the difference for you in getting a top score on this important exam. When used in combination with other test-preparation materials, *TOEFL Exam Essentials* is a powerful tool that will help you succeed.

If you are committed to doing well on the TOEFL exam, you should also invest the time and money into purchasing or using other test-preparation materials that contain practice tests. As you prepare for the exam, consider taking several practice tests. Use the study plan described earlier in this chapter to schedule your practice test.

You will find many test-preparation books at your bookstore, library, or for purchase online. See *Learning Express's TOEFL Exam Success* (LearningExpress, 2002) for detailed study and learning strategies, lessons, and practice questions targeted to the kinds of questions asked in each section of the official exam.

The Internet also contains resources for the TOEFL exam. Some websites offer online practice tests and scoring, with an analysis of your results. If you register for the computer-based TOEFL exam, taking a practice test on a computer will be an advantage to you. You will become more familiar with the experience of taking a standardized test on a computer so that when you take the official exam, it won't be new to you. See Appendix B in the back of the book for more print and online resources.

A primary resource for TOEFL exam preparation is the official TOEFL exam website at www.toefl.org. Since July 2003, the Educational Testing Service (ETS)—the service that administers the TOEFL exam—has made test-preparation material available at no charge when you register for the test. You can access the material on the TOEFL exam website or request that it be mailed to you. The TOEFL exam website also offers online registration, the most current information about the test, and the locations of test centers around the world. Here are some other helpful resources found at www.toefl.org:

- Frequently asked questions about the computer-based test: www.toefl.org/toeflcbt/cbtfaq.html
- Free online computer tutorial (how to scroll, how to use mouse): www.toefl.org/testprep/cbtutprq.html
- Practice questions (computer-based): www.toefl.org/testprep/cbtutprq.html
- Complete list of TOEFL exam writing topics: www.toefl.org/testprep/preindx.html#wrtgtopics
- Frequently asked questions about the paper-based test: www.toefl.org/toeflsup/suppfaq.html
- Practice questions (paper-based): www.toefl.org/onsitetst/itpprac.html

Now that you have started getting ready for the exam, let *TOEFL Exam Essentials* streamline the test-preparation process for you. The next chapters describe each section of the TOEFL exam, emphasizing the specific language skills and test-taking strategies that will help you do your best.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Register for the test soon.
- Organize your current calendar so you can make time to prepare for the TOEFL exam.
- Design a study plan and modify it as you go to make it more useful.
- Stick to your study plan as much as possible.
- Time yourself answering practice questions so you can pace yourself during the exam.
- Take a standardized practice test on a computer if you are taking the computer TOEFL exam.
- Sharpen your computer skills if you are taking the computer TOEFL exam.
- Study in an active manner: ask questions, highlight or underline, make notes.
- Take steps to reduce your general stress level.
- Follow strategies to cut down on your test stress.
Adequate test preparation, regular sleep, and good health habits will increase your confidence and energy.
- Be prepared: know how to get to the test center and what materials and documents you will need on test day.
- Think positively—you are ready for your exam!

Chapter 2

Listening

You may think of listening as a passive activity, but becoming a good listener means learning to listen *actively*—to ask questions, analyze, and draw conclusions about what you hear. Because lectures and class discussions are the primary teaching methods at universities, good listening skills are crucial for your success at college.

The listening section of the TOEFL exam measures your ability to understand North American English. It uses conversational language including idiomatic expressions, rather than formal, written English. The section has 30–50 questions and is 40–60 minutes in length. On the exam, you will hear three types of recordings:

Dialogues: a brief conversation between two people. In some, each person speaks only once. In others, one or both

people speak more than once. Each dialogue is followed by one question.

Short conversations and class discussions: a seven- or eight-line conversation between two or more people about a specific topic, followed by several questions.

Mini-lectures: a one- or two-minute talk by a single speaker, followed by several questions.

Below is a breakdown of each recording type for the computer- and paper-based TOEFL exams:

Types of recordings	Computer Test	Paper-and-Pencil
Dialogues	11–17 dialogues, with one question each	30 dialogues, with one question each
Short Conversations	2–3 conversations, with 2–3 questions each	2 conversations, with 7–8 questions total
Mini-lectures/ Academic Discussions	4–6 mini-lectures, with 3–6 questions each	3 mini-lectures with 12–13 questions total

COMPUTER TEST VS. PAPER TEST

The listening section on the computer-based test (CBT) differs from that on the old, paper-based test. Although you will listen to the same kinds of conversations and talks, you will answer fewer questions about each on the CBT. The listening section of the CBT is also computer adaptive, meaning that the computer selects questions based on your ability level. Your first question

will be of average difficulty. If you answer it correctly, your next question will be harder. If you answer incorrectly, your next question will be easier. Here are some other key differences between the two tests:

Computer Test: Listening	Paper-and-Pencil: Listening Comprehension
30–50 questions	50 questions
Computer adaptive: questions are based on your ability.	Test takers answer the same questions.
You wear a headset with adjustable volume.	Test administrator plays recordings.
Includes visuals (pictures and other graphics).	Does not include visuals.
You hear and see the questions on the computer screen.	You hear the questions only.
You control the pace by choosing when to begin the next recording.	You follow the same pace as other test takers.
Questions may have two answers.	Questions have only one answer.
Most questions are multiple choice, but some follow special directions.	All questions are multiple choice.
Once you submit an answer, you cannot change it.	You can return to previous questions and change your answers.

LEARNING HOW TO LISTEN

How can you become a more active listener? Practicing the following listening techniques will improve your ability to understand spoken English:

- **Focus on the speaker.** Do not be distracted by your surroundings or by daydreaming.
- **Use non-verbal responses,** like nodding your head or leaning toward the speaker as you listen. Even if you are listening to a pre-recorded audiotape for the TOEFL exam, your physical responses will engage you in the act of listening and help you concentrate on the information.
- **Concentrate on the message.** If you plan to take the computer TOEFL exam, you will see pictures of people on your computer screen before each recording. These visuals will orient you to the setting and participants of the conversation, but they may also distract you. Focus on the conversation, not the picture. If you are taking the paper-based TOEFL, find a place in the room—a blank chalkboard or wall—to direct your attention. Do not be distracted by the reader's appearance as you listen to him or her. You may also try closing your eyes as you listen to the reading of each passage.

SPECIAL TIPS FOR THE COMPUTER TEST

Developers of the computer test use the computer's multimedia ability to present different types of questions and to include

images along with audio recordings. Other special features of the computer test include listening to the recordings on your own headset and controlling your pace throughout the section. To prepare for the computer-based test, try these test-taking strategies:

1. **Adjust the volume on your headset** before you begin the listening section. Make sure that you can hear the recordings clearly. You will not be allowed to adjust the volume once the testing begins.
2. **Don't be distracted by the computer images of people.** Before most dialogues, your computer screen will show a picture of the people in the conversation you are listening to. These images are meant to set the scene. However, if you find them distracting, look at them briefly, then close your eyes when you listen to the recording.
3. **Pay close attention to other visuals.** Images of maps, tables or charts, graphs, drawings, or objects may accompany longer talks and conversations. These visuals contain information from the talk—information that you need to answer the questions.
4. **Read the questions on your computer screen** as you listen to them. This can help you better understand them.
5. **Pace yourself.** Because you control how fast or slow you go through the test, make sure to keep track of time. Give yourself enough time to hear each recording and answer every question.

Skill Builders

Listening well takes practice. As you prepare for the listening section of the TOEFL exam, incorporate some of these skill-building exercises into your study plan:

- **Go to places where English is spoken.** The more you listen to spoken English, the more you will understand. Visit a park or museum where you will hear English around you, go to the movies in English, or converse with family and friends in English.
- **Build your concentration.** Tune in to a radio program or listen to a book on tape every day. Start with a five-minute session and add five minutes each day. Your ability to focus will grow.
- **Summarize information.** Listen to a radio or TV show about a serious topic. Summarize the show's message in your mind or on paper. What is the main idea presented in the show? What are the supporting details?
- **Ask questions.** When you talk with others, think about whether you really understand what they are saying. If you don't, speak up and ask for clarification.
- **Take note of verbal clues.** As you listen to different people, pick out the clues that let you know when they are changing subjects or making a point that is important to them.
- **Listen to different speaking styles.** Consider the speaking styles of three different people (for example, your teachers, people you overhear at a café, or political speakers on cable news programs). What helps you understand what each has to say? What makes it difficult?

LISTENING TO LECTURES

Lectures, the primary teaching method in colleges today, can be challenging to listeners. They demand your sustained attention and often, you can't interrupt a lecturer to ask a question or clarify a point. Lectures, however, are often much more organized than everyday conversation or a class discussion. Once you know what organizational and verbal clues to listen for, you will better understand what you hear.

Main ideas—Most speakers organize their lectures around a main idea or point, and often they will announce their main idea at the beginning of the lecture. These phrases and statements signal the introduction of a topic:

“Now I'd like to talk about . . .”

“Let's turn our attention to . . .”

“Moving on to the next subject . . .”

Supporting details—A lecturer will present supporting details in the form of examples or details that develop their main idea. Keep attuned to these common words and phrases that often introduce supporting facts or details:

for example for instance in particular

in addition furthermore some

others specifically such as

Lists—Lecturers often use lists to organize their subject matter and introduce important points. Numbers can be a verbal clue that a speaker is using a list:

The three different kinds of burns are . . .

There are four reasons why this happened.

Recent environmental laws have affected our area in several ways.

Key words and concepts—Speakers may introduce key terms or ideas as a way of organizing their thoughts. Listen for unfamiliar terms followed by a definition of what they mean. These phrases signal that a speaker is using a key word or concept:

“This important theme/idea/concept . . .”

“Let me define that for you.”

“This idea is central to X’s argument . . .”

QUESTION TYPES IN THE LISTENING SECTION

The questions in the listening segment of the TOEFL exam will test your ability to locate main ideas, supporting facts and details, and inferences in the conversations and talks you hear.

In Class: Listening to Group Discussions

When you listen to a class discussion, you are receiving information from not one, but several people. Unlike lectures, class conversations are not highly structured. Participants may interrupt each other or make a point that seems off track. Some participants offer comments that are more valuable than others. How do you make sense of it all? Try this: As you listen to a group discussion, track each person’s arguments and positions. Summarize on paper or in your mind what each speaker is saying. Then work out what the main idea is. The main idea may be a combination of everyone’s viewpoint, so it could be a two-step process.

- 1. Locate the main idea.** The main idea of a conversation, class discussion, or lecture is different from its main topic. The topic is the *subject*—what a conversation or lecture is about. The main idea is what the speaker wants to say or express *about* the subject. The main idea is a *general* statement that brings together all of the ideas in a conversation or talk.

Main topic: what the conversation or lecture is about

Main idea: what the speaker wants to express about his or her topic

Here's an example. Listen to an instructor begin a lecture:

Today we're going to talk about the body's immune system. As you may know, the immune system is what defends the body from infections. It's really a remarkable system—in the body, millions and millions of cells, organized into sets, or smaller units called subsets, make a complex communications network that pass information back and forth, almost like bees swarming around a hive. The result is a sensitive system of checks and balances that produce a prompt, appropriate, and effective immune response.

Question: What is the instructor's main point?

- a. The immune system has its own system of checks and balances.
- b. The immune system protects the body.
- c. The immune system is a remarkable and complex communications network.

- d. When the immune system breaks down, it can be devastating.

Choice **c** is correct—it gives the main idea or point that the instructor is trying to express. It's a general statement that holds together all of the information in the passage. Choice **a** is too specific to be the main idea. Choice **b** is too general to be the main idea. Choice **d** may be true, but the passage does not give this information.

- 2. **Find the supporting details.** Supporting details are facts or *specific* examples that give proof of a speaker's main idea. The next question asks you to find a supporting detail from the mini-lecture about the immune system.

Supporting detail: a specific fact or example that supports the main idea

- Question:** The body's immune system consists of
- a. swarming bees
 - b. billions of cells
 - c. a complex organization
 - d. a communication network

The correct answer is **b**. You can easily eliminate choice **a**—it's a silly answer choice used to distract you. Choices **c** and **d** are too general to be supporting details.

3. **Make inferences.** Often people do not say what they mean in explicit terms. In these cases, you need draw a logical conclusion based on details or from what is *suggested* in a conversation. In the listening test, some questions ask you to make inferences based on a speaker's *tone*, or attitude about his or her subject.

Tone: a speaker's mood or attitude expressed in speech

Man 1: How about you help me fix my car today?

Man 2: Sure, Sam. Right after I go to work, go to the game, and study!

Question: What does Man 2's reply suggest?

- a. He plans on helping Sam fix his car.
- b. He doesn't have time to help Sam today.
- c. He will help Sam, if Sam does his homework for him.
- d. He is promising to help.

Choice **b** is correct. In speech, people often use tone rather than words to convey meaning. A word like "sure" can have dozens of meanings depending on the speaker's tone. During the exam, listen to *how* someone speaks. Consider the speaker's attitude or mood: is he or she expressing joy, anger, disbelief, or another emotion?

Inference questions may also ask you to draw a conclusion based on what a speaker *implies* or *assumes*. Here is an example:

Woman: Frank, how do I get to Times Square?

Frank: Ask Sarah. She's a native New Yorker.

Question: What is Frank assuming about Sarah?

- a. She always carries a map of New York City.
- b. She doesn't know how to get to Times Square.
- c. She will know how to get to Times Square because she grew up in New York.
- d. Frank doesn't know how to get to Times Square.

Choice **c** is correct. Choice **a** may be true, but it is not what Frank is implying. Choice **d** may be true, but it doesn't answer the question.

The last type of inference question asks you to make a logical conclusion about what the speaker will do in the future based on the conversation:

Woman: I forgot my textbook. Professor Jacob said we could look at our books during the test.

Man: I have a copy that I'm not using.

Question: What will the woman probably do?

- a. Borrow the man's textbook for the test.
- b. Go home so she can get her book.
- c. Ask the professor if she can take the test another day.
- d. Call home and see if her roommate will bring it to her.

Choice **a** is correct. The man is offering his book to the woman even though he is not saying it explicitly. You can make this conclusion based on what he is *suggesting*.

OTHER QUESTION TYPES ON THE COMPUTER TEST

Most of the questions on the computer-based test are traditional multiple choice, but some are types that can only be used on a computer. If you are taking the computer-based TOEFL exam, become familiar with these question types:

- **Questions with more than one answer.** You will select two of four possible answer choices. Here is an example:

Acid rain looks, feels, even tastes like clean rainwater, but it actually contains high levels of pollutants. Although natural sources like gases from forest fires can be part of the problem, the burning of fossil fuels, such as car exhaust and smoke from factories, is the main cause of acid rain. This how it works: pollutants mix in the atmosphere to form fine particles that can be carried long distances by wind. Eventually, they return to the ground in the form of rain or other precipitation. Acid rain has caused widespread damage in eastern North America, Europe, Japan, China, and Southeast Asia.

Question: Based on the lecture, which of the following can cause acid rain?

[Click on two answers.]

- a. contaminated drinking water
- b. natural sources
- c. man-made pollutants
- d. rain

Answer: b and c.

- **Questions that use visual information.** You will select an image or part of an image for your answer.

Question: Choose the map that best represents the areas negatively affected by acid rain. [Click on a map.]

Answer: You would choose a map that highlights eastern North America, Europe, Japan, China, and Southeast Asia.

- **Sequence questions.** You will put information or events into order so that they form a process.

Question: Summarize what happens to acid-rain pollutants by placing the stages in the proper order. [Click on a word. Then click on the space below where it belongs. Use each word only once.]

form fine particles carried by wind mix in atmosphere
return to ground in rain

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Answer: 1. mix in atmosphere; 2. form fine particles; 3. carried by wind; 4. return to ground in rain.

- **Matching questions.** You will match up or pair images, words, or phrases.

Question: An instructor describes the formation and effects of acid rain. Match each term with its definition.

[Click on a sentence. Then click on the space where it belongs. Use each sentence only once.]

precipitation fossil fuel pollutant

something that contaminates the environment

condensed vapor that falls to earth as a deposit like rain or snow

a fuel formed in the earth from plant or animal remains

Answer:

precipitation	fossil fuel	pollutant
<i>condensed vapor that falls to earth as a deposit like rain or snow</i>	<i>a fuel formed in the earth from plant or animal remains</i>	<i>something that contaminates the environment</i>

WHAT'S UP WITH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

You probably won't see the greeting "What's up?" in the reading portion of the TOEFL exam, but you might hear it—or another idiom—on the listening test. Idioms are words or phrases used in a particular region. Idiomatic expressions often have unusual grammatical structures or have a meaning that does not make sense when you add up the meanings of each word. Here's an example of a test question that will ask you to identify the meaning of an idiomatic expression:

Woman: The astronomy midterm is tomorrow!

Man: I know. I'm not ready. It's going to be an all-nighter!

Question: What does the man mean?

- a. He's going out past midnight.
- b. He thinks the midterm is at night.
- c. He's going to stay up late studying.
- d. He's not going to study—it's too late.

The correct answer is **c**. If you don't know an idiomatic expression, think about what makes sense in the situation. You can eliminate choices **a**, **b**, and **d** because they are not what is suggested in the context of the conversation.

Keep Your Ears Open for Idioms

"Keep your ears open" means to stay attuned—so keep your ears open for idiomatic expressions while you are listening to everyday conversations. Here is a sample of some idioms used in North America:

all of a sudden: suddenly

All of a sudden, the dog ran into the road.

boil down: summarize; amount

He *boiled down* the report to a page and a half.

The report *boiled down* to a plea for more funding.

catch up: to complete something belatedly

I need to *catch up* on my sleep.

drop off: deposit or deliver

She *dropped off* the package at his house.

find out: discover, learn

I don't know the answer, but I'll *find out* for you.

get down: give one's attention to; depress

Let's *get down* to business.

The rain was *getting* her *down*.

have on: wear

The man *has on* a new sweater.

keep + -ing verb: continue without interruption

She *kept talking* throughout class despite the teacher's warnings.

jump in: begin or enter eagerly

The woman didn't wait for instructions, she just *jumped* right *in*.

make up your mind: settle, decide

I *made up my mind* to take the earlier train.

put off: to hold back to a later time

You will have to *put off* buying that dress until you have more money.

show up: arrive, appear

He always late—he would *show up* late to his own funeral!

sleep on it: delay making a decision until the next day

After considering the plan, the council decided to *sleep on it* and cast a vote the next day.

take place: happen, occur

U.S. presidential elections *take place* every four years.

used to + verb: something accomplished in the past, but not in the present

She *used to work* as an investment banker, but now she's a teacher.

QUICK QUIZ

Ask someone who speaks fluent English to read the following passages, questions, and answer choices into a tape recorder. Your reader should speak at a normal, conversational pace. If you can't find someone to help you, read aloud to yourself and answer the questions that follow. The answers can be found on page 48.

Woman 1: Are going to the party tonight?

Woman 2: I don't think so. It's been a long day. I'm beat!

1. Why isn't Woman 2 going to the party?
 - a. She doesn't like parties.
 - b. She's too busy to go.
 - c. She's too tired to go.
 - d. She'd rather stay home and beat eggs.

Man: I promised Dante that I'd lend him my car, but I forgot that I need it today to get to work.

Woman: I have his cell phone number.

2. What will the man probably do?
 - a. call his mother
 - b. call Dante on his cell phone
 - c. use the cell phone to call his boss at work
 - d. skip work today

Woman: I didn't like that novel.

Man: Neither did I.

3. What does the man mean?
 - a. He didn't like the book either.
 - b. He doesn't like reading novels.

- c. He did like the book.
- d. He doesn't know what to do.

Man: Would you mind if I turned off the radio?

Woman: Well, I'm in the middle of listening to the game.
It's almost over.

4. What is the woman implying?
- a. The man should listen to the game too.
 - b. The man doesn't like sports.
 - c. She'll turn off the radio right away.
 - d. She'll turn off the radio when the game is finished.

Man: So, how'd you do in your acting class?

Woman: Let's just say that I won't be winning any Academy Awards.

5. What does the woman mean?
- a. She's a terrific actress.
 - b. She thinks she didn't do very well in acting class.
 - c. She didn't go to class.
 - d. She doesn't have time to watch the Academy Awards ceremony on TV.

Woman: Hey, why aren't you at the physics lab?

Man: I don't have lab on Tuesdays.

Woman: Today's *not* Tuesday—it's Wednesday! Really, I think you would forget your head if it weren't attached to your shoulders.

Man: Oh no!

Woman: You can just make it if you take my car.

Man: Thanks, I'll be careful with it!

6. What does the woman mean by “you would forget your head if it weren’t attached to your shoulders”?
 - a. The man is very forgetful.
 - b. The man forgot where the physics lab was.
 - c. The man has had neck surgery.
 - d. The man usually doesn’t forget things.
7. What will the man probably do?
 - a. skip lab and go to lunch with the woman
 - b. run as fast as he can to the lab
 - c. call his professor and explain the problem
 - d. borrow the woman’s car and drive to the lab

Questions 8 through 11 are based on the following class discussion:

Professor: By now you have read the chapter about the challenges faced by Native Americans after the first Europeans settled in North America. What were your reactions? Yes, Malinda?

Malinda: I was really surprised that the biggest threat to the Native Americans was disease. I couldn’t believe how much damage smallpox and measles caused.

Jose: Yeah, it was really devastating. The native population just didn’t have the immunity to those diseases. I read in the chapter that smallpox and measles killed entire Native American communities before even one European got sick!

Barbara: Disease wasn’t the only problem. There was genocide. And European settlement also destroyed their traditional way of life.

Malinda: I think it's a tragedy how many people were killed and how much of Native American culture was lost after Europeans arrived.

Jose: I agree that it was a terrible tragedy, but I think it's important to remember that not everything was lost. I mean, Native Americans have had a major population recovery in the last century. And a lot of Native American tribes are really strong today. They're carrying on their traditions and taking back control of their governments.

8. What event are the students discussing?
 - a. the development of Native American cultures
 - b. U.S. policymaking regarding Native Americans
 - c. the effect of European settlement on Native Americans
 - d. the arrival of the first people in North America
9. Why is Malinda surprised?
 - a. She's surprised that Native Americans were removed from their homelands.
 - b. She's surprised by the diversity of Native American cultures.
 - c. She doesn't believe that some Native American populations have recently increased.
 - d. She can't believe that common European diseases were so deadly to the native population.
10. The students name some of the challenges that Native Americans faced after European settlement. What were the two that they discussed?
 - a. malnutrition
 - b. new diseases

- c. killing of Native Americans by Europeans
 - d. introduction of horses by Spanish
11. From the students' comments, we can infer that
- a. European settlement drastically changed Native Americans' way of life.
 - b. European settlers found few inhabitants when they arrived.
 - c. Europeans did not benefit from contact with Native Americans.
 - d. Native Americans had one culture and language.

Questions 12 through 16 are based on the following mini-lecture:

The Cuban Missile Crisis lasted only thirteen days. But those thirteen, terrifying days make up the world's closest brush with the threat of nuclear war. There were several events that unfolded during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

First, on October 14, 1962, U.S. spy planes flying over Cuba spotted Soviet missile installations under construction. The missiles were intermediate- and medium-range; they could carry nuclear weapons within the range of U.S. cities—putting the people of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles at risk. After considering a surprise air strike, President Kennedy decided to announce a naval blockade of Cuba.

But before he began the naval blockade, Kennedy made a worldwide radio and TV address on October 22. In the address, he told the public about the discovery of the missiles and demanded that the Soviet Union remove them. He said that the

United States would regard a missile attack from Cuba the same as an attack from the Soviet Union, and that it would respond accordingly. The days after the speech were tense. Kennedy didn't know how the Soviet Union would respond. Finally, after thirteen days, Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles if the United States promised not to invade Cuba.

One interesting fact is that, unknown to the U.S. government at the time, 40,000 Soviet soldiers were stationed in Cuba and armed with nuclear weapons. This information has only come to light recently when U.S. and Soviet files about the incident have become declassified.

An ironic result of the crisis was that even though Khrushchev's actions helped protect the world from nuclear war, they made him look weak to younger Soviet leaders. He was removed from power.

12. What is the speaker's main point?
- a. Thirteen days is not a long time.
 - b. The Soviet threat during the Cuban Missile Crisis was not real.
 - c. The Cuban Missile Crisis put the world at risk of nuclear war.
 - d. The Cuban Missile Crisis was a significant historical event.
13. According to the speaker, President Kennedy
- a. knew that Khrushchev would back down.
 - b. didn't think the situation was very serious.
 - c. viewed the crisis as a conflict between Cuba and the United States only.
 - d. believed the crisis was principally between the United States and the Soviet Union.

14. According to the speaker, at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the U.S. government
- was not surprised to find missile installations in Cuba.
 - did not know the full extent of the Soviet threat in Cuba.
 - overestimated the Soviet threat in Cuba.
 - knew everything that was going on in Cuba.
15. The speaker describes four events that occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Place these events in proper chronological order.
- Kennedy's public address*
U.S. discovery of missile bases in Cuba
U.S. blockade of Cuba
Soviet removal of missiles
- -
 -
 -
16. The speaker suggests that by agreeing to remove the weapons and end the crisis, Khrushchev
- made a strong choice, not a weak one.
 - brought shame to his country.
 - deserved to be removed from power.
 - made the wrong choice.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Practice active listening techniques, like using non-verbal responses.
- Schedule listening skill builders into your study plan.
- Go to places where English is spoken regularly.
- Listen to radio or TV programs or go to the movies regularly.
- Review how lectures are structured; listen to a lecture or long program.
- Listen for idiomatic expressions in everyday conversation; look up those that you don't know.
- Main ideas are general statements that a speaker wants to say something about a topic.
- Supporting details are specific examples and facts that back up a main idea.
- Inferences are what a speaker suggests or implies but does not necessarily say.
- Tone is a speaker's attitude or mood expressed in speech.
- If you are taking the computer-based exam, know its special features and the question types specific to that test.
- Review the differences between the computer- and paper-based tests.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. c.
2. b.
3. a.
4. d.
5. b.
6. a.
7. d.
8. c.
9. d.
10. b and c.
11. a.
12. c.
13. d.
14. b.
15.
 1. U.S. discovery of missile bases in Cuba
 2. Kennedy's public address
 3. U.S. blockade of Cuba
 4. Soviet removal of missiles
16. a.

Chapter 3

Structure

When you communicate in writing, you make a permanent impression. When you talk, you may abbreviate words, leave sentences unfinished, or use informal words and phrases, but when you write, you must follow the grammatical constructions of formal English. Admissions officers will want to know if you have the ability to express yourself clearly and correctly in written English—an essential skill in college. The structure section of the TOEFL exam measures your knowledge of English grammar and style. It presents you with sentences that you need to correct by filling in a blank or by identifying a grammatical error. The sentences will cover topics similar to those in college courses like history, biology, sociology, and art. However, you do not need to have specific knowledge of these topics to answer the questions in the structure test.

QUESTION TYPES IN THE STRUCTURE SECTION

There are two basic kinds of questions on the structure section of both the computer-based and paper-based exams:

- **Sentence completion.** This question type presents a sentence with a blank. From four possible answer choices, you will select the one word or phrase that *correctly* completes the sentence. Here are some examples:
 1. The company had dumped waste into the river for years and it _____ to continue doing so.
 - a. plans
 - b. planning
 - c. planned
 - d. had planned
 2. After the female emperor penguin lays a single egg, she gives them to her mate, _____ holds it in a fold of skin near his feet for a two-month incubation period.
 - a. he
 - b. who
 - c. which
 - d. while

Answers: 1. c

2. b

- **Recognizing grammatical mistakes.** In this question type, sentences will have four underlined words or phrases. You will choose the underlined word or phrase that is *incorrect*. Here are some examples:

3. Frank Lloyd Wright, by designing the low-cost “Usonian”
A B
house in the 1930s, wanting to make American architec-
C D
ture more “democratic” and affordable to everyone.
a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D
4. A lack in vitamin D, which comes from fortified milk or
A B
sunshine, can decrease the body’s ability to absorb calcium.
C D
a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D

Answers: 3. c

4. a

COMPUTER TEST VS. PAPER TEST

You will find some key differences between the computer-based test (CBT) and the paper-and-pencil exam. Although the questions will cover the same type of material, you will answer fewer questions about each on the CBT. The structure section of the CBT is also computer adaptive, meaning that the computer selects questions based on your ability level. Your first question will be of average difficulty. If you answer it correctly, your next

question will be harder. If you answer incorrectly, your next question will be easier. Here is an overview of the differences between the two tests:

Computer Test: Structure	Paper-and-Pencil: Structure and Written Expression
15–20 minutes	25 minutes
20–25 questions	40 questions
Computer adaptive: the level of difficulty of questions is based on each test-taker's ability.	Test takers answer the same questions.
Question types are mixed together and presented at random.	Question types fall into two sections: Part A—15 sentence-completion questions Part B—25 questions in which you identify grammar mistakes
Once you submit an answer, you cannot change it.	You can return to previous questions and change your answers.
Your score on the structure section is combined with your score in the writing portion of the test.	Your score on this section is not combined with another part of the test.

MAKING SENSE OF SENTENCES

The grass grows. This is an example of the basic unit of thought in the English language: the sentence. Sentences must have two key parts—a **subject** and a **predicate**—and express a complete thought. The subject (*grass*) names what the sentence is talking about. The predicate is a verb or verb phrase (*grows*) that tells us something about the subject. The subject of a sentence may be **singular**, meaning that there is only one subject. Subjects may also be **compound**, meaning they have more than one subject: *The grass and the flowers grow.*

The predicate may also be singular or compound. For example, here the predicate is singular: *I ate a bowl of spaghetti.* In the following example, the predicate is a compound: *I ate a bowl of spaghetti and drank two glasses of milk.*

WHAT IS A CLAUSE?

Like sentences, clauses are groups of words that have a subject and a predicate. Clauses may be independent or dependent. An **independent clause** stands alone and expresses a complete idea as in this example: *Ximena walked on the grass.* When a sentence has more than one independent clause, it is called a **compound sentence**. In compound sentences, independent clauses are joined by a connecting word or **conjunction** (*and, but, or, for, nor, so, or yet*). In the following example, the independent clauses are underlined: Ximena walked on the grass, but she didn't get her new shoes wet.

A **dependent clause** does not express a complete thought: *though it was wet.* When a dependent clause stands alone, it is called a **sentence fragment**. To make a complete thought, a dependent

clause needs an independent clause: *Though it was wet, Ximena walked on the grass.* Sentences that contain an independent clause and a dependent clause are called **complex sentences**.

Quick tip: To identify a sentence fragment or dependent clause on the TOEFL exam, look for the following joining words, called **subordinating conjunctions**. When a clause has a subordinating conjunction, it needs an independent clause to complete an idea.

after	because	once	though	when
although	before	since	unless	where
as, as if	if	that	until	while

Practice

Underline the independent clauses in the following sentences. Find the answers on page 82.

1. I went for a walk downtown and mailed your letter.
2. If it is hot tomorrow, let's go to the beach.
3. The 20-foot-tall, long-necked giraffe is the tallest living animal on Earth.
4. The log-cabin quilt was probably designed as a way to give a second life to unwieldy but warm fabrics salvaged from suits and coats.

PARTS OF SPEECH

A word can be classified as a different part of speech depending on how it works in a sentence. For example, the word *quiet* can be a noun, verb, or adjective; add *-ly* and it can function as an adverb. This table lists the parts of speech:

Part of Speech	Function	Examples
noun	names a person, place, thing, or concept	<i>Emma, cat, girl, Elm Street, vase, pen, New York, weather</i>
pronoun	takes the place of a noun so that the noun does not have to be repeated	<i>I, you, he, she, us, they, this, that, themselves, somebody, who, which</i>
verb	describes an action, occurrence, or state of being	<i>swim, becomes, is, seemed, hoping</i>
helping verb	combines with other verbs (main verbs) to create verb phrases that help indicate tenses	forms of <i>be, do</i> and <i>have</i> ; <i>can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would</i>
adjective	describes nouns and pronouns; can also identify or quantify	<i>green, content, awake, small, heavy, happy; that</i> (e.g., <i>that car</i>); <i>several</i> (e.g., <i>several dogs</i>)
adverb	describes verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, or entire clauses	<i>quickly, slowly, suddenly, always, very, yesterday</i>
preposition	expresses the relationship in time or space between words in a sentence	<i>in, on, around, above, between, underneath, beside, with, upon</i>

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

She don't or she doesn't? You might easily pick out the second version as the correct match between subject and verb. However, some instances of subject-verb agreement are trickier—even for native speakers of English.

Subject-verb agreement is when the subject of the sentence correctly matches the verb *in number*. If the subject is singular, the verb is singular. If the subject is plural, the verb is plural.

Singular: Betto feeds the birds every day.

Plural: Betto and Josephine feed the birds every day.

Subject-verb agreement can be confusing, however. Look out for problem verb forms and the other common pitfalls listed below.

- **The subject *I***—Even though *I* is a single person, it usually takes the plural form of the verb: *I look. I do.*
- **The verb *to be***—The irregular verb *to be* (*be, am, is, are, was, were*) is a problem verb because of the unusual way it is formed. Remember never to use the *be* form after a subject.

I be going is incorrect.

I am going is correct.

- **Doesn't/don't, Wasn't/weren't**—These verb constructions can confuse writers. *Doesn't* (does not) and

wasn't (was not) are singular. *Don't* (do not) and *weren't* (were not) are plural. (*I* takes the plural form, *don't*)

I don't want to leave. I wasn't in class yesterday.
She doesn't want to leave. We weren't in class yesterday.

- **Words or phrases that follow a subject**—A common error in making subject-verb agreement is confusing a phrase (words or phrase that follow a subject) with the subject of the sentence. When you read, be careful to locate the true subject of the sentence. Subject and verbs are underlined in the following examples.

One of the boys is missing.
The paintings by Pedro Reiss are bold and commanding.
The president, along with three members of his Cabinet, returned to Washington today.

- **Singular nouns that end in s**—Some words like *measles*, *mumps*, *news*, *checkers* or *marbles* (games), *physics*, *economics*, *sports*, and *politics* are singular despite their plural form, because we think of them as a single thing. Some are singular or plural depending on how they are used in a sentence.

The *news* **begins** at 6 p.m.
Aerobics **is** a great way to get in shape and reduce stress.

- **Pronoun subjects**—Pronouns are misused often in speech and writing. Some pronouns are always singular, whereas others are always plural. A few can be either singular or plural. *Each*, *either*, *neither*, *anybody*, *anyone*,

everybody, everyone, no one, nobody, one, somebody, someone are singular pronouns that agree with singular verbs.

Everyone **wants** to win the lottery.

Each of the managers **wants** her own phone line.

- *Both, few, many, and several* are plural pronouns and agree with plural verbs.

Both of her ex-boyfriends **are** attending the wedding.

- *All, any most, none, and some* can be singular or plural pronouns, depending on their use.

All of the ice cream **is** gone.

All of the ice cream sundaes **are** gone.

WHEN THINGS GET COMPLEX . . .

When you look at complex sentences, pay close attention to determine whether the subject and verb agree. These guidelines will help you:

- If two nouns or pronouns are joined by *and*, they need a plural verb.

Oscar and Lorraine **drive** to work on most days.

- If two singular nouns or pronouns are joined by *or* or *nor*, they need a singular verb.

On most days, Oscar or Lorraine **drives** to work.

- If one plural and one singular subject are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb agrees with the closest subject.

Neither the teacher nor the students **like** the textbook.
Neither the students nor the teacher **likes** the textbook.

- If a sentence asks a question or begins with the words *there* or *here*, the subject follows the verb. The verb must agree with the subject. The subjects are underlined in the following examples.

Here **is** the evidence to prove it. What **are** his reasons?

Practice

Circle the correct verb in each sentence. Find the answers on page 82.

5. The chief executive officer and the chairman of the board *agrees/agree* about the new benefit package.
6. All of the children *sleeps/sleep* at naptime.
7. One of the first modern detectives in literature *was/were* created by Edgar Allan Poe.

GETTING PRONOUNS RIGHT

Pronouns are words that take the place of a noun or another pronoun. The nouns represented by pronouns are called **antecedents**. Just as subjects and verbs must agree in number, pronouns and antecedents need to agree in number. If the antecedent is singular, the pronoun is singular; if the antecedent is plural, the pronoun is plural. In the following examples, pronouns are italicized and the antecedents are underlined:

The teachers received *their* benefits.

Maggie wants to bring *her* digital camera on the trip.

Sometimes pronoun agreement is tricky. Review these guidelines so you can identify common pronoun errors in the TOEFL exam:

- Indefinite pronouns (pronouns that don't refer to a specific person) like *each*, *either*, *neither*, *anybody*, *anyone*, *everybody*, *everyone*, *no one*, *nobody*, *one*, *somebody*, and *someone* always require singular pronouns.

Each of the boys wore *his* favorite costume.

Neither of the tenants could find *her* copy of the lease.

- If two singular nouns or pronouns are joined by *and*, use a plural pronoun.

When Grandma and Grandpa visit, *they* always bring presents.

- If two singular nouns or pronouns are joined by *or*, use a singular pronoun.

Remember to give Sophie or Jane *her* application.

- If a singular and a plural noun or pronoun are joined by *or*, the pronoun agrees with the closest noun or pronoun it represents.

The coach or players will explain *their* game strategy.

The players or the coach will explain *his* game strategy.

Troublesome Pronouns

Its/It's

Its means "belonging to it."

It's is a contraction for "it is."

The dog wagged its tail.

It's time to go. (It is time to go.)

Your/You are

Your means "belonging to you."

You are is a contraction for "you are."

Your phone is ringing.

You're right about that. (You are right . . .)

Their/They're/There

Their means "belonging to them."

They're is a contraction for "they are."

There is an adverb describing where an action takes place.

Their plane is ready for take-off.

They're going to miss the plane. (They are going . . .)

There goes the plane!

Whose/Who's

Whose means "belonging to whom."

Who's is a contraction for "who is" or "who has."

Whose sweater is this?

Who's coming to dinner?
(Who is coming to dinner?)

Who/That/Which

Who refers to people.

That refers to things.

Which introduces clauses that are not essential to the information in the sentence, unless they refer to people. In that case, use *who*.

The man who fixes my car has retired.

This is the car that I told you about.

The band, which started out in Boston, is now famous in Europe and Japan.

Maya, who plays in the band, lives upstairs.

Practice

Circle the correct pronoun in each sentence. Find the answers on page 82.

8. No one in *her/their* right mind would follow your advice.
9. Arnold or Jacques will bring *his/their* recorder so *he/they* can tape the interview.
10. Bring *your/you're* fishing pole along if *your/you're* coming.
11. Interstate 235, *who/which/that* runs through town, is being repaired this summer.
12. *Its/It's your/you're* turn to do the dishes.

ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

Study carefully! This is an example of a common mistake: confusing an adjective for an adverb. The correct statement is “study carefully.” Adjectives and adverbs are **modifiers**, or words that describe other words. However, adjectives and adverbs describe different parts of speech. In the preceding example, *carefully* is an adverb describing the verb *study*.

Adjectives describe nouns or pronouns and answer one of three questions: *which one?* *what kind?* and *how many?*

- which one? → *that* tree, the *other* shoe, *her* last time
- what kind? → *elm* tree, *suede* shoe, *exciting* time
- how many? → *five* trees, *many* shoes, *several* times

Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs and answer one of these questions about another word in the sentence: *where?* *when?* *how?* and *to what extent?*

where?	Place your baggage <i>below</i> your seat.
when?	Call your mother <i>tomorrow</i> .
how?	Kyoko turned <i>suddenly</i> .
to what extent?	Ben could <i>hardly</i> wait.

To recognize grammatical mistakes involving adjectives and adverbs, review these common trouble spots:

- **Verbs that deal with the senses (touch, taste, look, smell, sound)**—Deciding which modifier to use with these verbs can be especially tricky. If the modifier is describing a noun or pronoun that comes before the verb, use an adjective. If the modifier is describing a verb, use an adverb.

The entire group felt sick after lunch. (*Sick* is an adjective describing the noun *group*.)

The trainer felt gently around the player's ankle. (*Gently* is an adverb describing the verb *felt*.)

- **Adjectives that follow the verb**—Sometimes an adjective comes after the verb, but it describes a noun or pronoun that comes before the verb. In this example, the noun is in bold and the adjective is underlined:

These **pickles** taste salty. (salty pickles)

- **Misplaced modifiers**—Modifiers should be placed as closely as possible to the words that describe.

Incorrect: My uncle told me about raising cattle in the kitchen. (Why were cattle in the kitchen?)

Correct: In the kitchen, my uncle told me about raising cattle.

Problem Modifiers	
<p>Fewer/Less <i>Fewer</i> describes plural nouns, or things that can be counted. <i>Less</i> describes singular nouns that represent a quantity or degree.</p>	<p>The school enrolls <i>fewer</i> children than it once did.</p> <p>Julian has <i>less</i> time than you do.</p>
<p>Good/Well <i>Good</i> is an adjective. <i>Well</i> is an adverb, used to describe an action.</p>	<p>Caroline felt <i>good</i> about her test results. (<i>Good</i> describes Caroline.)</p> <p>Sophia performed <i>well</i> on the test. (<i>Well</i> describes the verb performed.)</p>
<p>Bad/Badly <i>Bad</i> is an adjective. <i>Badly</i> is an adverb, used to describe an action.</p>	<p>Owen felt <i>bad</i> after his lengthy workout. (<i>Bad</i> describes Owen.)</p> <p>The band played <i>badly</i> at the concert. (<i>Badly</i> describes the verb <i>played</i>.)</p>

- **Dangling modifiers**—Words, phrases, or clauses set off by commas at the beginning of a sentence sometimes modify the wrong noun or pronoun.

Incorrect: Broken and beyond repair, Grandma threw away the serving dish. (Why was Grandma broken?)

Correct: Grandma threw away the broken serving dish that was beyond repair.

Practice

Choose the correct word in parentheses in each of the following sentences. Find the answers on pages 82–83.

13. The music sounded (strange, strangely).
14. My cowboy boots feel less (comfortable, comfortably) than my pumps.
15. Ask (polite, politely) if you would like a second serving.
16. Phoebe makes (fewer, less) money than her sister does.
17. He runs so (good, well) that he often wins local road races.

DON'T BE TOO NEGATIVE

Although in Shakespeare's time, a **double negative**—the use of two negatives in the same sentence—could be used to emphasize a point, today double negatives are considered a grammatical mistake. Be on the lookout for sentences that “double up” on the following negative words:

no	neither	nobody	scarcely
not	nothing	nowhere	barely
neither	no one	hardly	

MAKING COMPARISONS

Adjectives and adverbs change form when they are used to make comparisons. To create comparisons, follow these general rules:

When comparing two things,

- add *-er* to short modifiers of one or two syllables (*taller*, *wiser*).
- use the word *more* or *less* before the modifiers of more than two syllables (*more dependable*, *less outrageous*).

When comparing more than two things,

- add *-est* to short modifiers of one or two syllables (*funniest*, *rudest*).
- use the word *most* or *least* before modifiers of more than two syllables (*most intelligent*, *least precisely*).

Special Cases: The following comparative modifiers don't follow these rules—they change form completely.

Modifier	Comparative	Superlative
good	better	best
well	better	best
many	more	most
much	more	most
bad	worse	worst
little	less or lesser	least

Practice

Circle the correct modifier in each sentence. Find the answers on page 83.

18. The judge looked *skeptical/skeptically* at the attorney.
19. Pasta does not taste as *good/well* if it is overcooked.
20. Pleasant Lake is the *best/better* trout lake around.

ACTION WORDS

Verbs form the heart of a sentence—they express the action or state of being of the subject. The tense of the verb tells readers when the action happens, happened, or will happen. Verbs have five basic forms:

1. The **infinitive** is the base form of the verb plus the word *to*. →*to swim, to hope, to be*
2. The **present tense** expresses action that happens now or happens routinely. →The baby *smiles* a lot.
3. The **present participle** describes what is happening now. A helping verb (*am, is, are*) precedes the *-ing* form of the verb. →The baby *is smiling* again.
4. The **past tense** shows an action that happened in the past. →School officials *warned* the students last fall.
5. The **past participle** expresses an action that happened in the past. It uses a helping verb such as *has, have, or had*. →The reporter *has followed* the story since it broke.

REGULAR VERBS

Regular verbs follow a standard set of rules for forming the present participle, past tense, and past participle forms. The

present participle is formed by adding *-ing*. The past and past participle are formed by adding *-ed*. If the verb ends with the letter *e*, just add *d*. If the verb ends with the letter *y*, for the past tense, change the *y* to an *i* and add *-ed*. Here are some examples:

Present	Present Participle	Past	Past Participle
talk	talking	talked	talked
exercise	exercising	exercised	exercised
multiply	multiplying	multiplied	multiplied
notice	noticing	noticed	noticed

IRREGULAR VERBS

Approximately 150 verbs in English are irregular. They do not follow the standard rules for changing tense. Irregular verbs fall into three categories:

- irregular verbs with the same past and past participle forms
- irregular verbs with three distinct forms
- irregular verbs with the same present and past participle forms.

The table on the next few pages lists the most common irregular verbs.

Irregular Verbs with the Same Past and Past Participle Forms

Present	Past	Past Participle
bite	bit	bit
dig	dug	dug
bleed	bled	bled
hear	heard	heard
hold	held	held
light	lit	lit
meet	met	met
pay	paid	paid
say	said	said
sell	sold	sold
tell	told	told
shine	shone	shone
shoot	shot	shot
sit	sat	sat
spin	spun	spun
spit	spat	spat
swear	swore	swore
tear	tore	tore
creep	crept	crept
deal	dealt	dealt
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt	knelt
leave	left	left
mean	meant	meant
send	sent	sent
sleep	slept	slept

Present	Past	Past Participle
spend	spent	spent
bring	brought	brought
buy	bought	bought
catch	caught	caught
fight	fought	fought
teach	taught	taught
think	thought	thought
feed	fed	fed
flee	fled	fled
find	found	found
grind	ground	ground

Irregular Verbs with Three Distinct Forms

Present	Past	Past Participle
begin	began	begun
ring	rang	rung
sing	sang	sung
spring	sprang	sprung
do	did	done
go	went	gone
am	was	been
is	was	been
see	saw	seen
drink	drank	drunk
shrink	shrank	shrunken
sink	sank	sunk
stink	stank	stunk

Present	Past	Past Participle
swear	swore	sworn
tear	tore	torn
wear	wore	worn
blow	blew	blown
draw	drew	drawn
fly	flew	flown
grow	grew	grown
know	knew	known
throw	threw	thrown
drive	drove	driven
strive	strove	striven
choose	chose	chosen
rise	rose	risen
break	broke	broken
speak	spoke	spoken
fall	fell	fallen
shake	shook	shaken
take	took	taken
forget	forgot	forgotten
get	got	gotten
give	gave	given
forgive	forgave	forgiven
forsake	forsook	forsaken
hide	hid	hidden
ride	rode	ridden
write	wrote	written
freeze	froze	frozen
steal	stole	stolen

Irregular Verbs with the Same Present and Past Participle Forms

Present	Past	Past Participle
come	came	come
overcome	overcame	overcome
run	ran	run

Review these common errors involving verb tense, so that you can identify them on the structure test:

- **Mixed verb tenses**—Switching tense within a sentence can change its meaning. Generally, a passage that begins in the present tense should continue in the present tense.
- **Improper past tense**—Don't use past tense to make a statement about a present condition.

Incorrect: Zelda met the new director. He was very tall.
(Isn't he still tall?)

Correct: Zelda met the new director. He is very tall.

- **Subjunctive mood**—The subjunctive mood of verbs expresses something that is imagined, wished for, or contrary to fact. The subjunctive of *was* is *were*.

If I were rich, I'd quit my job and move to Tahiti. (I am not rich.)

If you were a dog, you would be entirely dependent upon human beings. (You are not a dog.)

Practice

Circle the correct verb in each sentence. Find the answers on page 83.

21. Statistics *was/were* my most difficult course in high school.
22. The clerk *rings/ring* up the sales while the customers waits/wait in line.
23. *Has/Have* either of the tenants paid the rent?
24. If I *was/were* on the school board, I'd abolish the dress code.
25. I stayed at a bed and breakfast inn in Vermont. The building *is/was* Victorian.

TRICKY VERBS

The sets of verbs on the next page confuse even native speakers of English. To keep them straight, think about which verb in each pair needs an object. For example, *lie* describes an action performed by a subject: *I will lie down*. *Lay*, on the other hand, needs an object to make sense: *He lays the baby in the crib*. To make things more confusing, the past tense of *lie* is *lay*! Review this chart and practice using these tricky verbs in context.

PREPOSITIONAL IDIOMS

Knowing which preposition (*to, of, about, for, with, about, on, upon, etc.*) is appropriate in a sentence is a challenging part of mastering English. Review these common prepositional idioms:

according to	depend on/upon	next to
afraid of	equal to	of the opinion

Lie/Lay	
<i>Lie</i> means "to rest, to recline." (subject) past tense: <i>lay, had lain</i>	Don't just <i>lie</i> there like a lump, do something! Last night, he <i>lay</i> on the couch and fell asleep.
<i>Lay</i> means "to place, to set down." (needs an object) Past tense: <i>laid, had laid</i>	I always <i>lay</i> my keys on the counter. (The object is <i>keys</i> .) Ruben <i>laid</i> the blankets on the bed yesterday.
Sit/Set	
<i>Sit</i> means "to rest." (subject)	She always sits behind her desk.
<i>Set</i> means "to put or place." (needs an object)	He set the files on my desk. (The object is <i>files</i> .)
Rise/Raise	
<i>Rise</i> means "to go up." (subject)	After it is filled with hot air, the balloon rises.
<i>Raise</i> means "to move something up." (needs an object)	The town officials are raising property taxes this year. (The object is <i>taxes</i> .)

anxious about	except for	on top of
apologize to (someone)	fond of	opposite of
apologize for (something)	from now on	prior to
approve of	from time to time	proud of
ashamed of	frown on/upon	regard to
aware of	full of	related to
blame (someone) for	glance at/through	rely on/upon

blame (something)	grateful to (someone)	respect for
on	grateful for (something)	responsible for
bored with	in accordance with	satisfied with
capable of	incapable of	similar to
compete with	in conflict	sorry for
complain about	inferior to	suspicious of
composed of	insist on/upon	take care of
concentrate on	in the habit of	thank (some-
concerned with	in the near future	one) for
congratulate on	interested in	tired of
conscious of	knowledge of	with regard to
consist of		

QUICK QUIZ

Answer the questions below. If the question has a blank, select the *correct* answer to fill in the blank. If the question has four underlined words or phrases, choose the underlined word or phrase that is *incorrect*. Find the answers on page 83.

1. Louise read the book very thorough, but she performed

A
B
C

poorly on the test.

D

 - a. A
 - b. B
 - c. C
 - d. D

2. If you interested in pleasing customers, don't make them
A B C
wait for service.
D
- a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D
3. In 1868, newspapers were filled with the accounts of men
_____ claimed to have become rich overnight in Cal-
ifornia's gold fields.
- a. whom
b. that
c. which
d. who
4. Each of the managers want to renew her contract before
A B C D
the new fiscal year.
- a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D

5. The city doesn't need no more taxes; everyone pays too
A B C
much already.
D
- a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D
6. The distinct geology of Cape Cod began _____ about
20,000 years ago.
a. formed
b. form
c. to form
d. was forming
7. In contrast to its soft body and muscular feet, some mol-
A B C
lusks have hard shells.
D
- a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D

11. In 1963, Betty Friedan's expose of domesticity, *The Fem-*
A
inine Mystique, became an immediate bestseller and
B C
creating a national sensation.
D
- a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D
12. Homesteaders on the Great Plains brang few possessions
A B C
to their new home.
D
- a. A
b. B
c. C
d. D
13. Since his release from jail in 1990, Nelson Mandela has
emerged as the _____ spokesman for South Africa's
anti-apartheid movement.
- a. more prominent
b. more prominently
c. most prominent
d. most prominently

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Sentences must have a subject and a predicate and express a complete thought.
- A subject is the sentence part that tells who or what the sentence is about.
- A predicate is the sentence part that describes what the subject is or what the subject is doing.
- A clause is a group of words with a subject and a predicate.
- An independent clause stands alone and expresses a complete thought.
- A dependent clause needs an independent clause to complete its meaning.
- The parts of speech are noun, verb, helping verb, adjective, adverb, and preposition.
- For subject-verb agreement, the subject of a sentence must match the verb in number.
- Familiarize yourself with the common pitfalls involving subject-verb agreement.
- For pronoun agreement, a pronoun and its antecedent must match in number.
- Know how to identify common pronoun errors and troublesome pronouns.
- Adjectives describe nouns or pronouns.
- Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.
- Review the common grammatical mistakes involving modifiers and problem modifiers.
- Avoid using two negative pronouns or modifiers in one sentence.

- Learn how to create the comparative and superlative forms of modifiers.
- The five basic verb forms are infinitive, present tense, present participle, past tense, and past participle.
- Study and memorize the forms of the most common irregular verbs.
- Review the common errors involving verb tense and problem verbs.
- Review and memorize common prepositional idioms.

Practice Answers

1. I went for a walk downtown and mailed your letter.
2. If it is hot tomorrow, let's go to the beach.
3. The 20-foot-tall, long-necked giraffe is the tallest living animal on Earth.
4. The log cabin quilt was probably designed as a way to give a second life to unwieldy but warm fabrics salvaged from suits and coats.
5. agree
6. sleep
7. was
8. her
9. his, he
10. your, you're
11. which
12. It's, your
13. strange
14. comfortable
15. politely

STRUCTURE

83

16. less
17. well
18. skeptically
19. good
20. best
21. was
22. rings, wait
23. Has
24. were
25. is

Quiz Answers

1. b.
2. a.
3. d.
4. b.
5. b.
6. c.
7. b.
8. c.
9. a.
10. d.
11. d.
12. b.
13. c.
14. d.
15. a.
16. b.

Chapter 4

Reading

Developing strong reading skills means that you *interact* with what you read—ask questions, locate main ideas, and draw conclusions. Because the materials you read in college—from textbooks to websites—will be in English, good reading comprehension skills are essential. The reading section of the TOEFL exam tests your ability to read and understand short passages about academic topics like those you will encounter in university courses. You will read short passages, usually from one to five paragraphs in length, and answer several questions about each passage.

COMPUTER TEST VS. PAPER TEST

The formatting and number of questions differ in the computer-based vs. the paper-based reading test. However, the type and difficulty of the reading passages are the same. In both exams, you

can skip questions and return to them later. You can also change your answers. The following chart compares the reading comprehension segments on the two tests:

Computer Test: Reading Comprehension	Paper-and-Pencil: Reading Comprehension
70–90 minutes	55 minutes
44–55 questions	50 questions
5–6 reading passages	5–6 reading passages
6–10 questions per passage	7–12 questions per passage
Most questions are multiple choice, but some follow special directions.	All questions are multiple choice.

SKILL BUILDERS

Becoming an active reader takes practice. To improve your comprehension skills, try the following techniques while you read:

- **Skim ahead.** Scan the text *before* you read. Note how the text is broken into sections, what the main topics are in each section, and the order in which the topics are covered. Look for highlighted key words and ideas.
- **Jump back.** Review the text after you read. Go over summaries, headings, and highlighted information. This process will help you remember information and make connections between ideas.

Test Time Saver

To use your time effectively during the exam, answer all of the questions about one reading passage before going on to the next one.

- **Look up new words.** Keep a dictionary on hand as you read and look up any unfamiliar words. List new vocabulary words and their definitions in a notebook so you can review them later.
- **Highlight important information.** Highlight or underline key terms, main ideas, and new concepts as you read. (If you don't own the book, use a notebook to jot down information.)
- **Take notes.** Record your questions, observations, and opinions about what you read. What is the main idea of the passage? Do you agree with the author?
- **Connect what you read** with your own experience or with another topic you have studied. For example, if you are reading about the 1989 student protest in Tiananmen Square, you may note how it was similar to or different from student protests in the United States in the 1960s.

QUESTION TYPES IN THE READING SECTION

The reading comprehension questions on the TOEFL exam fall into nine categories:

1. **Main idea.** This question type asks you to locate the main idea of a passage or paragraph.

Examples:

- Which sentence best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
- What is this paragraph mainly about?
- What is the author's main purpose in this passage?
- What would be the best title for this passage?

2. **Supporting details.** For this kind of question, you will identify a specific fact or detail described in the passage.

Examples:

- What causes Type II diabetes?
- How many people in the United States have Type II diabetes?

3. **Exceptions.** For this question type, you will identify a specific fact or detail that was *not* mentioned in the passage.

Examples:

- Which characteristic does NOT describe the cuttlefish?
- The author mentions all of the following as important causes of acid rain EXCEPT:

4. **Location of information.** These questions ask you to find the place in the passage where specific information is given.

Examples:

- Where in the passage does the author define the term *ecosystem*?
- *Computer test only*: Click on the sentence in paragraph 3 in which the author mentions the symptoms of lupus.

5. **Vocabulary.** There are two kinds of vocabulary questions: one asks you to determine the meaning of a word based on how it is used in the passage; the other asks you to choose a synonym for the vocabulary word.

Examples:

- The word *intrinsic* in paragraph 2 most likely means:
- The word *commotion* in paragraph 5 could best be replaced by:
- *Computer test only*: Look at the word *decadent* in the passage. Click on another word in the **bold** text that is closest in meaning to *decadent*.

6. **Inferences.** For this question type, you will draw a logical conclusion based on the information in the passage.

Examples:

- The author suggests that cloning will lead to:
- This passage suggests that racial profiling is discriminatory because:

7. **Reference.** These questions require you to determine what a specific word (often a pronoun) or phrase refers to in the passage.

Examples:

- The word *it* in line 7 refers to:
- *Computer test only*: Look at the word *one* in the passage. Click on the word or phrase in the **bold** text that *one* refers to.

8. **Paraphrased sentences (computer test only)**. This question type asks you to identify the sentence that best paraphrases, or restates, one or more sentences in the passage.

Examples:

- What does the author mean by the sentence
Woodstock should have been a colossal failure?
- What does the author mean by the statement
Unfortunately, many state governments have not only permitted gambling but sponsor it through lotteries?

9. **Sentence insertion (computer test only)**. For these questions, you will identify the best place within a passage to insert a new sentence. You will see several choices marked on your computer screen with a small square (■).

Example:

The following sentence can be added to paragraph 1.

The Everglades National Park is the largest remaining subtropical wilderness in the continental United States. Where would this sentence best fit in the paragraph? Click on the square (■) to add the sentence to the paragraph.

LOCATING THE MAIN IDEA

Writing is communication—a writer tries to convey his thoughts to a reader through words. When standardized tests ask you to find the main idea of a passage, they are asking you to uncover the writer’s motive, or *why* she wrote what she did.

To determine the main idea of a passage, think about a **general statement** that brings together all of the ideas in a paragraph or passage. Do not confuse the main idea of a passage with its main topic. The topic is the *subject*—what a passage is about. The main idea is what the author wants to express *about* the subject. To present a main idea, many textbook writers follow the basic format of **general idea** → **specific support**. First, they state their main idea and then provide support for it with specific facts and details. A first sentence may contain a main idea. However, sometimes an author builds up to her point, in which case you may find the main idea in the last sentence of the introductory paragraph or even the last sentence of the entire passage.

Practice

Read the passage and then answer the following question.

Space shuttle astronauts, because they spend only about a week in space, undergo minimal wasting of bone and muscle. But when longer stays in microgravity or zero gravity are contemplated, as in a space station or a two-year roundtrip voyage to Mars, these problems are of particular concern because they could become acute. Fortunately, studies show that muscle atrophy can be kept largely at bay with appropriate exercise. Unfortunately, bone loss caused by reduced gravity cannot.

Question: What is the main point of this paragraph?

- a. The U.S. government is currently planning a voyage to Mars.
- b. Muscle atrophy and bone loss are major problems for astronauts in extended space flight.
- c. Astronauts confront many dangers in space flight.
- d. Short stays in space cause little bone and muscle damage in humans.

Choice **b** is correct—It represents a general statement that holds together all of the information in the paragraph. Choice **d** is too specific to be the main idea. Choice **c** is too general to be the main idea. Choice **a** may be true, but the passage does not give this information.

FINDING SUPPORTING DETAILS

Supporting details are facts or **specific information** that provide evidence for an author's main idea. They often answer the questions *what? when? where? why? or how?* Three question types on the reading test ask you about specific information within a passage: supporting-detail questions, exception questions, and location of information questions. You will need to be able to:

- identify supporting details from a passage
- recognize information that is *not* provided in the passage
- identify the place in the passage where specific information is given

How can you recall one fact from a passage that is five paragraphs long? Follow these techniques as a guide:

Do not memorize. The reading test does not ask you to have perfect recall. Instead, it measures your ability to read carefully and know where to look for specific information.

Look for language clues as you read the passage. Writers often use one of the following phrases to signal that they are introducing a fact or example:

one reason is	in one case	specifically
for example	for instance	in particular

Use key words from the question. Questions have two or three important words that tell you exactly what information to look for in the passage. For example, in the question *How many species of penguins are there worldwide?* the key words are *how many*, and *species*. They signal to you to look for a sentence in the passage that has a number and the word *species*.

Take note of structure. As you read, pay attention to how information is presented and in what order. Understanding the organization of a passage will help you locate the facts you need. See pages 100–103 for more about structure.

Practice

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow it. Find the answers on page 111.

(1) *Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest network of coral reefs, stretching 2,010 km (1,250 miles) off Australia's*

northeastern coast. (2) Although coral looks like a plant, it is the limestone skeleton of a tiny animal called a coral polyp. (3) The reef's 300 species of coral create an underwater garden of brilliant colors and intricate shapes.

(4) From microorganisms to whales, diverse life forms make their home on the reef. (5) Over 1,500 fish species, 4,000 mollusk species, 200 bird species, 16 sea snake species, and six sea turtle species thrive in the reef's tropical waters. (6) The reef is also a habitat for the endangered dugong (sea cows), moray eels, and sharks.

(7) Although protected by the Australian government, Great Barrier Reef faces environmental threats. (8) Crown-of-thorns starfish feed on coral and can destroy large portions of reef. (9) Pollution and rising water temperatures also threaten the delicate coral.

1. How many species of coral are there in the Great Barrier Reef?
 - a. 30
 - b. 200
 - c. 300
 - d. 3,000

2. Which of the following NOT a threat to the Great Barrier Reef?
 - a. dugong (sea cows)
 - b. crown-of-thorn starfish
 - c. pollution
 - d. rising sea temperatures

3. In which sentence does the author describe the coral polyp?
- sentence (1)
 - sentence (2)
 - sentence (4)
 - sentence (5)

TIPS FOR VOCABULARY QUESTIONS

Active readers make a habit of looking up unfamiliar words. But in a testing situation, you can't use a dictionary. The following strategies will aid you in figuring out what unfamiliar terms mean:

- **Look at context**—the words and sentences surrounding the word—for clues about meaning. For example, you can determine what the word *gullible* means from this context: *Fred is so gullible. He will believe anything that Oliver tells him.* The phrase “he will believe anything” restates the meaning of the word *gullible* and suggests its meaning of being easily duped or cheated.
- **Is the word negative or positive?** Using the context of the passage, determine whether the unfamiliar term is a negative or positive one. In the preceding example, you can conclude that *gullible* is not positive in that context. Thus, you can eliminate any answer choices that are positive terms.
- **Replace the vocabulary word** with the remaining answers, one at a time. Does the answer choice make sense when you read the sentence? If not, eliminate that answer choice.

Practice

Choose the correct meaning of the italicized word. Find the answers on page 111.

4. When you are in an interview, try not to show any *overt* signs that you are nervous. Don't shift in your chair, shake, or stutter.

Overt means

- a. subtle.
 - b. obnoxious.
 - c. obvious.
 - d. confident.
5. Although teaching is not a particularly *lucrative* career, I wouldn't do anything else. Knowing I'm helping others to learn is far more important to me than money.

Lucrative means

- a. highly profitable.
- b. highly rewarding.
- c. highly exciting.
- d. highly repetitive.

MAKING INFERENCES

Inference questions on the TOEFL exam ask you to draw logical conclusions about what you read. Sometimes a writer does not explicitly state his or her main idea or offer a conclusion. You must infer the writer's meaning. To do this you must carefully read the details and facts of a passage and look for context clues that reveal a writer's attitude.

Word choice—the specific words a writer chooses to describe people, places, and things—is one of the best clues to how a writer feels about her subject. Word choice, also called diction, includes these forms:

- the particular words a writer uses
- the way words are arranged in a sentence
- repetition of words or phrases
- inclusion of particular details

For example, consider how word choice affects the two sentences below:

A: Improved job training would reduce workplace injuries.

B: Improved job training would minimize workplace injuries.

The only difference between the two sentences is that sentence **A** uses the word *reduces* and sentence **B** uses *minimize*. Both sentences state that improved job training would result in fewer workplace injuries. However, sentence **B** is stronger because of its word choice: *to minimize* means to reduce to the smallest possible amount.

Even words that have similar dictionary definitions may have different **connotations**, or suggested meanings. For example, consider the words *rich*, *wealthy* and *affluent*. Although similar in meaning, each word evokes different thoughts and feelings. *Rich* implies having more than enough to fulfill normal needs, *wealthy* suggests the possession of property and things of value, and *affluent* implies increasing wealth.

Practice

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow. Find the answers on page 111.

Storytelling should speak first to the heart and only second to the intellect. It should, in Isaac Bashevis Singer's words, "be both clear and profound," and it should also entertain. The new writer should avoid creating pieces that are deliberately obscure and impossible to understand except by a small, elite group of other writers.

6. What is the passage suggesting about new writers?
 - a. They are excellent writers.
 - b. They write better than those who have practiced the art of writing.
 - c. They think that good writing should be difficult to understand.
 - d. They aim to please a wide audience.
7. What is the author implying about most readers?
 - a. They are not very smart.
 - b. They are not interested in obscure prose.
 - c. They do not like writing that affects their emotions.
 - d. They are snobs who look down on others.

ANSWERING REFERENCE QUESTIONS

Reference questions measure your understanding of what a particular sentence means. Read each passage carefully and try this three-part strategy to find the correct answer:

1. Eliminate any answers that you know are incorrect.
2. Insert each remaining answer choice into the sentence.

3. Decide whether the answer makes sense in the context of the sentence. If not, eliminate it and try another.

For example, look at how the strategy works with the following reference question.

The word *they* in paragraph 2 refers to:

- a. the victims of heat stroke
- b. the treatments for heat stroke
- c. the people who administer aid to victims of heat stroke
- d. the characteristics of heat stroke

Here's the sentence in which *they* is used:

They are a high body temperature (which may reach 106 degrees F or more); a rapid pulse; hot, dry skin; and a blocked sweating mechanism.

They clearly does not refer to people, so you can rule out choices **a** and **c**. When you replace *they* with the remaining answer choices, you can easily narrow your answer to the correct choice: **d**.

In Your Own Words

Questions that ask you to paraphrase, or reword, a sentence test the same skills as reference questions. They measure your ability to comprehend a sentence or paragraph. As you read, think about what the material is stating, then try rewriting it (on paper or in your mind) in new terms. This will increase your comprehension skills and improve your chances of answering paraphrased sentence questions correctly.

RECOGNIZING STRUCTURAL PATTERNS

Just as an architect needs a blueprint when designing a building, writers must have a plan that organizes their information and ideas. Learning organizational strategies will help you identify common patterns so that you can guess at what is coming ahead.

Recognizing structural techniques also helps you answer two types of questions on the TOEFL exam: supporting-detail questions (you will be able to locate specific information in a passage) and sentence-insertion questions (you will know where best to place new information in a passage).

The four most common organizational patterns that writers use are:

1. chronological order (time)
2. order of importance
3. comparison and contrast
4. cause and effect

Chronological order describes events in the order that they happened, will happen, or should happen. History texts, memoir, personal essays, and instructions often use this organization. Writers often provide clues in the form of transitional words or phrases to guide readers through events. Here are some common chronological transitions:

first, second, third	before	after	Next
now	then	when	as soon as
Immediately	suddenly	soon	during
while	Meanwhile	later	Finally
in the meantime	at last	eventually	afterward

Order of importance arranges ideas by rank instead of time. Writers may organize their ideas:

- by increasing importance (least important idea→most important idea), or
- by decreasing importance (most important idea→least important idea)

Newspaper articles follow the principle of decreasing importance; they give the most important information first (the *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why* about an event). Arguments may follow the principle of increasing importance, saving the most persuasive points for the end. Transitions offer clues about this type of organizational pattern, too. The following are common transitions used to indicate order of importance:

first and foremost	most important	more important
moreover	above all	first, second, third
last but not least	finally	

Comparison and contrast arranges two things side by side to show their similarities and differences. In this way, a writer can analyze two items by seeing how they measure up to one another. For example, this description of the two movie versions of *King Kong* uses comparison and contrast:

Both versions of the monster movie used the most sophisticated effects of their day (comparison). However, the stop-motion animation of the 1933 film retains its magic, whereas the

state-of-the-art special effects of 1976 seem hopelessly out of date today (contrast).

Here are common transitions that signal that a writer is organizing her ideas through comparison and contrast.

Words Showing Similarity

similarly	in the same way	likewise
like	in a like manner	just as
and	also	both

Words Showing Difference

but	on the other hand	yet
however	on the contrary	in contrast
conversely	while	unlike

Cause and effect arranges ideas so that readers can see why something took place (cause) and what changes happened as a result (effect). For example, a historian may write about the causes of the stock market crash of 1929 in the United States (investors borrowing money on easy credit to buy stock) and the effects of the crash (lost fortunes, business and bank closings, unemployment). The following are key words that give clues about when a writer is describing cause and effect.

Words Indicating Cause

because of	created by
since	caused by

Words Indicating Effect

therefore so
hence consequently
as a result

Practice

Consider the structure of the passage below and then answer the following sentence-insertion question. Find the answer on page 111.

Theodore Roosevelt was born with asthma and poor eyesight. (1) To conquer his handicaps, Teddy trained in a gym and became a lightweight boxer while at Harvard. (2) Next, he went west to hunt buffalo and run a cattle ranch. After returning east in 1886, he became a civil service reformer and also a police commissioner. (3) He entered national politics in 1896 when he became assistant navy secretary under President McKinley. He served in that post during the Spanish-American War. (4) Later he led the Rough Riders on a cavalry charge up San Juan Hill in Cuba. After achieving fame, he became Governor of New York and then Vice President under McKinley. When McKinley died in 1901, he assumed the presidency. In 1904, he was elected president in his own right.

The following sentence can be added to the passage:

Yet this sickly child later won fame as a political leader, Rough Rider, and hero of the common people.

8. Where would this sentence best fit in the passage? Choose the number to indicate where you would add the sentence to the passage.
- a. (1)
 - b. (2)
 - c. (3)
 - d. (4)

QUICK QUIZ

The following are two reading passages like those you will find on the TOEFL exam. Read each one carefully and then answer the questions that follow.

Passage 1

The Woodstock Music and Art Fair—better known to its participants and to history simply as “Woodstock”—should have been a colossal failure. Just a month prior to its August 15, 1969 opening, the council of Wallkill, New York, informed the fair’s organizers that it was withdrawing its permission to hold the festival.

Amazingly, the organizers found a new site, a large field in Woodstock, New York, owned by a local dairy farmer. Word spread to the public of the fair’s new location. The event drew a larger audience than the organizers had expected. On the first day of the fair, crowd estimates of 30,000 kept rising; traffic jams blocked most roads leading to the area. Some musicians could not reach the site to appear at their scheduled times. In addition, fences that were supposed to facilitate ticket collection never materialized, so the organizers abandoned all attempts at taking tickets.

But that was not all: as the large crowd gathered, so did summer storm clouds. It started raining on opening night and continued for much of the three-day event. To deal with the crowd, which reached an esti-

mated 500,000 by the third day, helicopters flew in food, doctors, and medical supplies.

Despite all of its problems, the festival featured some of the greatest musicians of the 1960s, including Janis Joplin; Joan Baez; Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young; Sly and the Family Stone; Creedence Clearwater Revival; and Jimi Hendrix. Today many people think of Woodstock not only as a milestone for rock music but as the defining moment for an entire generation.

1. The main idea of this passage is best expressed in which sentence?
 - a. Most Americans think of Woodstock as a bunch of kids dancing to music in the mud.
 - b. The organizers underestimated how many people the festival would attract.
 - c. Despite poor planning, Woodstock was a success and a high point for a generation of Americans.
 - d. The organizers succeeded in their goal of creating a historically significant event.
2. What was the final crowd estimate?
 - a. 20,000
 - b. 30,000
 - c. 50,000
 - d. 500,000
3. Which of the following was NOT a problem faced by the event's organizers?
 - a. blocked access to the site
 - b. attracting musical talent
 - c. bad weather
 - d. finding a location for the festival

4. The phrase *defining moment* in paragraph 4 could best be replaced by which word or phrase?
 - a. symbol
 - b. belief
 - c. anecdote
 - d. fun time
5. Where in the passage does the author describe the weather conditions during the event?
 - a. at the end of paragraph 2
 - b. at the beginning of paragraph 3
 - c. at the end of paragraph 3
 - d. at the beginning of paragraph 4
6. The word *facilitate* in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to
 - a. make easier.
 - b. make more difficult.
 - c. build a facility.
 - d. increase.
7. What does the author mean by the statement *the Woodstock Music and Art Fair should have been a colossal failure*?
 - a. Woodstock should not have happened.
 - b. Woodstock was a financial failure because the organizers did not collect tickets.
 - c. When you mix dairy farmers with young rock fans, you are asking for trouble.
 - d. The large crowd and other problems could easily have resulted in a crisis.

8. The passage suggests that
- a. a free concert would never happen today.
 - b. area residents thought the rock fans were weird.
 - c. the impact of the event exceeded expectations.
 - d. music brings people together in a way other art forms cannot.

Passage 2

The largest of the world's 17 penguin species, emperor penguins stand nearly four feet and weigh up to 90 pounds. These sea birds never set foot on dry land. (1) An estimated 200,000 breeding pairs live in about 40 penguin colonies scattered along the coasts of Antarctica. (2) Their waterproofed feathers, flipper-like wings, and streamlined bodies make them excellent swimmers and divers. On ice they can travel distances up to 50 miles by "tobogganing"—gliding on their stomachs while pushing with their wings and feet.

(3) Emperor penguins breed during the Antarctic winter in some of the world's most severe weather conditions (temperatures of -80°F and winds up to 112 miles per hour). Breeding during the winter allows chicks to mature in midsummer when food is plentiful. After the female lays a single egg, the male holds it in a fold of skin near his feet for a two-month incubation period. During this time he huddles with other males to keep warm. (4) The male moves very little and does not eat, usually losing up to a third of his body weight. Meanwhile the females go to sea and dive for fish so that when they return they can feed and care for the newly hatched chicks. After the male restores his body weight, both parents take turns caring for their young.

The world's emperor penguin population declined in the last 50 years due to a period of warming ocean temperatures. Warm water shrinks ice cover and reduces the population of krill—a small crustacean that

is the emperor penguin's staple food. Today the emperor penguin population has stabilized, but warming trends could again threaten this magnificent sea bird.

9. What is the author's main purpose in this passage?
 - a. to describe the recent plight of the emperor penguin
 - b. to show the differences between penguin species
 - c. to describe the characteristics and breeding practice of the emperor penguin
 - d. to describe the eating habits of the emperor penguin
10. Which of the following is NOT true of the emperor penguin?
 - a. They can travel 50 miles by gliding.
 - b. They breed during Antarctic summer.
 - c. The male incubates the egg.
 - d. They can withstand severe weather.
11. The word *stabilized* in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to
 - a. held steady.
 - b. increased.
 - c. slowed.
 - d. fluctuated.
12. The passage suggests that
 - a. the female emperor penguin should take better care of her young.
 - b. no animal can survive in subzero temperatures.
 - c. scientists have never been close enough to observe the emperor penguin.
 - d. changes in the global environment can threaten the emperor penguin.

13. What makes up the staple diet of the emperor penguin?
- a. cuttlefish
 - b. krill
 - c. seaweed
 - d. fried clams
14. Where in the passage does the author describe the characteristics that make emperor penguins excellent swimmers?
- a. at the beginning of paragraph 1
 - b. at the end of paragraph 1
 - c. at the beginning of paragraph 2
 - d. at the end of paragraph 2
15. Why do male emperor penguins form a huddle?
- a. to protect the eggs from sea lions
 - b. to share their food supply
 - c. to maintain body heat in harsh temperatures
 - d. to share parenting advice

16. The following sentence can be inserted into the passage:

Instead they feed and breed in the frigid waters and sea ice of the southern Ocean.

Where would this sentence best fit in the passage? Choose the number to indicate where you would add the sentence to the passage.

- a. (1)
- b. (2)
- c. (3)
- d. (4)

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Practice active reading techniques, such as highlighting and taking notes.
- Schedule regular reading time into your study plan.
- Familiarize yourself with the reading question types, including those on the computer-based exam.
- Main ideas are general statements that bring together all the ideas in a passage.
- Supporting details are specific examples and facts that back up a main idea.
- Inferences are conclusions based on what the writer suggests or implies.
- Word choice is the particular words a writer uses to describe his subject.
- Connotation is the suggested meaning of words.
- Learn the strategies for determining the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary words.
- Review the three-part strategy for answering reference questions.
- For paraphrased sentence questions, practice “rewriting” material as you read.
- Study the four most common patterns writers use to organize their ideas.
- Familiarize yourself with the transitional phrases used to introduce specific information, chronology, important points, comparisons, contrasts, causes, and effects.

Practice Answers

1. c.
2. a.
3. b.
4. c. Because *overt* is not a positive characteristic in this context, you can eliminate choices **a** and **d**, which are positive words in this setting. Choice **b** is too negative; nervous behaviors are not considered obnoxious.
5. a. Because the writer says that money is not important to him, you can determine the meaning of *lucrative* has something to do with money. When you replace *lucrative* with “highly profitable” in the sentence, it makes sense.
6. c.
7. b. The author uses the phrases “deliberately obscure” and “impossible to understand” to give a negative description of the “new writers” he is addressing. When the author states that obscure writing is “impossible to understand except by a small, elite group of other writers,” most likely he is not putting down the average reader but implying that most readers are not interested in obscure writing.
8. a. This passage is organized by chronological order. Note the use of the transitional words *next*, *later*, *when*, and *then*.

Quiz Answers

1. c.
2. d.
3. b.
4. a.
5. b.
6. a.
7. d.
8. c.
9. c.
10. b.
11. a.
12. d.
13. b.
14. b.
15. c.
16. a.

Chapter 5

Writing

College success depends on your ability to express yourself clearly and accurately in written English. At the university level, you will receive numerous writing assignments—term papers, essay exams, lab reports—and you will need to show you can organize and develop your thoughts through writing. The writing section is a required part of the computer-based TOEFL exam; everyone must complete an essay on the day of the test. The paper-and-pencil version of the TOEFL exam does not include a writing section. The writing test is a separate exam called the Test of Written English (TWE), which is offered in the United States five times a year.

Both the writing portion of the TOEFL exam and the TWE exam test your ability to generate ideas and support them through details and evidence. They measure how effectively and logically you organize your thoughts, using correct grammar, appropriate word choice, and varied sentence structure and vocabulary. In both

tests, you will be given 30 minutes in which to compose a short essay (about four to five paragraphs long) about a given topic. The topics are designed to be general so that you do not need any specialized knowledge to respond to them.

COMPUTER TEST VS. PAPER TEST

The writing section of the computer-based TOEFL exam differs from the paper-based TWE exam. Although the types of writing prompts are the same, the TWE exam is offered separately from the paper-based TOEFL exam and at limited times, whereas the computer-based test requires that you write an essay on the same day as the rest of the TOEFL exam. Both tests give you 30 minutes to respond to one pre-selected topic. The following chart compares the two tests:

Computer Test: Writing	Paper-and-Pencil: Test of Written English (TWE)
Mandatory part of the computer test.	Separate test (not part of the paper-and-pencil TOEFL exam).
Offered whenever the computer test is given.	Offered only five times a year. If you need to take the TWE exam, select a TOEFL exam date when the TWE exam is also offered. (There is no additional cost.)

Essay topic randomly selected by computer. Other test-takers may have different topics.	All test-takers respond to same essay topic.
Essay topics posted on www.toefl.org .	No published list of TWE exam essay topics.
You may handwrite your essay or type it on the computer.	You must handwrite your essay.
Your writing score is combined with your score on the structure section. It counts as 50 percent of your total structure/writing score.	Your TWE exam essay score is reported separately from your TOEFL exam score.

TYPES OF WRITING PROMPTS

The computer test and the TWE exam use the same type of **writing prompt**—a general topic and a question about that topic. Most prompts present a statement, situation, or scenario and ask you to take a position and explain it. They can be broken down into three parts:

1. a statement or situation to consider
2. a question
3. directions

Note the three parts in this example:

Test Time Saver

Decide beforehand if you are going to handwrite or type your essay.

If you are typing it, familiarize yourself with the word-processing software used on the TOEFL exam (you can do this at www.toefl.org). Handwritten essays must fit on two sides of a single page. Represent yourself in the best light by writing legibly and neatly.

(1) Many people feel that American society is too competitive. (2) Do you agree or disagree? (3) Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Some prompts skip the first part (statement/situation). Others incorporate the first part within the question. Here is an example of the latter:

(1 and 2 combined) Do you agree that “honesty is the best policy”? (3) Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Although all of the writing prompts fit the basic formula described above, they can be divided more specifically into five types:

1. **Agree or disagree.** The most common prompt on the TOEFL exam, this type asks you to agree or disagree with a statement. Here is an example:

Thomas Edison, the renowned inventor, once said, “Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

2. **Explain your position.** The second most common prompt, this type asks you to state your position on a general issue. Often prompts follow this pattern: “Some people prefer *x*. Others *y*. Which do you prefer?” Here are some examples:

Some people prefer to live in the quiet of the country; others prefer the hustle and bustle of the city. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Who makes a better leader: someone who is loved, or someone who is feared? Take a position and explain your answer.

3. **Describe a characteristic.** This prompt asks you to identify an important characteristic of a person, place, or thing. Unlike the first two kinds of prompts that narrow your responses, this type allows you to choose the characteristic you want to discuss.

What are some of the qualities of a good teacher? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

*People define “success” in different ways. In your opinion, what **one** characteristic best defines success? Use specific reasons and example to support your choice.*

4. **What if?** This prompt presents you with an “if-then” type of scenario: *If x happened, then* what would you do? Questions may be open-ended or may limit your choices to two possible reactions to the situation.

*If you could travel anywhere in the world, what **one** place would you go to? Why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.*

If you could meet a famous person from any historical time period, who would it be? Why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

5. **Cause or effect.** For this type of prompt, you will consider a phenomenon and look for its causes, or you will consider a cause and look at its effects. You do not need expert knowledge to respond; use your common sense and personal experiences to answer.

*The Internet allows people to access information in an instant. How has the speed of this technology changed people’s behavior? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. (Discuss **effect**.)*

*Some citizens do not vote in elections. Why do you think some people do not take advantage of their right to vote? (Discuss **cause**.)*

TIPS FOR THE WRITING TEST

To save time and get your best score on the writing test, follow these guidelines:

Find Topics Online

All of the writing prompts used on the computer-based TOEFL exam are available online. Although you cannot select which one you want to write about on the test, make sure to review the topics list. Pick several prompts and practice composing essays (be sure to time yourself).

To view the topics:

1. Go to www.toefl.org.
2. Click on "Test Prep."
3. Click on "Writing Topics."

Stick to your assigned topic. You cannot choose your own topic. If you write about a different topic, you will receive a score of "0."

Read questions carefully. If a prompt asks you to discuss only *one* characteristic, limit yourself to one. If you write about three characteristics, you will receive a lower score.

Limit your focus. For example, if a question asks you to describe some of the qualities you value in a friend, quickly choose two or three characteristics for your essay. You do not have enough time or space to discuss more.

Impose conditions. Some questions give you only two choices for your response, but that does not mean you are limited to a simple "yes" or "no" answer. For example, a prompt may ask you: "Do you agree or disagree that all students should wear school uniforms instead of whatever clothing they desire?" You can impose some conditions in your answer: "Students should not have to wear school

uniforms, but there should be restrictions about what kind of clothing students can wear.”

ALL ABOUT SCORING

The scoring system for the computer test and the TWE exam is the same: two readers independently rate your essay and give it a score from 0–6. The two scores are then averaged to determine your final essay score. For example, if one reader gives your essay a score of 6 and the other a 5, your score will be 5.5. If there is a discrepancy of more than one point, (e.g., one reader rates your essay a 4, and the other a 6), a third reader will independently score your essay.

The developers of the TOEFL exam created a scoring guide to aid readers in rating essays. The guide names specific criteria for each score. The official writing guide is available online at www.toefl.org or in the exam bulletin. Review the qualities of a top-rated essay. The more you know about what official exam readers are looking for, the more likely you will meet those expectations. The following guidelines are adapted from the TOEFL exam “Writing Score Guide.”

Your Guide to Scoring

Score An essay with this score:

- 6
 - fully addresses the essay topic
 - makes a clear thesis statement (main idea)
 - gives appropriate details and examples to support its thesis
 - is organized logically and develops ideas thoroughly

- uses correct grammar and makes appropriate word choices consistently
 - demonstrates variety in sentence structure and vocabulary
-
- 5
- addresses the essay topic, but responds to some parts more effectively than others
 - makes a thesis statement
 - gives details and examples to support its thesis
 - has an overall effective organization and develops ideas (e.g., four or five well-developed paragraphs)
 - uses correct grammar throughout most of the essay
 - demonstrates some variety in sentence structure and vocabulary
-
- 4
- addresses the essay topic, but does not respond to all of its parts
 - uses some details to support a thesis
 - is organized but does not use the most effective or logical approach
 - develops ideas adequately (e.g., four developed paragraphs)
 - includes grammatical and usage errors that may confuse meaning
 - demonstrates less variety in sentence structure and a more limited vocabulary
-
- 3
- does not have a clear thesis
 - has weak organization and development (e.g., two or three short paragraphs)
 - offers few or irrelevant details to support its thesis
 - uses words and phrases inappropriately
 - makes several grammatical errors
-

- 2
- lacks focus
 - gives few or no details
 - is disorganized and underdeveloped (e.g., only two short paragraphs)
 - makes serious and frequent grammatical errors
-
- 1
- is incoherent
 - is underdeveloped (e.g., only one paragraph)
 - makes serious and persistent grammatical errors
-
- 0
- is blank
 - simply copies the essay topic but does not respond to it
 - addresses another topic
 - uses a language other than English
 - consists only of a series of random keystrokes

KEEPING TIME ON THE ESSAY EXAM

You have just half an hour to write a top-rated essay. Should you plunge right in or take time to plan your essay first? Even though time is limited, your chances of doing well increase if you organize your thoughts before you write. The writing process includes three important steps: planning, writing, and proofreading. To make time for each step, follow these guidelines during the writing test:

- 5–10 minutes** plan (choose a thesis, brainstorm, and outline your essay)
- 15–20 minutes** write
- 5 minutes** proofread (reread for errors or to adjust word choice)
- = 30 minutes**

CREATING A STRONG ESSAY

Planning is an essential part of good writing, even within the limited time frame of the writing test. Your prewriting process should include formulating a thesis, brainstorming for supporting details, and making a basic outline of what you will write.

To begin, carefully read the writing prompt. Make sure you fully understand it. Then consider your answer to its question. Your answer will be the main idea or **thesis** of your essay. A strong thesis does not merely repeat or restate the question or the essay prompt. A thesis statement should:

- answer the question asked in the prompt
- tell the reader what your subject is
- let the reader know what you think or feel about the subject
- use active, clear language

Consider the following prompt:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? E-mail (electronic mail) is a less personal form of communication than letter writing. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

The following sentences are *not* thesis statements:

- E-mail is an easy, instantaneous kind of communication.
- Many people like to use e-mail for their personal correspondence.

These statements do not answer the question directly, nor do they tell the reader what the writer thinks or feels about the subject.

The following *are* thesis statements. They respond directly to the question:

- I believe that e-mail has made communication between people more personal than ever.
- In my opinion, e-mail is a less personal form of communication than letter writing.

Practice 1

Create thesis statements for three to five writing prompts (use some from this chapter or select some from the writing topics list at www.toefl.org). Check your statements against the criteria listed in this section and see how they rate.

NEXT STEP: BRAINSTORMING

Once you know how you will answer the question in the prompt, you can begin to brainstorm—think up ideas—that will support your thesis. Use one sheet of paper to list three to five reasons, examples, or details that support your main idea.

Brainstorming, also called free writing, is a technique in which you write down whatever comes to mind. To brainstorm, follow this strategy:

- Write non-stop for two to three minutes. Keep your hand moving to get your ideas out.
- Write down as many ideas as you can. Don't edit yourself; write whatever comes to mind.
- Pick the strongest ideas for your essay.

For both the computer-based test and the TWE exam, you will be given a piece of scrap paper for making notes. Because this paper will not be graded, don't worry about grammar or structure while you brainstorm. You can also write your notes in your native language if you choose—just be sure to use standard English in your essay.

The following is an example of how you might brainstorm supporting details for the e-mail prompt above:

Thesis: In my opinion, e-mail is a less personal form of communication than letter writing.

Why?

- people take less time to write e-mails than letters
- people don't choose their words carefully in e-mails
- e-mails don't show a person's handwriting or choice of stationery
- e-mails are just words on a machine; letters tell more about a person

Examples:

e-mails I write to my friends

letters my grandparents wrote to each other during their courtship

Practice 2

Brainstorm three to five reasons, examples, or details to support the thesis statements you formulated in Practice 1. Check your ideas against the criteria listed in this section and see how they rate.

MAKING AN OUTLINE

Outlines are an important part of your planning process. They help you to put your ideas in a logical order and alert you to any gaps in your supporting examples that you need to fill. Generally, essays follow a basic structure that includes three parts: an introduction (states your thesis), the body (explains and supports your thesis), and a conclusion (restates your thesis). Follow this structure in your outline, too. Plan on writing a five-paragraph essay, listing one point on your outline for each paragraph. Note how the body of the essay is divided into three supporting ideas:

1. Introduction
2. Body: Support 1
3. Body: Support 2
4. Body: Support 3
5. Conclusion

The following is an expanded outline based on the e-mail prompt described earlier in this chapter. The outline organizes the supporting ideas by increasing importance. It includes reasons that support the thesis and examples that support each reason:

1. Introduction

Thesis: In my opinion, e-mail is a less personal form of communication than letter writing.

2. Body

Reason 1: People take less time to write e-mails than letters.

Examples: My friends & I write quick, short e-mails—they don't take a lot of thought.

Winning Formula: Order of Importance

The locations of your introduction and your conclusion are obvious. However, you need a pattern, or structure, to organize the ideas in the body of your essay. Because the prompts on the writing exam ask you to take a position on a subject, you are essentially developing a brief argument in your essay. And the most effective strategy for making an argument is to organize your ideas by their importance, or rank. **Order of importance** can arrange ideas in two ways:

- by increasing importance (least important idea→most important idea).
- by decreasing importance (most important idea→least important idea).

Either arrangement is appropriate. However, if you develop your essay by increasing importance, you present your least important idea first and save your strongest idea for last, making a greater impact in your conclusion.

My grandparents took hours, even days, to write long letters.

3. Body

Reason 2: People don't choose their words carefully in e-mails.

Examples: I don't bother to check my spelling or grammar in my e-mails.

My grandparents wrote their letters using careful, correct sentences.

4. Body

Reason 3: E-mails are just words on a machine; letters tell more about a person.

Examples: I read and write e-mails on an impersonal, gray computer screen.

My grandmother's lilac-scented stationery and cursive writing reveal a little about who she was.

My grandfather's blue airmail letters capture a bit of history.

5. Conclusion

I believe that electronic mail is a convenient, fast way to communicate, but not as personal as letter writing. Unlike e-mails, the careful sentences and characteristic handwriting in my grandparents' letters leave a personal record of who they were, how they lived, and what they felt.

Practice 3

Make an expanded outline for one of the prompts you used in Practice 1 and 2. As you create your outline, you will probably notice where you need to add examples or work out your ideas.

A STRONG INTRODUCTION

With a detailed outline in hand, you are ready to write. Because you only have 15 to 20 minutes to compose your essay, don't waste time perfecting your introduction. A good way to begin is to restate in your own words the statement or situation in the prompt and then give your thesis. Here is an example:

Some people prefer living in the country. Others prefer the crowds and energy of the city. For me, the noise, lights, and

movement of the city are more comforting than a quiet, dark, and still night in the country.

Another way to write a strong introduction is to include your thesis and a summary of the evidence (supporting details) you will present:

Today, the Internet allows us to access information in an instant. This technology has improved our lives by making it easier to research topics that interest us, find and buy products we need, and exchange information with others.

Note how this introduction outlines the three main parts the essay's body: how the Internet makes it easier to (1) research topics, (2) find and buy products, and (3) exchange information.

THE BODY: SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS

After you have written your introduction, begin composing the body of your essay (about three paragraphs long). To create an effective essay, *each* paragraph in your essay needs to be effective, too. Follow these guidelines as you write each supporting paragraph:

- **Avoid introducing several ideas within one paragraph.** By definition, a paragraph is a group of sentences about the *same* idea.
- **Treat each paragraph as a mini-essay**, with its own thesis (a **topic sentence** that expresses the main idea of the paragraph) and supporting details (examples).
- **List at least one detail or example** for each main supporting idea.
- **Keep each paragraph about 3–4 sentences long.** Your

essay for the TOEFL exam will be short. If you write more sentences in each paragraph, you may run out of time and space. If you write fewer, you will most likely not develop your idea sufficiently.

- **Use transitions.** Key words and phrases like *more important*, *similarly*, *first*, *for example*, and *in particular* can help guide your reader through your essay. For more transitional phrases, see pages 100–103 in Chapter 4.

ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE VOICE

For clear, direct writing, use the active voice. In English, *voice* expresses a relationship between the verb and the subject of the sentence or its direct object. When you write in the *active voice*, the subject of the sentence causes, or is the source of, the action (verb). When you use the *passive voice*, the subject does not perform the action, but rather is acted upon. Sentences in the passive voice are often wordier and more difficult to understand. Here are some examples of active vs. passive voice:

Active voice: We suggest that you organize your ideas by importance.

Passive voice: It is suggested that you organize your ideas by importance. (Note that this sentence does not say *who* performed the action.)

Active voice: Her brother typed the letter.

Passive voice: The letter was typed by her brother. (Here the *doer* of the action is the direct object *brother*, not the subject of the sentence, *letter*.)

IN CONCLUSION

Use the last paragraph of your essay to sum up your argument. Avoid introducing new topics or ideas. Your concluding paragraph should:

- show that you have covered your topic fully
- restate your thesis in different words
- make readers feel that have learned something meaningful from your argument

Here is a sample conclusion using the writing prompt about whether one prefers living in the city or the country:

Give me the grime and rush of the city over the “peaceful” countryside any day. Some people find inspiration in the solitude of the country, but I find my inspiration in the mix of people, skyscrapers, and the fast pace of the city.

THE LAST STEP: PROOFREADING

Because you have only about five minutes to proofread, you don't have time to substantially revise or rewrite your piece. Organizing your argument and providing adequate support must happen *before* you write, when you are outlining your essay. The goal of proofreading is to give your essay a final “polish” by checking your spelling, correcting grammatical errors, and, if needed, changing word order or word choice. To proofread, carefully read your essay, paying attention to anything that doesn't sound right. The following checklist outlines some basic grammatical problems to look out for as you proofread. (For more information about each of these topics, review Chapter 3, Structure.)

Make sure your nouns and verbs agree. The subject of the sentence must match the verb in number. If the subject is singular, the verb is singular. If the subject is plural, the verb is plural.

Make sure pronouns and antecedents agree. An antecedent is the noun represented by a pronoun. Pronouns and antecedents must agree in number. If the antecedent is singular, the pronoun is singular; if the antecedent is plural, the pronoun is plural.

Check your modifiers. Even native speakers of English confuse adjectives and adverbs. Adjectives modify nouns and pronouns; adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

Avoid double negatives. The use of double negatives is unnecessary and redundant. Remember that there are more negatives than the obvious *no*, *not*, *never*, *neither*, and *nor*. There is also *hardly* and *barely* that act as negatives in your sentences.

Keep your verb tense consistent. Switching tense within a sentence can change its meaning. Generally, a sentence or paragraph that begins in the present tense should continue in the present tense.

Review prepositional idioms. If you have studied the list of prepositional idioms on pages 73–75, you may be able to “hear” whether a preposition (*to*, *of*, *about*, *for*, *with*, *about*, *on*, *upon*) sounds right with a particular phrase or verb.

COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS

The following list contains 20 of the most commonly confused word pairs or groups, along with a brief definition of each. Mark the words that you often confuse and study them.

Confusing Words	Quick Definition
accept	recognize
except	excluding
access	means of approaching
excess	extra
affect (verb)	to influence
effect (noun)	a result
effect (verb)	to bring about
assure	to make certain (assure someone)
ensure	to make certain
insure	to make certain (financial value)
beside	next to
besides	in addition to
bibliography	list of writings
biography	a life story
complement	match
compliment	praise
decent	well mannered
descent	decline, fall
desert	arid, sandy region
dessert	sweet served after a meal
disburse	to pay
disperse	to spread out
disinterested	no strong opinion either way; impartial
uninterested	don't care
elicit	to stir up
illicit	illegal

farther	beyond
further	additional
imply	hint, suggest
infer	assume, deduce
personal (adjective)	Individual, private
personnel (noun)	employees
principal (adjective)	main
principal (noun)	person in charge
principle	standard
than	in contrast to
then	next
their	belonging to them
there	in a place
they're	they are
who	substitute for he, she, or they
whom	substitute for him, her, or them
your	belonging to you
you're	you are

Practice Writing Prompt

Time yourself (30-minute limit) and compose an essay answering the following writing prompt.

We are often surprised, even awed, by the experiences of our ancestors. Describe a time when you learned something important about your family history. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

The following are model essays based on the writing prompt above. The first is a sample 6 score, followed by a sample 4 and sample 1 score. After you read each of them, consider how you would rate your own essay using the criteria of the TOEFL exam listed on pages 120-122.

Sample 6 Score

My dad was not usually the type to talk about much, especially about his past. I knew some things about his background: He left Hungary in 1956, after the Revolution. He had fought with the rebels in Budapest. When he settled in France, he left behind his parents and 11 brothers and sisters. That was all I knew.

When I turned fourteen, my dad began to tell me more. He thought I was old enough to hear about his role in the Hungarian Revolution. The Revolution started as a student protest against the Communists in October of 1956. It ended in November when Soviet tanks rolled into Budapest and crushed the rebellion. My father, who was only 22 years old, served in the rebel army.

I wanted to know all the details. How did he get involved? How did he escape? But the question I most wanted to know was this: *Why* did he fight? I wanted to know how a young man could believe in something so strongly that he was willing to die for it.

My dad gave a lot of reasons for his role in the rebellion. First, the Communists were ruining the economy. Even though he worked as a toolmaker, my dad could not always afford to buy clothes or food. "But what I really could not live with," he said, "was not being able to say what I wanted." If you spoke up against the government, you could go to jail, or worse.

Today, my dad sometimes complains about France. He says

that the politicians are crooked, criminals have too many rights, and parents are not strict enough with their children. But I don't need to remind him that at least in his new country, he can complain as loudly as he pleases.

Sample 4 Score

The summer I was fourteen, I learned something about my dad. He never talked much and I didn't really know that much about him. When I turned fourteen, he thought I was old enough to hear more. He decided it was time to tell me about the Hungarian Revolution.

My dad was a toolmaker in Hungary. Because he didn't like the Communist government, he decided to join the protests led by students angry at the government. That's how the rebellion started. The Communists wouldn't let anyone talk bad about the government, and the protesters were attacked. That started the fighting. My dad was only 22 years old then.

I wanted to know why he decided to fight. He told me that because of the communist government, he couldn't make enough money to buy food and clothes. The most important thing, though, was freedom of speech. He couldn't say what he wanted. You could go to jail for criticizing the government.

My dad escaped with the other refugees, and he has lived in France since 1956. He complains about France a lot, especially the politicians. But he knows that here, no one is going to put him in jail for that.

Sample 1 Score

I was surprised by my dad when he told me about the Hungarian revolution he fought. I knew before that he fought but I didn't know anything else about it. It was a short war and the communists

one. He was in the army. He didn't like to talk much so that's part of why I was so surprised. One question I had, was, why did he fight. He said he didn't like the government and they'd take you away for just saying that. I can't imagine such a thing. I would want to fight to. That's not the way it is in France or America. This is a really grate country and I'm glad to live here.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Review the list of TOEFL exam writing prompts at www.toefl.org.
- Time yourself and practice writing essays about several prompts.
- Familiarize yourself with the scoring system and the criteria for a top-rated essay.
- Do not write about a topic other than the one assigned to you. If you write about a different topic, you will receive a score of 0.
- Plan on writing five paragraphs: an introduction, three supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Aim to write about three to four sentences in each paragraph.
- Give yourself about 5–10 minutes to plan, 15–20 minutes to write, and 5 minutes to proofread your essay.
- The prewriting process includes stating your thesis, brainstorming, and outlining.
- Use your outline to organize your essay and fill in gaps where supporting details are needed.
- Proofread for grammatical errors and word choice; do not revise or rewrite.

Appendix A

Test Details

The computer TOEFL exam is offered almost every day in the United States. However, every test location does not give the exam every day. Depending on demand, test centers may give the computer test daily, weekly, or monthly. You may be able to schedule a test date in as little as three days, but plan to register at least six to eight weeks in advance (as spaces can fill quickly). When registering, keep in mind that the busiest testing months are October, November, December, April, and May.

The paper test is given less frequently and is available in fewer locations. At the time of publication, the test dates for the paper exam in 2004 include the following:

- January 17, 2004
- March 12, 2004
- May 15, 2004

Note that not all test locations are open on all dates. Contact your Regional Registration Center (RRC) to ask about available test dates.

Before You Start:
Get the *TOEFL Information Bulletin*

The TOEFL Information Bulletin for Computer-Based and Paper-Based Testing includes important information about the exam: a list of test sites, institution codes (to report your scores to the college or university to which you are applying), a registration form, test instructions, and other details. You can pick up a bulletin at an admissions or international student office at most universities or:

- call the ETS at **609-771-7100**.
- download a bulletin online at www.toefl.org.

REGISTRATION FOR THE COMPUTER TEST

To schedule a test date for the TOEFL computer exam, follow one of these methods:

- Call **800-468-6335** for a test center in the United States, Canada, or a U.S. territory. You will need a credit card to schedule by phone.
- Call **443-751-4862**, if you live outside the United States, but plan to take the exam at a U.S. test center.
- Complete the registration form in the *TOEFL Information Bulletin* and mail the form with your payment (credit card, check, or money order) to

Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6159, Princeton, NJ 08541-6159.

To take the test in another country, call the Regional Registration Center (RRC) in your area. A complete list of RRCs is available in the *TOEFL Information Bulletin*. You can also schedule a test date by mailing or faxing an International Test Scheduling Form (available in the exam bulletin) to your RRC.

REGISTRATION FOR THE PAPER TEST

You can register for the TOEFL paper exam in two ways:

- Fill out the registration form in the *TOEFL Information Bulletin* and fax or mail the form to Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6159, Princeton, NJ 08541-6159, U.S.A. (fax: 609-771-7710).
- Register online at www.toefl.org. You will need a credit card to schedule online.

How Much Does the Test Cost?

Both the computer and paper versions of the TOEFL exam cost \$130 in the United States. The test fee may vary in certain countries.

If you can't make your test date, you may reschedule or cancel your appointment. To reschedule or cancel, call 800-468-6335 (for U.S. test centers) or contact your RRC at least three days before your scheduled test date. If you decide to reschedule, you will be charged a \$40 fee. For canceled dates, you can

receive a partial refund of \$65 if you contact the testing center within the proper time frame and fill out a Refund Request Form (available in the exam bulletin).

SCORING: THE COMPUTER TEST

Test takers of the computer TOEFL exam will receive a total score of 0 to 300 points. The total score is made up of three sections with the following score ranges:

Listening	0–30
Structure/Writing	0–30
Reading	0–30

To determine your total score, add your section scores, multiply by 10, and divide by 3.

Your essay is graded separately on a scale of 0–6. The essay rating is then incorporated into your Structure/Writing score, making up about half of the 30 points for that section. For more information about the scoring system of the essay test, see pages 120–122 in Chapter 5.

You will be able to view your Listening and Reading scores on your computer screen immediately after completing the exam. Because your essay will not yet be read and graded, you will see only a score range for the Structure/Writing portion of the test.

SCORING: THE PAPER TEST

The scoring scale for the paper-and-pencil TOEFL exam ranges from 310 to 677 points. Each of the test's three sections makes up one-third of your total score. The TWE exam is scored

separately on a scale of 1 to 6, and reported separately from your total TOEFL exam score.

A score of 500 to 517 points on the paper test corresponds to a score of 173 to 187 points on the computer test. Tables available on the TOEFL exam bulletin offer more information about how the computer-test scores compare to paper-test scores. The bulletin also offers percentile charts that help you interpret your TOEFL exam score.

The TOEFL exam has no passing or failing scores. Each institution decides the minimum test score that it accepts. Aim to score above the minimum admission requirement set by the college or university to which you are applying.

CANCELING YOUR SCORE

For those taking the computer test, you can elect to cancel your scores when you view them on your screen after you complete the test. The paper test allows you to cancel your scores by filling out the score cancellation section of your answer sheet at the test center or by calling 609-771-7100 within seven days of your test date. However, you cannot cancel your scores after you have received your score report.

Once canceled, your scores will not be reported to you or any institutions and you will not receive a refund of your test payment. Canceled scores on the paper-based TOEFL exam cannot be reinstated. If you cancel your scores on the computer-based exam, you can reinstate them within 60 days by faxing or mailing a written request to Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6159, Princeton, NJ 08541-6159 (fax: 609-771-7710). Your request should give

your name, date of birth, daytime phone number, appointment number, and a \$10 reinstatement fee.

OFFICIAL SCORE REPORTS

You will receive one free examinee score report and up to four official free score reports sent to institutions of your choice. You must select which institutions will receive your scores on the day of the test. You can order additional score reports by filling out a Score Report Request Form (available in the exam bulletin) and paying a \$15 fee for each report. Note that scores older than two years are not kept on file and can't be reported.

The following chart describes when your test scores will be mailed to you:

Exam Type	Mailing Date
Computer test with typed essay	2 weeks after test
Computer test with handwritten essay	5 weeks after test
Paper-and-pencil test	5 weeks after test

Notify ETS if you haven't received your scores after 4 weeks (computer test with typed essay); 7 weeks (computer test with handwritten essay); or 8 weeks (paper-and-pencil test).

SCORES BY PHONE

To find out your scores on the same day they are mailed, call one of the following numbers:

- 888-863-3544 (United States, Canada, or U.S. territories)
- 609-771-7262 (all other locations)
- 609-771-7714 TTY (hearing impaired only)

This service costs \$10. To learn your scores by phone, you need a touch-tone phone, your 16-digit appointment number or 7-digit paper registration number, your date of birth, your test date, and a credit card to pay the fee.

TAKING THE TEST AGAIN

You may take the TOEFL exam as many times as you wish. However, you can't take it more than one time in a calendar month, even if you have canceled your scores. If you take the test more than once in this time period, your scores will not be reported and your test payment will not be refunded.

WHAT TO BRING ON TEST DAY

Test takers must provide proper registration and identification papers on the day of the exam in order to be admitted to the test center. Don't let your studying go to waste by forgetting your documents. Collect the items listed below before your test day.

For the *computer* test, you must bring:

- **Identification with photograph.** Test takers must fulfill strict identification requirements to be admitted. Acceptable forms of identification include a government-issued ID (a passport, driver's license, national or military identification) or a student ID. For other valid forms, review the exam bulletin.

- **Your appointment confirmation number.** You will receive this number when you schedule your appointment.
- **Your CBT voucher.** This only applies if you registered for the test by mail rather than by telephone.

For the *paper* test, you must bring:

- **Identification with photograph.** See the information above.
- **Your admission ticket** and a **signed photo file record** with a recent photo attached. Glue or tape your photo to the form. Do not use staples. Laminated copies or photocopies are not acceptable. (For more details, see the exam bulletin.)
- **Pencils.** Bring at least two sharpened, medium-soft (#2 or HB) black lead pencils and an eraser.

FOLLOW THE RULES

Arrive at least 30 minutes before the test begins in order to register and present your identification. You will be assigned a seat and asked to sign your name any time you leave or enter the testing room. If you are taking the computer test, your photo will be taken and reproduced on your score report and on the computer monitor you are using. If you encounter a problem during the exam, raise your hand and alert the administrator.

You must follow the directions of the test administrator during the exam. The test administrator can dismiss you from the test and cancel your scores without a refund if you do any of the following:

- take the test for someone else
- fail to provide acceptable identification
- use a test aid (such as a dictionary, calculator, book, highlighter, or translator)
- copy from someone else
- eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum during the test
- give or receive help
- leave the testing room without permission
- exceed the time allowed for the break
- create a disturbance
- bring a weapon into the test center
- try to remove notes or scratch paper from the testing room
- tamper with the computer
- reproduce, disclose, or remove test questions from the testing room

Disability Accommodations

Test takers with disabilities can request disability services and accommodations. Download a copy of the *Guide for Test Takers With Disabilities* from www.toefl.org or contact TOEFL Disability Services, Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6054, Princeton, NJ 08541 (phone: 609-771-7780; fax: 609-771-7165; TYY: 609-771-7714).

CONTACT ETS

If you have any remaining questions about the TOEFL exam, you can contact the ETS by one of the following ways:

E-mail	toefl@ets.org
Mail	TOEFL Services Educational Testing Services P.O. Box 6151 Princeton, NJ 08541-6151
Telephone	609-771-7100
Fax	609-771-7500
TTY	609-771-7714

Appendix B

Resources

OFFICIAL TOEFL EXAM INFORMATION

The TOEFL exam is administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Most questions you may have about the TOEFL exam can be answered at www.toefl.org. You can contact the TOEFL offices at:

TOEFL/TSE Services

P.O. Box 6151

Princeton, NJ 08541

Telephone: 609-771-7100 (Monday–Friday, 8:00 A.M.
to 8:00 P.M. EST)

Fax: 609-771-7500

RESOURCES

Here are some additional resources on the TOEFL exam, as well as on the topics tested—reading, listening, grammar/structure, and writing.

Print

- 501 Reading Comprehension Questions, 2nd edition* (New York: LearningExpress, 2001).
- Bonet, Diana, Ed., et al. *The Business of Listening: A Practical Guide to Effective Listening* (Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, 2001).
- Chesla, Elizabeth. *Read Better, Remember More, 2nd edition* (New York: LearningExpress, 2000).
- Chesla, Elizabeth. *LearningExpress's TOEFL Exam Success* (New York: LearningExpress, 2002).
- Kurtin, Mary, et al. *Grammar Workbook for the TOEFL Exam* (Lawrenceville, NJ: ARCO, 2001).
- Lougheed, Lin. *How to Prepare for the Computer-Based TOEFL Essay: Test of English as a Foreign Language* (Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 2000).
- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2003).
- Preparation for the Computer-Based TOEFL Test: Powerprep Software* (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 2000).
- Sharpe, Pamela. *Passkey to the TOEFL, 4th edition* (Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 2001).
- TOEFL Sample Tests, 6th edition* (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Services, 2001).

Yates, Jean. *The Ins and Outs of Prepositions: A Guide Book for ESL Students* (Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 1999).

Online

www.a4esl.org—Quizzes for ESL speakers/writers, covering slang, holidays, reading, culture, writing, grammar, idioms, vocabulary. Helpful links to other websites.

www.toefl.org—This is the official TOEFL site from which you can download the TOEFL Bulletin, find answers to common questions about the exam, and order official Educational Testing Service test-prep materials.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl>—An online writing lab with explanations, workshops, exercises, and links to other writing help centers. There is a section especially for ESL students with a grammar refresher course.