

Please note: These practice sets align with TOEFL iBT tests administered on or after July 26, 2023.

TOEFL iBT® Free Practice Test

Transcript

Please note that this is not an exact transcript of the Free Practice Test. It has been adapted to paper format for usability.

This document may contain some question types that would not appear on a test that has been adapted for various accessibility purposes. On test day, you will receive an accessible assessment that is consistent with any accommodations for which you have been approved.

General Test Information

This free practice test will familiarize you with most of the question types found on the *TOEFL iBT*® test. This test is not a simulation of the *TOEFL iBT*® test. You will not receive scores and your answers will not be saved.

- In the **Reading** section, you will answer questions about reading passages. In this practice test, you will be able to review the correct answer for each question by reviewing the answer key at the end of the section.
- In the **Listening** section, you will answer questions about conversations and lectures. In this practice test, you will be able to review the correct answer for each question by reviewing the answer key at the end of the section.
- In the **Speaking** section, you will be presented with four questions. The first question is about a familiar topic. The other questions ask you to speak about reading passages, conversations, and lectures. In this practice test, your responses will not be scored. Instead, you will see sample responses to each question.
- In the **Writing** section, you will be presented with two writing tasks. The first task asks you to write about a reading passage and a lecture. The second task asks you to write a post for an academic discussion. In this practice test, your responses will not be scored. Instead, you will see sample responses to each question.



Reading Section Directions

In this section, you will be able to demonstrate your ability to understand academic passages in English. You will read and answer questions about **two passages**. In the actual test, you will have 36 minutes total to read both passages and respond to the questions. A clock will indicate how much time is remaining.

In the actual test, some passages may include an underlined word or phrase that you can select to see a definition, an explanation, or an illustration.

You can skip questions and go back later. In this practice test, you can review the correct answer for each question by reviewing the answer key.

Reading Practice Set 1

Examining the Problem of Bycatch

1. A topic of increasing relevance to the conservation of marine life is bycatch—fish and other animals that are unintentionally caught in the process of fishing for a targeted population of fish. Bycatch is a common occurrence in longline fishing, which utilizes a long heavy fishing line with baited hooks placed at intervals, and in trawling, which utilizes a fishing net (trawl) that is dragged along the ocean floor or through the mid-ocean waters. Few fisheries employ gear that can catch one species to the exclusion of all others. Dolphins, whales, and turtles are frequently captured in nets set for tunas and billfishes, and seabirds and turtles are caught in longline sets. Because bycatch often goes unreported, it is difficult to accurately estimate its extent. Available data indicate that discarded biomass (organic matter from living things) amounts to 25–30 percent of official catch, or about 30 million metric tons.
2. The bycatch problem is particularly acute when trawl nets with small mesh sizes (smaller-than-average holes in the net material) are dragged along the bottom of the ocean in pursuit of groundfish or shrimp. Because of the small mesh size of the shrimp trawl nets, most of the fishes captured are either juveniles (young), smaller than legal size limits, or undesirable small species. Even larger mesh sizes do not prevent bycatch because once the net begins to fill with fish or shrimp, small individuals caught subsequently are trapped without ever encountering the mesh. In any case, these incidental captures are unmarketable and are usually shoveled back over the side of the vessel dead or dying.
3. The bycatch problem is complicated economically and ecologically. Bycatch is a liability to shrimp fishers, clogging the nets and increasing fuel costs because of increased drag (resistance) on the vessel. Sorting the catch requires time, leading to spoilage of harvested shrimp and reduced time for fishing. Ecologically, high mortality rates among juvenile fishes could contribute to population declines of recreational and commercial species. Evidence to this effect exists for Gulf of Mexico red snapper and Atlantic Coast weakfish. Because the near-shore areas where shrimp concentrate are also important nursery grounds for many fish species, shrimp trawling could have a profound impact on stock size.
4. Once the dead or dying bycatch is returned to the ecosystem, it is consumed by predators, detritivores (organisms that eat dead plant and animal matter), and decomposers (organisms that break down dead or decaying organic matter), which could have a positive effect on sport fish, seabird, crab, and even shrimp populations. Available evidence indicates that 40–60 percent of the 30 metric tons of catch discarded annually by commercial fishing vessels, and even more of the noncatch waste (organisms killed but never brought to the surface), does not lie unused on the bottom of the sea. It becomes available to midwater and ocean-bottom scavengers, transferring material into their food web and making energy available to foragers (organisms that search for food) that is normally tied up in ocean-bottom, deep-ocean, midwater, and open-ocean species.

5. Overfishing and overdiscarding may thus contribute to a syndrome known as “fishing down of food webs,” whereby we eliminate apex (top) predators and large species while transforming the ocean into a simplified system increasingly dominated by microbes, jellyfish, ocean-bottom invertebrates, plankton, and planktivores. The strongest evidence for the fishing down phenomenon exists in global catch statistics that show alarming shifts in species composition from high-value, near-bottom species to lower-value, open-ocean species. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, the global fishing fleet doubled in size and technology advanced immeasurably. Despite increased effort and technology, total catch stabilized, but landing rates (rates at which species are caught) of the most valuable species fell by 25 percent.

6. Conservation organizations have condemned the obvious and extreme waste associated with bycatch. Public concern over high mortality rates of endangered marine turtles captured in shrimp trawls led to the development of turtle exclusion devices (TEDs) in the 1980s. TEDs were incorporated into the shrimp net design with the purpose of directing turtles out of nets without unacceptably reducing shrimp catches. Marine engineers and fishers also developed shrimp net designs that incorporate bycatch reduction devices (BRDs), taking advantage of behavioral differences between shrimp and fish, or between different fishes, in order to separate fishes.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. Why does the author provide the information that “Available data indicate that discarded biomass (organic matter from living things) amounts to 25–30 percent of official catch, or about 30 million metric tons”?
 - (A) To disprove the claim that it is difficult to accurately estimate the extent of the bycatch problem
 - (B) To illustrate the extreme effectiveness of the longline and trawling methods
 - (C) To suggest that uncertainty about the true extent of bycatch does not leave in doubt that it is a problem
 - (D) To indicate that data about bycatch are available only from fisheries having the right kind of gear

2. According to paragraph 1, which of the following is true about the impact of various methods of fishing on the problem of bycatch?
 - (A) Almost all commercial fishing methods capture fish and animals that the fishers do not want.
 - (B) Switching from trawling to longline fishing would save seabirds and turtles from being unintentionally caught.
 - (C) Longline fishing is particularly dangerous for dolphins and whales.
 - (D) Trawling on the ocean floor produces less bycatch than does trawling through mid-ocean waters.

3. The word “acute” in the passage is closest in meaning to
 - (A) common
 - (B) severe
 - (C) complicated
 - (D) noticeable

4. According to paragraph 2, why have larger mesh sizes not provided a practical solution to bycatch in shrimp fishing?
 - (A) Larger openings increase the risk that nets will get tangled or damaged as they are being hauled over the sides of the vessel.
 - (B) Openings large enough to prevent the capture of juvenile and other undesirable fish would also release the shrimp.
 - (C) Large mesh sizes are more likely to result in fish getting stuck partway through, causing more deaths within the catch.
 - (D) When nets grow full, they still trap fish that cannot reach the mesh openings.

5. According to paragraph 3, which of the following is NOT a problem associated with bycatch in shrimp fishing?
- (A) Shrimp fishers have to buy more fuel because of the added weight of the extra fish in their nets.
 - (B) The population of recreational and commercial species declines because much of the bycatch is their prey, resulting in a food shortage for them.
 - (C) Shrimp fishers must spend time sorting the shrimp from the bycatch, and some shrimp spoil during this time.
 - (D) The populations of some species of fish are reduced because so many of their young are caught in shrimp nets.
6. According to paragraph 4, how does bycatch sometimes benefit sport fish, seabird, crab, and even shrimp populations?
- (A) The discarded fish provide these species with a significant amount of food that would otherwise be unavailable to them.
 - (B) Fishing eliminates up to 40 to 60 percent of the predators of these species, most of which are caught unintentionally.
 - (C) These fish and other animals may be caught unintentionally in overcrowded locations and then released into more favorable environments.
 - (D) Many of the competitors of these species are eliminated by fishing, leaving them with access to more food and other resources.
7. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in paragraph 5? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.
- (A) Overfishing and overdiscarding of jellyfish, ocean-bottom invertebrates, plankton, and planktivores are transforming the ocean in a process known as fishing down of food webs.
 - (B) Overdiscarding bycatch simplifies the food web by favoring the kinds of predators that feed on such prey as jellyfish, ocean-bottom invertebrates, and planktivores.
 - (C) Fishing down of food webs may occur if overfishing and bycatch disposal result in the disappearance of species at the top of the food web and the dominance of species near the bottom.
 - (D) Overfishing and overdiscarding is a syndrome that affects not only top predators and large species but also microbes, jellyfish, ocean-bottom invertebrates, plankton, and planktivores.

8. What does paragraph 5 suggest is the reason why landing rates of the most valuable species fell 25 percent in the last three decades of the twentieth century?
- (A) Changes in technology led many fishers to shift from a focus on near-bottom species to lower-value open-ocean species.
 - (B) Around the world, the number of people and ships involved in the fishing trade declined because of changes in the demand for fish.
 - (C) The total amount of fish in the ocean decreased significantly, leading to a steady decrease in global total catch.
 - (D) The most valuable species make up a much smaller percentage of the total sea population than they used to.
9. In the paragraph below, there is a missing sentence. Look at the paragraph and indicate (A, B, C and D) where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

Turtles were not the only marine species to benefit from new catch techniques.

Where would the sentence best fit?

Conservation organizations have condemned the obvious and extreme waste associated with bycatch. **(A)** Public concern over high mortality rates of endangered marine turtles captured in shrimp trawls led to the development of turtle exclusion devices (TEDs) in the 1980s. **(B)** TEDs were incorporated into the shrimp net design with the purpose of directing turtles out of nets without unacceptably reducing shrimp catches. **(C)** Marine engineers and fishers also developed shrimp net designs that incorporate bycatch reduction devices (BRDs), taking advantage of behavioral differences between shrimp and fish, or between different fishes, in order to separate fishes. **(D)**

- A. Option A
- B. Option B
- C. Option C
- D. Option D

Directions: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the 3 answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. **This question is worth 2 points.**

Write your answer choices in the spaces where they belong. You can either write the letter of your answer choice or you can copy the sentence.

Many fish and other animals are unintentionally caught during commercial fishing, a problem known as bycatch.
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<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer choices

- (A) Bycatch occurs in both longline fishing and trawling and affects a range of species, although marine engineers have developed net devices that have lessened the problem for some species.
- (B) Female fish are especially likely to become bycatch when they are near the ocean bottom spawning their eggs, which decreases the populations of commercially desirable fish such as salmon and tuna.
- (C) Trawling with small mesh nets for shrimp results in large amounts of bycatch, especially of small, young, or unwanted species of fish, causing a range of problems for shrimp fishers and the ecosystem.
- (D) Efforts are being made to come up with productive uses for bycatch, such as providing food for fish farms or being used in agricultural products such as animal feed and fertilizers.
- (E) When bycatch is disposed of in the ocean, the extra food is eaten by predators, detritivores, and decomposers but may ultimately cause the most valuable species to decline.
- (F) Much of the equipment designed to prevent bycatch has so far proven to be largely ineffective, with TEDs failing to significantly reduce the number of sea turtles captured in fishing nets.

Reading Practice Set 2

Ancient Rome and Greece

1. There is a quality of cohesiveness about the Roman world that applied neither to Greece nor perhaps to any other civilization, ancient or modern. Like the stones of a Roman wall, which were held together both by the regularity of the design and by that peculiarly powerful Roman cement, so the various parts of the Roman realm were bonded into a massive, monolithic entity by physical, organizational, and psychological controls. The physical bonds included the network of military garrisons, which were stationed in every province, and the network of stone-built roads that linked the provinces with Rome. The organizational bonds were based on the common principles of law and administration and on the universal army of officials who enforced common standards of conduct. The psychological controls were built on fear and punishment—on the absolute certainty that anyone or anything that threatened the authority of Rome would be utterly destroyed.
2. The source of the Roman obsession with unity and cohesion may well have lain in the pattern of Rome's early development. Whereas Greece had grown from scores of scattered cities, Rome grew from one single organism. While the Greek world had expanded along the Mediterranean Sea lanes, the Roman world was assembled by territorial conquest. Of course, the contrast is not quite so stark: in Alexander the Great the Greeks had found the greatest territorial conqueror of all time; and the Romans, once they moved outside Italy, did not fail to learn the lessons of sea power. Yet the essential difference is undeniable. The key to the Greek world lay in its high-powered ships; the key to Roman power lay in its marching legions. The Greeks were wedded to the sea; the Romans, to the land. The Greek was a sailor at heart; the Roman, a landsman.
3. Certainly, in trying to explain the Roman phenomenon, one would have to place great emphasis on this almost animal instinct for the territorial imperative. Roman priorities lay in the organization, exploitation, and defense of their territory. In all probability it was the fertile plain of Latium, where the Latins who founded Rome originated, that created the habits and skills of landed settlement, landed property, landed economy, landed administration, and a land-based society. From this arose the Roman genius for military organization and orderly government. In turn, a deep attachment to the land, and to the stability which rural life engenders, fostered the Roman virtues: gravitas, a sense of responsibility, peitas, a sense of devotion to family and country, and iustitia, a sense of the natural order.

4. Modern attitudes to Roman civilization range from the infinitely impressed to the thoroughly disgusted. As always, there are the power worshippers, especially among historians, who are predisposed to admire whatever is strong, who feel more attracted to the might of Rome than to the subtlety of Greece. At the same time, there is a solid body of opinion that dislikes Rome. For many, Rome is at best the imitator and the continuator of Greece on a larger scale. Greek civilization had quality; Rome, mere quantity. Greece was original; Rome, derivative. Greece had style; Rome had money. Greece was the inventor; Rome, the research and development division. Such indeed was the opinion of some of the more intellectual Romans. “Had the Greeks held novelty in such disdain as we,” asked Horace in his Epistles, “what work of ancient date would now exist?”
5. Rome’s debt to Greece was enormous. The Romans adopted Greek religion and moral philosophy. In literature, Greek writers were consciously used as models by their Latin successors. It was absolutely accepted that an educated Roman should be fluent in Greek. In speculative philosophy and the sciences, the Romans made virtually no advance on early achievements.
6. Yet it would be wrong to suggest that Rome was somehow a junior partner in Greco-Roman civilization. The Roman genius was projected into new spheres— especially into those of law, military organization, administration, and engineering. Moreover, the tensions that arose within the Roman state produced literary and artistic sensibilities of the highest order. It was no accident that many leading Roman soldiers and statesmen were writers of high caliber.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. According to paragraph 1, all of the following are controls that held together the Roman world EXCEPT
 - A. administrative and legal systems
 - B. the presence of the military
 - C. a common language
 - D. transportation networks

2. According to paragraph 2, which of the following was NOT characteristic of Rome's early development?
 - A. Expansion by sea invasion
 - B. Territorial expansion
 - C. Expansion from one original settlement
 - D. Expansion through invading armies

3. Why does the author mention "Alexander the Great" in the passage?
 - A. To acknowledge that Greek civilization also expanded by land conquest
 - B. To compare Greek leaders to Roman leaders
 - C. To give an example of a Greek leader whom Romans studied
 - D. To indicate the superior organization of the Greek military

4. The word "fostered" in the passage is closest in meaning to
 - A. accepted
 - B. combined
 - C. introduced
 - D. encouraged

5. Paragraph 3 suggests which of the following about the people of Latium?
 - A. Their economy was based on trade relations with other settlements.
 - B. They held different values than the people of Rome.
 - C. Agriculture played a significant role in their society.
 - D. They possessed unusual knowledge of animal instincts.

6. Paragraph 4 indicates that some historians admire Roman civilization because of
- A. the diversity of cultures within Roman society
 - B. its strength
 - C. its innovative nature
 - D. the large body of literature that it developed
7. According to paragraph 4, intellectual Romans such as Horace held which of the following opinions about their civilization?
- A. Ancient works of Greece held little value in the Roman world.
 - B. The Greek civilization had been surpassed by the Romans.
 - C. Roman civilization produced little that was original or memorable.
 - D. Romans valued certain types of innovations that had been ignored by ancient Greeks.
8. Which of the following statements about leading Roman soldiers and statesmen is supported by paragraphs 5 and 6?
- A. They could read and write the Greek language.
 - B. They frequently wrote poetry and plays.
 - C. They focused their writing on military matters.
 - D. They wrote according to the philosophical laws of the Greeks.

9. In the paragraph below, there is a missing sentence. Look at the paragraph and indicate (A, B, C and D) where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

They esteem symbols of Roman power, such as the massive Colosseum.

Where would the sentence best fit?

Modern attitudes to Roman civilization range from the infinitely impressed to the thoroughly disgusted. **(A)** As always, there are the power worshippers, especially among historians, who are predisposed to admire whatever is strong, who feel more attracted to the might of Rome than to the subtlety of Greece. **(B)** At the same time, there is a solid body of opinion that dislikes Rome. **(C)** For many, Rome is at best the imitator and the continuator of Greece on a larger scale. **(D)** Greek civilization had quality; Rome, mere quantity. Greece was original; Rome, derivative. Greece had style; Rome had money. Greece was the inventor; Rome, the research and development division. Such indeed was the opinion of some of the more intellectual Romans. “Had the Greeks held novelty in such disdain as we,” asked Horace in his Epistles, “what work of ancient date would now exist?”

- A. Option A
- B. Option B
- C. Option C
- D. Option D

10. **Directions:** An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. **This question is worth 2 points.**

Write your answer choices in the spaces where they belong. You can either write the letter of your answer choice or you can copy the sentence.

The Roman world drew its strength from several important sources.
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Answer Choices

- A. Numerous controls imposed by Roman rulers held its territory together.
- B. The Roman military was organized differently from older military organizations.
- C. Romans valued sea power as did the Latins, the original inhabitants of Rome.
- D. Roman values were rooted in a strong attachment to the land and the stability of rural life.
- E. Rome combined aspects of ancient Greek civilization with its own contributions in new areas.
- F. Educated Romans modeled their own literature and philosophy on the ancient Greeks.

Reading Answer Key

Examining the Problem of Bycatch	
1	C
2	A
3	B
4	D
5	B
6	A
7	C
8	D
9	C
10	A,C,E
Ancient Rome and Greece	
1	C
2	A
3	A
4	D
5	C
6	B
7	C
8	A
9	B
10	A,D,E

Listening Section Directions

In this section, you will be able to demonstrate your ability to understand conversations and lectures in English. Answer the questions based on what is stated or implied by the speakers.

In the actual test, the Listening section is divided into two separately timed parts, and you can listen to each conversation and lecture only one time. You must answer each question and you cannot return to previous questions. A clock will indicate how much time is remaining. The clock will count down only while you are answering questions, not while you are listening.

For this practice test, a useful guideline is to spend no more than 35 seconds to answer a question. You can review the correct answer for each question by reviewing the answer key at the end of the section.

Listening Practice Set 1

Retirement Party



- Narrator Listen to a conversation between a student and a professor.
- Male Student Hi, Professor Mason. Do you have a minute?
- Female Professor Yes, of course, Eric. I think there was something I wanted to talk to you about, too.
- Male Student Probably my late essay.
- Female Professor Ah, that must have been it. I thought maybe I'd lost it...
- Male Student No, I'm sorry. Actually, it was my computer that lost it, the first draft of it, and... Well anyway, I finally put it in your mailbox yesterday.
- Female Professor Oh, and I haven't checked the mailbox yet today. Well, I'm glad it's there... I'll read it this weekend.
- Male Student Well, sorry again. Say, I can send it to you by e-mail too, if you like.
- Female Professor Great, I'll be interested to see how it all came out.
- Male Student Right. Now, uh, I just overheard some graduate students talking... something about a party for Dean Adams?
- Female Professor Retirement party, yes... all students are invited. Wasn't there a notice on the anthropology department's bulletin board?
- Male Student Uh, I don't know. But... I wanted to offer to help out with it. You know, whatever you need. Dean Adams, well, I took a few anthropology classes with her, and they were great. Inspiring. And, well, I just wanted to pitch in.

Female Professor Oh, that's very thoughtful of you, Eric, but it'll be pretty low-key. Nothing flashy. That's not her style.

Male Student So there's nothing?

Female Professor No, we'll have coffee and cookies... maybe a cake. But actually, a couple of the administrative assistants are working on that. You could ask them, but I think they've got it covered.

Male Student OK.

Female Professor Actually... no, never mind...

Male Student What is it?

Female Professor Well... It's nothing to do with the party, and I'm sure there are more exciting ways you could spend your time, but we do need some help with something. We're compiling a database of articles the anthropology faculty has published. There's not much glory in it, but we're looking for someone with some knowledge of anthropology who can enter the articles...I hesitate to mention it, but I don't suppose this is something you would...

Male Student No, that sounds kinda cool. I'd like to see what they're writing about.

Female Professor Wonderful... and there are also some unpublished studies. Did you know Dean Adams did a lot of field research in Indonesia? Most of it hasn't been published yet.

Male Student No, like what?

Female Professor Well, she's really versatile. She just spent several months studying social interactions in Indonesia, and she's been influential in ethnology. Oh, and she's also done work in South America that's closer to biology—especially with speciation.

Male Student Uh, not to seem uninformed...

Female Professor Well, how species form... you know, how two distinct species form from one—like when populations of the same species are isolated from each other and then develop in two different directions and end up as two distinct species.

- Male Student Interesting.
- Female Professor Yes, and while she was there in South America, she collected a lot of linguistic information, and songs...really fascinating.
- Male Student Well, I hate to see her leave.
- Female Professor Don't worry. She'll still be around. She's got lots of projects that she's still in the middle of.

Now get ready to answer the questions.
You may use your notes
to help you answer.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. Why does the man go to see the professor?
 - A. To hand in a late assignment
 - B. To find out about jobs in the department
 - C. To discuss Dean Adams' current research
 - D. To volunteer to help organize an event

2. How did the man learn about Dean Adams' retirement?
 - A. He read about it in an e-mail message.
 - B. It was posted on a bulletin board.
 - C. He heard other students discussing it.
 - D. Dean Adams announced it in her class.

3. Why does the professor refuse the man's offer to help with a party? [Choose 2 answers.]
 - A. Two people are already working on it.
 - B. She prefers that he spend his time on another project.
 - C. The party does not require much preparation.
 - D. Dean Adams is not permanently leaving the department.

4. Why does the professor talk about speciation?
- A. To describe the main focus of the work she needs help with
 - B. To tell the man about a new research area in ethnology
 - C. To explain what Dean Adams chose to work on in Indonesia
 - D. To demonstrate how varied Dean Adams' research has been
5. Part of the conversation is repeated below. Read it and answer the question.



Narrator Listen again to part of the conversation. Then answer the question.

Female Professor There's not much glory in it, but we're looking for someone with some knowledge of anthropology who can enter the articles...I hesitate to mention it, but I don't suppose this is something you would...

Why does the professor say this:

Female Professor I hesitate to mention it, but I don't suppose this is something you would...

- A. To express doubt about the man's qualifications for the project
- B. To ask the man if he would be willing to work on the project
- C. To ask the man to recommend someone for the project
- D. To apologize for not being able to offer the project to the man

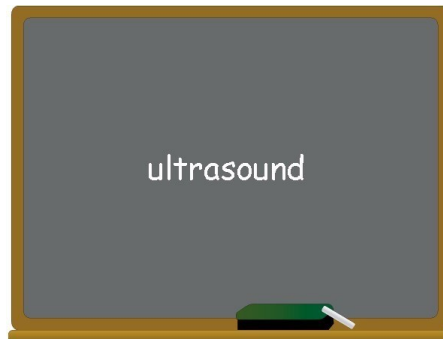
Listening Practice Set 2

Bat Acoustics

Narrator Listen to part of a lecture in a biology class.



Female Professor So, that's how elephants use infrasound... Now let's talk about the other end of the acoustical spectrum—sound that's too high for humans to hear: ultrasound.

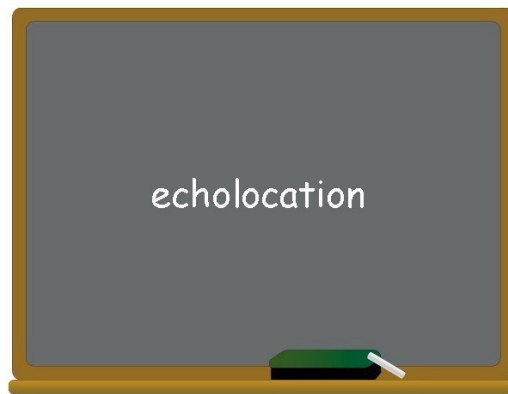


Female Professor Ultrasound is used by many animals that detect—and, some of them, send out—very high-frequency sounds. So, what's a good example? Yes, Carol?



Female Student Well, bats—since they’re all blind, bats have to use sound for—uh, y’know—to keep from flying into things.

Female Professor That’s echolocation.

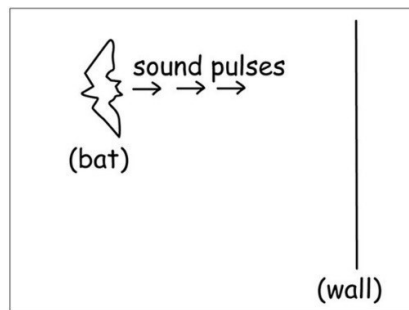


Female Professor Using echoes—reflected sound waves—to locate things... As Carol said, bats use it for navigation and orientation... and what else? Mike?



Male Student Well, finding food is always important—and, uh, I guess, not becoming food for other animals...

Female Professor Right on both counts. Avoiding other predators—and locating prey—uh, typically insects that fly around at night. Now, before I go on, let me just respond to something Carol was saying—this idea that bats are blind... actually, there are some species of bats—the ones that don't use echolocation—that do rely on their vision for navigation but, it is true that, for many bats, their vision is too weak to count on. OK, so: quick summary of how echolocation works. The bat emits these ultrasonic pulses—very high-pitched sound waves that we can't hear—and then: they analyze the echoes—how the waves bounce back. Uh, here, let me finish this diagram I started before class...



Female Professor So the bat sends out these pulses—very focused bursts of sound, and echoes bounce back...



Female Professor Y’know, I don’t think I need to draw in the echoes. Your-your reading assignment for the next class—it has a diagram that shows this very clearly—so anyway as I was saying... By analyzing these echoes, the bat can determine, say, if there’s a wall in a cave that it needs to avoid... and—how far away it is. Another thing it uses ultrasound to detect, is the size and shape of objects. For example, one echo they’d quickly identify is the one they associate with a moth, which is common prey for a bat—particularly, a moth beating its wings. However, moths happen to have a major advantage over most other insects: they can detect ultrasound. This means that, when a bat approaches, the moth can detect the bat’s presence... so it has time to escape to safety... or else they can just remain motionless—since, um, when they stop beating their wings, they’d be much harder for the bat to distinguish from, oh, a-a leaf... or-or some other object...

Now, we’ve tended to underestimate just how sophisticated the abilities of animals that use ultrasound are. In fact, we kind of assumed that they were filtering a lot out—uh, the way a sophisticated radar system can ignore echoes from stationary objects on the ground. Radar does this to remove “ground clutter”—information about, um, hills or buildings that it doesn’t need... but bats—we thought they were filtering out this kind of information because they simply couldn’t analyze it. But it looks as if we were wrong. Recently, there was this experiment with trees and a specific species of bats—a bat called the lesser spear-nosed bat. Now a tree should be a huge acoustical challenge for a bat, right? I mean, it’s got all kinds of surfaces, with different shapes and angles... So, well, the echoes from a tree are going to be a

mass of chaotic acoustic reflections, right? Not like the echo from a moth. So, we thought, for a long time, that bats stopped their evaluation at simply “that’s a tree.” Yet, it turns out that—that bats, or at least this particular species, can not only tell that it’s a tree, but can also distinguish between, say, a pine tree and a deciduous tree—like, a maple, or an oak tree: just by their leaves— an-and when I say “leaves,” I mean pine needles, too. Any ideas on how it would know that?



Male Student Well... like with the moth—could it be their shape?

Female Professor You’re on the right track. It’s actually the echo off all the leaves— as a whole—that matters. Now, think: A pine tree—with all those little, densely packed needles... those produce a large number of faint reflections in wh- what’s called a-a “smooth” echo—the waveform is very even ... but an oak—which has fewer but bigger leaves with stronger reflections—produces a jagged waveform—or what we call a “rough” echo. And these bats can distinguish between the two—and not just with trees, but with any echo that comes in a smooth or rough shape.

Now get ready to answer the questions.
You may use your notes
to help you answer.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. What is the lecture mainly about?
 - (A) How animals emit ultrasonic pulses
 - (B) How bats use acoustical signals
 - (C) A comparison of echolocation and radar
 - (D) Variations among bats in the use of ultrasound

2. Why does the professor decide NOT to add more information to the diagram on the board?
 - (A) She wants students to complete the diagram themselves as an assignment.
 - (B) She needs to look up some information in order to complete the diagram accurately.
 - (C) The additional information is not relevant to the topic that she wants to discuss next.
 - (D) Students already have the additional information in their textbook.

3. According to the professor, what are two ways in which a moth might react when it detects the presence of a bat?

[Choose 2 answers.]

 - (A) The moth might stop beating its wings.
 - (B) The moth might emit high-frequency sounds.
 - (C) The moth might leave the area.
 - (D) The moth might change its color to match its surroundings.

4. What surprising information did a recent experiment reveal about lesser spear-nosed bats?
 - (A) They filter out echoes from some types of trees.
 - (B) They can analyze echoes from stationary objects with complex surfaces.
 - (C) They cannot analyze “jagged” echoes.
 - (D) They cannot analyze echoes from certain types of small moving objects.

5. According to the professor, why does a pine tree produce a “smooth” echo?
 - (A) Because it has a smooth trunk
 - (B) Because it has large branches spaced at regular intervals
 - (C) Because it has many small, densely packed needles
 - (D) Because it remains stationary in all types of weather

6. Part of the conversation is repeated below. Read it and answer the question.



Female Professor Now, before I go on, let me just respond to something Carol was saying—this idea that bats are blind

Why does the professor say this:

Female Professor Now, before I go on, let me just respond to something Carol was saying

- (A) To answer a question that Carol asked
- (B) To correct a statement that Carol made
- (C) To praise Carol for an example that she gave
- (D) To give an example of a principle that Carol stated

Listening Practice Set 3

Graduation Requirements



- Narrator Listen to a conversation between a student and a registrar.
- Male Student Hi, I'd like to drop off my graduation form. I understand you need this in order to process my diploma.
- Female Registrar OK, I'll take that. Uh, before you leave, lemme check our computer... Uh, looks like you're OK for graduation and...hmmmm. Actually, I'm getting a warning flag on your academic record here.
- Male Student Really?
- Female Registrar Yeah, let's see what's what. Uh, OK, are you familiar with our graduation requirements?
- Male Student Um, I think so
- Female Registrar Then you know you need forty-eight credits in your major field to graduate, and at least twenty-four credits at the intermediate level or higher. Also, after your second year, you have to meet with your department chair to outline a plan for the rest of your time here. In the past, we also issued letters before a student's final year began to let them know what they needed to take in their final year to be OK. But we don't do that anymore...
- Male Student I-I definitely met with my chairperson two years ago. Uh, he told me that I needed eight more courses at the intermediate level or higher in the last two years to be OK...so I'm not sure what the problem is. I made sure I got those credits.

Female Registrar Unfortunately, the computer's usually pretty reliable... so I'm not sure what's going on here.

Male Student It could be that I've taken two basic courses but coupled both of them with field experiences.

Female Registrar What do you mean?

Male Student Well, I could only take intro courses because there were no intermediate-level courses available for those particular topics. My chairperson told me that if I did independent field research in addition to the assigned work in each course, they would count as intermediate-level courses. My classmates, um, well, some of my classmates did this for an easy way to meet the intermediate course requirement. But I did it to get the kind of depth in those topics I was going for. As it turned out, I really enjoyed the fieldwork. It was a nice supplement to just sitting and listening to lectures.

Female Registrar I'm sure that's true, but the computer's still showing them as basic-level courses, despite the fieldwork.

Male Student I'm not sure what to do, then. I mean, should I cancel my graduation party?

Female Registrar No! No reason to get worried like that. Just contact your chairperson immediately, OK? Uh, tell him to call me as soon as possible so that we can verify your fieldwork arrangement and certify those credits right away. It's not like there's an actual deadline today or anything, but if more than a few weeks go by, we might have a real problem that would be very difficult to fix in time for you to graduate. In fact, there probably would be nothing we could do.

Male Student I'll get on that.

Now get ready to answer the questions.

You may use your notes
to help you answer.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. Why does the man go to see the registrar?
 - (A) To find out why he is not on the list of graduating students
 - (B) To explain why he has not fulfilled his graduation requirements
 - (C) To find out the exact requirements for graduation
 - (D) To submit a document required for graduation

2. According to the registrar, what step is currently taken to ensure that students fulfill their graduation requirements?
 - (A) Academic records are regularly checked by the registrar's office.
 - (B) Students meet with a department chairperson to plan their course work.
 - (C) Students receive letters listing the courses that they still need to take.
 - (D) Warning letters are sent to students who have fallen behind in their course work.

3. Why does the man mention his classmates?
 - (A) To explain how he obtained information about field research
 - (B) To point out that many students like to do field research
 - (C) To show that it is difficult to get intermediate-level credits
 - (D) To emphasize his motivation to do field research in two of his courses

4. Why does the registrar tell the man to contact his chairperson immediately?
 - (A) A deadline has already passed.
 - (B) The man has a limited time to resolve his problem.
 - (C) The man first needs to find out if the chairperson will help him.
 - (D) Issuing a new grade may take longer than expected.

Listen again to part of the conversation.
Then answer the question.

Narrator Listen again to part of the conversation. Then answer the question.



Male Student I'm not sure what the problem is. I made sure I got those credits.

Female Registrar Unfortunately, the computer's usually pretty reliable... so I'm not sure what's going on here.

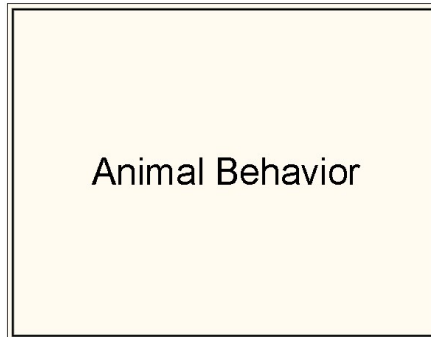
5. What does the registrar imply when she says this:

Female Registrar Unfortunately, the computer's usually pretty reliable... so I'm not sure what's going on here.

- (A) She is uncertain about the reliability of the computer.
- (B) She will approve the man's form despite her doubts about it.
- (C) She needs more information about the man's credits.
- (D) She needs to call someone to help her fix computer errors.

Listening Practice Set 4

Habitat Selection



Narrator Listen to part of a lecture in an animal behavior class.



Female Professor OK, well, last time we talked about passive habitat selection. Like plants, for example—they don't make active choices about where to grow—they're dispersed by some other agent, like the wind. And if the seeds land in a suitable habitat, they do well and reproduce.

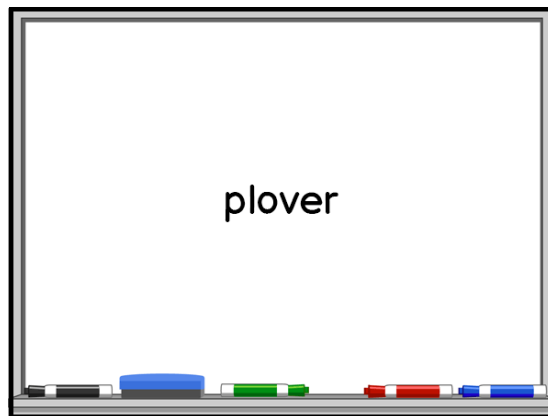
With active habitat selection, an organism is able to physically select where to live and breed, and because an animal's breeding habitat is so important, we'd expect animal species to have developed preferences for particular types of habitats, places where their offspring have the best chance of survival.

So let's look at the effect these preferences can have by looking at some examples. But first let's recap. What do we mean by "habitat." Frank?



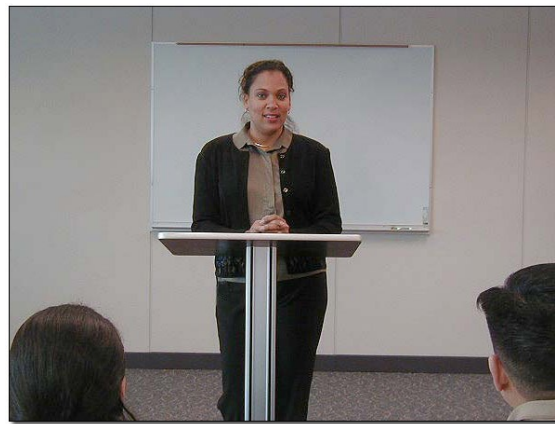
Male Student Well, it's basically the place or environment where an organism normally lives and grows.

Female Professor Right. And as we've discussed, there're some key elements that a habitat must contain: food, obviously. Water; and it's got to have the right climate; and spaces for physical protection. And we saw how important habitat selection is when we looked at habitats where some of these factors are removed, perhaps through habitat destruction. Um, I just read about a shorebird, the plover.

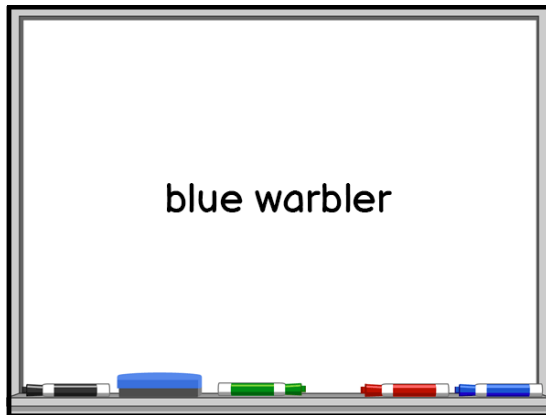


Female Professor The plover lives by the ocean and feeds on small shellfish, insects, and plants. It blends in with the sand, so it's well camouflaged from predator birds above. But it lays its eggs in shallow depressions in the sand, with very little protection around them. So, if there're people or dogs on the beach, the eggs and fledglings in the nests are really vulnerable. Out in California, where there's been a lot of human development by the ocean, the plovers are now a threatened species.

So, conservationists tried to create a new habitat for them. They made artificial beaches and sandbars in areas inaccessible to people and dogs. And the plover population is up quite a bit in those places.



Female Professor OK, that's an instance where a habitat is made less suitable. But now what about cases where an animal exhibits a clear choice between two suitable habitats—in cases like that, does the preference matter? Well, let's look at the blue warbler.



Female Professor

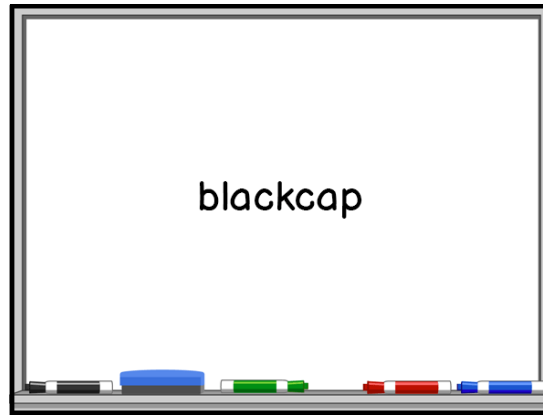
The blue warbler is a songbird that lives in North America. They clearly prefer hardwood forests with dense shrubs—ah, bushes— underneath the trees. They actually nest in the shrubs, not the trees so they're pretty close to the ground but these warblers also nest in forests that have low shrub density. It's usually the younger warblers that nest in these areas because the preferred spots where there are a lot of shrubs are taken by the older, more dominant birds.



Female Professor

And the choice of habitat seems to affect reproductive success. Because the older, more experienced birds, who nest in the high- density shrub areas, have significantly more offspring than those in low-density areas. Which suggests that the choice of where to nest does have an impact on the number of chicks they have.

But a preferred environment doesn't always seem to correlate with greater reproductive success. For example, in Europe, studies have been done of blackcap warblers—we just call them blackcaps.



Female Professor

The blackcap can be found in two different environments. Ah, their preferred habitat is forests near the edges of streams. However, blackcaps also live in pine woods away from water. Studies've been done on the reproductive success rates for the birds in both areas and the results showed—surprisingly—that the reproductive success was essentially **the same in** both areas—the preferred and the second- choice habitat. Well, why?



Female Professor

It turned out that there were actually four times as many bird pairs, or couples, living in the stream-edge habitat compared to the area away from the stream. So, the stream-edge area had a much denser population, which meant more members of the same species

competing for resources—wanting to feed on the same things or build their nests in the same places, which lowered the suitability of the prime habitat even though it's their preferred habitat. So, the results of the studies suggest that when the number of competitors in the prime habitat reaches a certain point, the second-ranked habitat becomes just as successful as the prime habitat, just because there are fewer members of the same species living there. So, it looks like competition for resources is another important factor in determining if a particular habitat is suitable.

Now get ready to answer the questions.
You may use your notes
to help you answer.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. What is the main purpose of the lecture?
 - (A) To compare active habitat selection with passive habitat selection
 - (B) To show that most habitat preferences in animals are learned
 - (C) To compare the habitat requirements of several bird species
 - (D) To examine the consequences of habitat selection by animals

2. What element of the plover's habitat in California was threatened?
 - (A) The availability of food
 - (B) The availability of water
 - (C) The safety of nests from human activity
 - (D) The protection of nests from predatory birds

3. What does the professor illustrate with the example of the blue warbler?
 - (A) The relationship between human activity and habitat loss
 - (B) The relationship between habitat and reproductive success
 - (C) The advantages of habitats with low vegetation density
 - (D) The reproductive advantage that young warblers have over older warblers

4. Why does the professor mention the population density of blackcaps in two different habitats?
 - (A) To explain the similar reproductive rates in the two habitats
 - (B) To explain the relation between a species' population density and its nesting behavior
 - (C) To illustrate the advantages of a preferred habitat over a secondary habitat
 - (D) To illustrate the possible impact of making a poor habitat selection

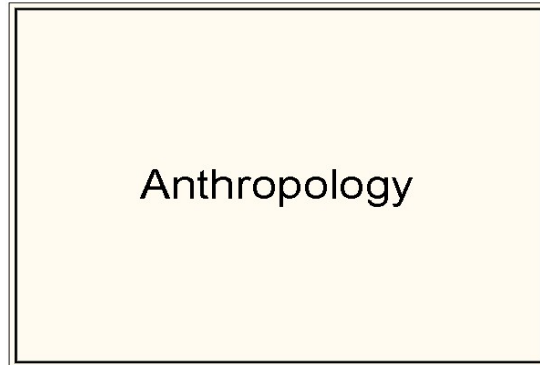
5. According to the professor, why did some blackcaps choose a secondary habitat?
- (A) They were following a moving food supply.
 - (B) Their preferred habitat was taken over by another bird species.
 - (C) Their nesting sites were disturbed by human activity.
 - (D) Their preferred habitat became too competitive.
6. What can be inferred about the professor when she says this:

Female Professor OK, that's habitat destruction. But now what about cases where an animal exhibits a clear choice, one suitable habitat over another—in cases like that, does the preference matter?

- (A) She realizes that she just contradicted a statement she made earlier.
- (B) She is about to discuss another aspect of the topic.
- (C) She thinks the answer to her question is obvious.
- (D) She wants students to recall a case that she has already discussed.

Listening Practice Set 5

Birch Bark Canoes



Narrator Listen to part of a lecture in an anthropology class.



Female Professor So we've been discussing sixteenth century Native American life, and today we're going to focus on Iroquois and Huron peoples, um they lived in the northeastern Great Lakes region of North America. Now, uh back then, eh their lives depended on the natural resources of the forest, especially the birch tree. The birch tree can grow in many different types of soils and i-is prevalent in that area. Now, um eh can anyone here describe a birch tree?



Male Student Umm, they're tall? And...white? The bark, I mean.

Female Professor Yes, the birch tree has white bark. And this tough protective outer layer of the tree, this, this white bark, is waterproof, and this waterproof quality of the bark oh it made it useful for making things like cooking containers, um ...a-a variety of utensils.

And...i-if you peel birch bark in the winter—eh we call it the “winter bark”—um, another layer, a tougher inner layer of the tree adheres to the bark, producing a stronger material...so the “winter bark” was used for larger utensils and containers.

Male Student Umm, I know people make utensils out of wood, but utensils out of tree bark?

Female Professor Well, birch bark is pliable and very easy to bend. The Native Americans would cut the bark and fold it into any shape they needed, then secure it with cords until it dried. They could fold the bark into many shapes.



Female Student So, if they cooked in bowls made of birch bark, wouldn't that make the food taste funny?

Female Professor Oh, that's one of the great things about birch bark. The taste of the birch tree doesn't get transferred to the food—so it was perfect for cooking containers.

Eh but the most important use of the bark by far was the canoe. Since the northeast region of North America is uh it's interconnected by many streams and waterways, water transportation by vessels like a canoe was most essential. The paths through the woods were often overgrown, so, so water travel was much faster. And here's what the Native Americans did...they would peel large sheets of bark from the tree to form lightweight yet sturdy canoes. The bark was stretched over frames made from tree branches, uh stitched together and sealed with resin—y-you know that, that sticky liquid that comes out of the tree—and when it dries, it's watertight. One great thing about these birch bark canoes was, uh they could carry a large amount of cargo. F-For example, a canoe weighing about 50 pounds could carry up to 9 people and 250 pounds of cargo.

Female Student Wow! But...how far could they travel that way?

Female Professor Well, like I said, the northeastern region is uh interconnected by rivers and streams, and uh the ocean at the coast. The canoes allowed them to travel over a vast area that-that today would take a few hours to fly over. You see, the Native Americans made canoes of all types, for travel on small streams or on large open ocean waters. For small streams they made narrow, maneuverable boats, while, while larger canoes were needed for the ocean. They could travel throughout the area, only occasionally having to portage, um to, to, carry the canoe over land a short distance eh to another nearby stream. And since the canoes were so light...this wasn't a difficult task.

Now, how do you think this affected their lives?

Female Student Well, if they could travel so easily over such a large area, they could trade with people from other areas...which I guess, would...lead them to form alliances?



Female Professor Exactly. Having an efficient means of transportation, well that helped the Iroquois to form a federation, linked by natural waterways, and this federation expanded from uh what is now southern Canada all the way south to the Delaware River. And eh this efficiency of the birch bark canoes also made an impression on newcomers to the area. French traders in the seventeenth century modeled their ... eh well they adopted the design of the Iroquois birch bark canoes and they found that they could travel great distances—more than 1500 kilometers a month.

Now, besides the bark, Native Americans also used the wood of the birch tree. Eh, the young trees were used as supports for lodgings, with the waterproof bark used as roofing. Um, branches were folded into snowshoes, and the Native American people were all adept at running, running very fast over the snow in these uh these birch-branch snowshoes, which, if you've ever tried walking in snowshoes, you know isn't easy.

Now get ready to answer the questions.
You may use your notes
to help you answer.

Directions: Now answer the questions.

1. What is the lecture mainly about?

- (A) Different kinds of trees used for building canoes
- (B) Various methods of Native American transportation
- (C) The value of birch trees to some Native American groups
- (D) The trading of birch wood products by Europeans in North America

2. According to the professor, what characteristics of birch bark made it useful to Native Americans?

[Choose 2 answers.]

- (A) It repels water.
- (B) It can be eaten.
- (C) It is easy to fold.
- (D) It has a rough texture.

3. According to the professor, why was the canoe important to some Native American groups?

[Choose 2 answers.]

- (A) There was a network of waterways where they lived.
- (B) Snowy winters made land travel too difficult.
- (C) Some Native American groups sold their canoes to other groups.
- (D) Canoe travel helped form relationships between groups of Native Americans.

4. Why does the professor mention French traders who arrived in the Iroquois region?

- (A) To illustrate how far news of the Iroquois canoe design had traveled
- (B) To explain the kinds of objects the Iroquois received in exchange for their canoes
- (C) To support her point about how efficient the Iroquois canoe design was
- (D) To emphasize that the Iroquois were the first settlers in that region

5. Why does the student say this:

Male Student Umm, I know people make utensils out of wood, but utensils out of tree bark?

- (A) To share what he knows about birch wood
- (B) To point out a misprint in the textbook
- (C) To bring up a point from a previous lecture
- (D) To request more explanation from the professor

6. Why does the professor say this:

Female Professor The canoes allowed them to travel over a vast area that-that today would take a few hours to fly over.

- (A) To show how slow canoe travel was
- (B) To illustrate the size of a geographic area
- (C) To compare different means of travel
- (D) To describe how waterways change over time

Listening Answer Key

Retirement Party	
	D
	C
	A, C
	D
	B
Bat Acoustics	
	B
	D
	A, C
	B
	C
	B
Graduation Requirements	
	D
	B
	D
	B
	C
Habitat Selection	
	D
	C
	B
	A
	D
	B
Birch Bark Canoes	
	C
	A C
	A, D
	C
	D
	B

Speaking Section Directions

In this section, you will be able to demonstrate your ability to speak in English about a variety of topics by answering four questions.

The first question is about a familiar topic. The next two questions begin with a reading passage. In the actual test, the passage will go away, and you will listen to either a conversation or a lecture on the same topic. You will then be presented with a question that asks you to combine information about what you have read and heard. In the final question, you will be presented with a lecture. You will then be asked to summarize the lecture.

In the actual test, your responses will be scored on your ability to speak clearly and coherently, and to accurately convey the information that you have read and/or heard. It is important to use your own words and provide an original response. Including memorized reasons and examples may result in a lower score.

In the actual test, you will be given a short time to prepare your response. When the preparation time is up, you will be told to begin your response. A clock will indicate how much time is remaining.

In this practice test, your responses will not be scored. Instead, you will see sample responses to the four questions. If you wish to practice your responses, you may do so by setting a timer and recording yourself using your own device.

Speaking Practice Task 1

Online or Classroom

State whether you agree or disagree with the following statement. Then explain your reasons, using specific details in your explanation.

Learning through online courses is more effective than learning in the traditional classroom setting.

If this were an actual test question, you would have 15 seconds to prepare and 45 seconds to speak.

Preparation Time: 15 seconds

Response Time: 45 seconds

In this practice test, you may use a timer to practice preparing and giving a response. If you can, record your answer and compare it to the sample response.

Sample Response

This is a high-level response.

Transcript:

Learning through online courses more effect than learning the traditional classroom setting because of three reasons. The first is that you can take the courses wherever you are once you have the computer and uh internet and second is that a discussion on the classes could be more easily for some students who are very shy to discuss with the friends, classmates and professor face to face. They can talk whatever they like if they face a computer. What's more, it could be much easier for the students to hand in their assignment. They just could uh...they could just send the email to the professor and uh the professor can give the commen... uh commendator [unintelligible] of assignments in the email so I believe learning thorough...

Rationale:

Overall, this speaker provides a full response. She states her opinion and provides three different, well-developed reasons for it. For the most part, the speaker is clear and easy to understand. The major weakness, which prevents the response from scoring at the highest level, is the imprecise vocabulary and minor grammatical errors. She makes several minor errors of word choice, word form, verb tense, prepositions, and so on. However, these errors seldom obscure meaning for the listener. For example, she said, "...they can talk whatever they like if they face a computer..." but she should have said, "they can say whatever they like if they are facing a computer..." In her last sentence, she struggled to communicate the idea that the professor "could give comments on assignments by email."

Speaking Practice Task 2

Banning Bicycles

Narrator Read the article from a university newspaper. You will have 50 seconds to read the article. Begin reading now.

Reading Time: 50 seconds

University to Prohibit Bicycles on Campus

Beginning next semester, the University will not allow the use of bicycles on campus. The campus sidewalks are intended for pedestrians and receive heavy pedestrian traffic. Several minor accidents have resulted from people on bicycles colliding with people walking, and although no one has been seriously hurt, University officials feel that bicycles pose a safety risk. Furthermore, the prohibition of bicycles will not be a problem for students, since the university currently operates a convenient alternative: the free campus bus system, which runs between all campus buildings.



- Narrator Now listen to a conversation between two students.
- Male Student Hey, Sue, did you see this article?
- Female Student Yeah, I did. I don't think that's a very good idea.
- Male Student Really? You don't think it's a safety hazard, like they said?
- Female Student No—at least not during the day. I'm pretty sure both of those accidents happened at night, when it's harder to see cyclists. They didn't say that in the article.

Male Student Oh, that does make a difference.

Female Student Sure it does. Maybe at night, with low visibility, there's a safety hazard. But I don't think there's any danger in the daytime...which is when most people need to move around and get to classes.

Male Student Yeah, that makes sense.

Female Student Besides, it's such a big campus, if they do this, it's going to be really hard to get around.

Male Student Well, we can always take the bus I guess. Female Student But the buses only run once an hour.

Male Student That's true. They're not very convenient.

Female Student No, not at all. If people have to take the bus, we'll end up sitting around waiting for the next one all the time. And we're all too busy to waste our time doing that.

The woman expresses her opinion of the proposed policy change. State her opinion, and explain the reasons she gives for holding that opinion.

If this were an actual test question, you would have 30 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to speak.

Preparation Time: 30 seconds
Response Time: 60 seconds

In this practice test, you may use a timer to practice preparing and giving a response. If you can, record your answer and compare it to the sample response.

Sample Response

This is a mid-level response.

Transcript:

Well, the newspaper uh notice that uh the students cannot use bicycles because it is considered as a safe re...safe risk. But uh, the woman, the girl does not agree with it uh...she thinks that first uh [pause] the bus uh the bus cause accident uh mainly because when it's night people cannot see each other clearly and uh during daytime uh bike...a bicycle is very safe. And the second, she thinks that she thinks that the campus is quite big and not using bicycles causes very causes very inconvenience to uh get to classes. And finally although she thinks although the uh campus support provide bus but it's not..is...

Rationale:

The speaker seems to have understood some of the key points from the reading and the conversation. However, many important details are missing or incorrectly expressed in his response. For example, he incorrectly says that “the bus cause accident” but the reading suggested that accidents on sidewalks occurred when bicycles ran into pedestrians. Numerous vocabulary and grammar errors sometimes make it difficult to understand the speaker’s intended message. For example, it is not clear what is meant by phrases such as “...very causes very inconvenience...”, or “...campus support provide bus...” The speech is mostly clear and easy to understand, although the speaker repeats “uh” throughout the responses, which is often distracting to the listener.

Speaking Practice Task 3

Behavior Modification

Narrator Now read the passage from a psychology textbook. You have 45 seconds to read the passage. Begin reading now.

Reading Time: 45 seconds

Behavior Modification

Individuals often modify their behavior based on what they have learned about the possible consequences of their actions. When an individual learns through experience that a certain behavior results in pleasant consequences, that behavior is likely to be repeated. An unpleasant consequence, on the other hand, discourages further repetition of the behavior. While behavior modification can be observed in experiments, it also occurs frequently in everyday settings, when individuals change their behavior based on what they have learned about the consequences of that behavior.



Narrator Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic in a psychology class.

Male Professor This happens all the time with kids, in schools. Say there's a little boy or girl who's just starting school. Well, they're not really used to the rules about proper behavior for a classroom, so at the beginning, they might, I don't know, interrupt the teacher, walk around the classroom when they're supposed to be sitting down. You know, just misbehaving in general. OK, but what happens? Well, the teacher gets angry with them when they act this way.

They might get punished--they have to sit at their desks when everyone else is allowed to go outside and play. And they certainly don't like that.

Soon they'll learn that this kind of behavior gets them in trouble. They'll also learn that when they raise their hand to talk to the teacher and sit quietly and pay attention during class... they're rewarded. The teacher tells them she's proud of them, and maybe puts little happy-face stickers on their homework. Now that their behavior gets a good reaction from the teacher, the kids learn to always act this way in class... and not behave the way they used to.

Using the example from the lecture, explain what behavior modification is and how it works.

If this were an actual test question, you would have 30 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to speak.

Preparation Time: 30 seconds
Response Time: 60 seconds

In this practice test, you may use a timer to practice preparing and giving a response. If you can, record your answer and compare it to the sample response.

Sample Response

This is a high-level response.

Transcript:

Behavior modification is defined as uh people's, uh chan-people's changing their behavior based on their experiences about the consequences of the behaviors. And according to reading too, the patt-um, behavior modification can be observed both in experiments and in real life. The professor gives a example of-of observation of the modification in real life about kids. First when kids first moved in school, they do not know the rules, so they do things like, uh, walking around when they're not supposed to or talking, uh, when teacher's speaking. This behaviors will result in punishments like um, the teacher's, uh, reproaching them about how inappropriate that is. And soon-soon--soon they learn to behave better, um, because uh if they learn to raise hands, um, and or keeps out in the class is more pleasant, teachers praise them, through this they learned, um, this behavior is better for them.

Rationale:

Overall, the speaker is clear and easy to understand. His pronunciation is generally good and he uses intonation effectively to express meaning. He is able to use a range of simple and complex grammatical structures and vocabulary to express his ideas, although he makes several minor errors such as errors in agreement (“this behaviors”) and dropping pronouns and articles (“learn to raise [their] hands”). These errors don't obscure meaning for the listener. His vocabulary use is often very precise and effective (“...reproaching them about how inappropriate that is...”). His definition of behavior modification is clear and accurate. He is able to summarize key points from the lecture to support the definitions. Overall, this is a mostly coherent and accurate synthesis of the reading and listening material.

Speaking Practice Task 4

Reliability vs Features



Narrator Listen to part of a lecture in a business class.

Female Professor If a consumer has to choose between two products, what determines the choice?

Assume that someone, a purchaser, is choosing between two products that cost the same. OK? If people have a choice between two identically priced products, which one will they choose? They choose the one they think is of higher quality, of course. But what does it mean for a product to be a high-quality product? Well, business analysts usually speak of two major factors of quality—one factor is reliability, and the other is what we call features.

So, reliability. What's reliability? Well, a product is reliable if it works the way we expect it to work, if it can go a reasonable amount of time without needing repairs. If a product, a car for example, doesn't work the way it should and needs repairs too soon, we say it's [stress on the first syllable] unreliable. So, product reliability means, basically, the absence of defects or problems that you weren't expecting. [pause] It used to be that when people thought about product quality, they thought mainly about reliability. Today it's different. People do still care about reliability, don't get me wrong. It's just that manufacturing standards are so now so high that, take cars for example, today, today's cars all very reliable. So reliability is important, but it's not gonna be the deciding factor.

So, if reliability isn't the deciding factor any more, what is? Features—all those extras, the things a product has that aren't really necessary but that make it easier to use or that make it cool: for example, new cars today are loaded with features like electric windows, sun roofs, air conditioning, stereos, and so forth. When people are comparing products today, they look at features—because reliability's pretty much equal cross the board. And that's why manufacturers include so many features in their products.

Using points and examples from the lecture, explain the two major factors of product quality and how their role in consumer decision making has changed.

If this were an actual test question, you would have 20 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to speak.

Preparation Time: 20 seconds
Response Time: 60 seconds

In this practice test, you may use a timer to practice preparing and giving a response. If you can, record your answer and compare it to the sample response.

Sample Response

This is a mid-level response.

Transcript:

For example, you're going to purchase something which has the same price, so the choices, or the things that you have to look on is, uh, the quality, since they have the same price. So what do you mean by, uh, quality? So we're looking the reliability as well as the features. So when is it reliable, it should work the way it should work, while with the features, what are present in the product. Now normally, if, uh, people purchase things now, they look more in the features rather than the reliability of the product. They, they look more on the things that the present and not on its use, which is actually not necessary. So, people tend to, or the consumers tend to focus more on the features rather than the reliability.

Rationale:

While the speaker's pronunciation is clear and intonation is effective, the content is very vague and incomplete. Listeners who are not familiar with the lecture she is describing, would not be able to understand it from her response. Her response captures a few key ideas from the lecture. However, she does not connect her ideas by using helpful transitional expressions, and as a result, the content is often difficult for the listener to follow. She also does not include any specific details such as the information about buying a car to help explain her ideas. So while she attempts to explain two aspects of quality, reliability and features, her explanation is vague and not complete.

Writing Section Directions

In this section, you will be able to demonstrate your ability to use writing to communicate in an academic environment. There will be two writing tasks.

In this practice test, you will be able to practice writing a response to each task and review sample responses.

In the actual test, your responses will be scored on your ability to write correctly, clearly, and coherently, as well as on your ability to respond to the questions as fully as possible.

Now read the directions for the first writing task.

Writing Based on Reading and Listening

First, you will read a passage about an academic topic. In the actual test, you will have 3 minutes to read it. Then you will listen to a lecture about the same topic.

When the lecture has ended, you can start writing your response. In the actual test, you will have 20 minutes to write. In your response, provide a detailed summary of the lecture and explain how the lecture relates to the reading passage. While you write, you will be able to see the reading passage again. You should try to make your response as complete as possible using information from the lecture and the reading passage.

This practice test will show you mid-level and high-level sample responses.

Now you will see the reading passage. It will be followed by a lecture transcript.

Writing Practice Task 1

The Chevalier

Toward the end of his life, the Chevalier de Seingalt (1725–1798) wrote a long memoir recounting his life and adventures. The Chevalier was a somewhat controversial figure, but since he met many famous people, including kings and writers, his memoir has become a valuable historical source about European society in the eighteenth century. However, some critics have raised doubts about the accuracy of the memoir. They claim that the Chevalier distorted or invented many events in the memoir to make his life seem more exciting and glamorous than it really was.

For example, in his memoir the Chevalier claims that while living in Switzerland, he was very wealthy, and it is known that he spent a great deal of money there on parties and gambling. However, evidence has recently surfaced that the Chevalier borrowed considerable sums of money from a Swiss merchant. Critics thus argue that if the Chevalier had really been very rich, he would not have needed to borrow money.

Critics are also skeptical about the accuracy of the conversations that the Chevalier records in the memoir between himself and the famous writer Voltaire. No one doubts that the Chevalier and Voltaire met and conversed. However, critics complain that the memoir cannot possibly capture these conversations accurately, because it was written many years after the conversations occurred. Critics point out that it is impossible to remember exact phrases from extended conversations held many years earlier.

Critics have also questioned the memoir's account of the Chevalier's escape from a notorious prison in Venice, Italy. He claims to have escaped the Venetian prison by using a piece of metal to make a hole in the ceiling and climbing through the roof. Critics claim that while such a daring escape makes for enjoyable reading, it is more likely that the Chevalier's jailers were bribed to free him. They point out that the Chevalier had a number of politically well-connected friends in Venice who could have offered a bribe.



Narrator Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic you just read about.

Female Professor No memoir can possibly be correct in every detail, but still, the Chevalier's memoir is pretty accurate overall and is, by and large, a reliable historical source. Let's look at the accuracy of the three episodes mentioned in the reading.

First, the loan from the merchant: Well, that doesn't mean that the Chevalier was poor. Let me explain. We know that in Switzerland, the Chevalier spent huge amounts of money on parties and on gambling. And he had wealth, but it was the kind of property you have to sell first to get money. So, it usually took a few days to convert his assets into actual money. So, when he ran out of cash, he had to borrow some while he was waiting for his money to arrive—but that's not being poor!

Second, the conversations with Voltaire: The Chevalier states in his memoir that each night, immediately after conversing with Voltaire, he wrote down everything he could remember about that particular night's conversation. Evidently, the Chevalier kept his notes of these conversations for many years and referred to them when writing the memoir. Witnesses who lived with the Chevalier in his later life confirm that he regularly consulted notes and journals when composing the memoir.

Third, the Chevalier's escape from the prison in Venice: Other prisoners in that prison had even more powerful friends than he did, and none of them were ever able to bribe their way to freedom, so bribery hardly seems likely in his case. The best evidence, though, comes from some old Venetian government documents. They indicate that soon after the Chevalier escaped from the prison, the ceiling of his old prison room had to be repaired. Why would they need to repair a ceiling unless he had escaped exactly as he said he did?

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You will now see a question that asks you to summarize the points made in the lecture and to explain how they cast doubt on points made in the reading passage. If this were an actual *TOEFL iBT*® test, you would have 20 minutes to write your response. In this practice test, you may write your response and then compare it to the sample responses.

Sample Responses

Task 1 – This is a mid-level response.

Giving some logical reasons, the professor is defending the Chevalier's memoir and making it reliable. She uses sophistications to make the critics convince that their claim on memoir is not true. First of all, she mentions the issue about borrowing some money from a merchant by Chevalier. She thinks the Chevalier was in trouble with cash and he hadn't enough time to prepare it. He hadn't time to sell his own properties and estates to provide the money, so the loan is reasonable and it doesn't show his poverty. Secondly, the critics say that he escaped out the jail by bribing the watchman. But we know that there were more powerful men there in the jail with much more powerful friends and relations that made the escape so easier for them but they weren't able to escape. Therefore, we can accept what the Chevalier has said about the way he could manage to escape from the prison using a piece of metal and digging the ceiling. And the last reason the critics give on unreliability of the Chevalier's memoir is that the details of the conversation between Chevalier and Voltaire is not truly mentioned in details in the Chevalier's memoir. They believe that there's a long period of time between the time they were conversing and the time Chevalier wrote that on paper. And it is impossible to write the exact talk that was occurred at that time. However, the professor solves the dilemma easily. In his point of view, the Chevalier had a chance to get the tool due to the watchmen's come and go to repair the ceiling.

Overall the professor is trying to make his opinion seem to be true.

Rationale:

This response is in the medium writing proficiency range. It would probably earn the score of 3 based on the Integrated Writing Scoring Rubric. The writer manages to convey some lecture information in response to the points made in the reading passage, but some ideas are omitted, unclear, or poorly connected. In response to the argument that the Chevalier was poor because we know he had to borrow money, the writer explains that the Chevalier was short on cash but not necessarily poor because he had other assets, which took some time to sell. Second, in response to the reading argument that the Chevalier probably bribed his way out of prison rather than escaping, the writer conveys the argument that other, more powerful men were not able to escape from the same prison. However, the writer does not clearly explain that they were unable to escape through bribery. Finally, the writer summarizes the reading argument that the Chevalier would have been unlikely to remember his conversations with Voltaire so many years later, but then, confusingly, returns to the Chevalier's escape from the prison. The writer tries to indicate (but not very clearly) that the Chevalier was able to get out of the prison by using the tools of a person who came to repair the ceiling. Apart from not connecting ideas well in this part of the response and not responding to the reading argument

about Voltaire, the writer also conveys a very imprecise idea of what the lecturer said about the ceiling repairs. The errors in the use of language are fairly frequent in this response and obscure the meaning of several ideas. A few examples: “She uses sophistications to make the critics convince”; “powerful friends and relations that made the escape so easier for them but they weren't able to escape”; “he could manage to escape from the prison using a piece of metal and digging the ceiling”; “the last reason the critics gives on unreliability of the Chevalier's memoir is that the details of the conversation between Chelavier and Voltaire is not truely mentioned in details in the Chelavier's memoir.”

Task 1 – This is a high-level response.

The professor starts by saying that no memoir is completely accurate but she believes that the memoir of the Chevalier de Seingalt was fairly accurate and can be used as a valuable historical source. Though some critics disagree she is convinced that the memoir is accurate about it's details and has given considerable proof in her lecture.

While living in Switzerland the Chevalier mentions that he was wealthy and that he would indulge in extravaganzas like parties and gambling. The new evidence that the Chevalier did, infact, borrow money from Swiss merchants does not necessarily mean that he was poor. On the contrary the Professor theorizes that the Chevalier had a lot of assets as wealth and it would require time for him to convert the assets into readily useable currency. In such unfortunate circumstances where his vices would require immediate money he would borrow some, for the time being, only to pay them back later. Her theory is logical and sound.

The second piece critics would like to disclaim as true is the count of all conversations with Voltaire which he recorded with accuracy in his memoir which was penned down years later. The professor puts forward the fact that the Chevalier would dutifully make a note of the entire length of the conversation every night after meeting with Voltaire. Such an act is confirmed by witnesses who saw the Chevalier refer to journals and notes while writing his memoir.

The final piece is the account of the dramatic jail break from Venice where he used a piece of metal to cperate a hole in the roof and then escaped. Such an account, though hard to believe, might actually be true as the Professor points out to some Italian government records dating back to that time which shows repairs being carried out to the cieling of the very same cell in which the Chevalier was imprisoned.

Though it may seem a bit dramatic and over the top, on the outset, the Professor is convinced that the memoirs of the Chevalier were true and accurate and could be used as a historical reference towards eighteenth century Europe.

Rationale:

This response is in the high writing proficiency range. It would probably earn the score of 5 based on the Integrated Writing Scoring Rubric. The response is well organized, conveys the important information from all three lecture points, and connects it well with information that was presented in the reading passage. In response to the reading argument that the Chevalier de Seingalt exaggerated his wealth because we know he was forced to borrow money; the writer correctly conveys the lecturer’s argument that the Chevalier needed the loans only because his considerable assets could not always be quickly converted into cash. In response to the argument that the Chevalier could not possibly remember his conversations with Voltaire so many years later, the writer conveys that the Chevalier based his memoirs on extensive notes he took at the time of his conversations with the famous author. Finally, in response to the argument that the Chevalier’s description of his escape from prison through a hole in a ceiling is hard to believe, the writer conveys the argument that the Chevalier’s account is supported by the historical records describing ceiling repairs in the prison where he was held. There are a few minor language errors (“it’s details”, “count of all conversations”, “records... which shows repairs being carried out”, “on the outset”) but they do not interfere with meaning in any way. In fact, the writer is very skilled in using sophisticated and accurate paraphrasing to convey the content from the lecture and the passage. A few examples: “he would indulge in extravaganzas like parties and gambling”; “conversations with Voltaire which he recorded with accuracy in his memoir which was penned down years later”; “repairs being carried out to the cieling [ceiling] of the very same cell in which the Chevalier was imprisoned.”

Writing for an Academic Discussion

For this task, you will read an online discussion. A professor has posted a question about a topic, and some classmates have responded with their ideas.

Write a response that contributes to the discussion. In the actual test, you will have 10 minutes to write your response. It is important to use your own words in the response. Including memorized reasons or examples will result in a lower score.

This practice test will show you mid-level and high-level sample responses.

Writing Practice Task 2

Your professor is teaching a class on sociology. Write a post responding to the professor's question.

In your response you should:

- express and support your opinion
- make a contribution to the discussion

An effective response will contain at least 100 words.

Dr. Diaz

Over the next few weeks, we are going to look at lots of different materials about the role of television programs and television watching in people's lives. But first, I want to know what you think about this topic. So here's a question for the class discussion board:

What do you think is the most significant effect that watching television has on people? Why do you think television has this effect?

Kelly

I know that one way that television influences people's behavior is that when you are watching television, you are not moving around or exercising. This is especially true for children. The American Academy of Pediatrics says that when children spend a lot of time watching television, they have a greater tendency to be overweight.

Paul

I think the main effect that television has on people is to broaden their experience. There are so many programs devoted to nature and travel. Think of all the different places in the world you can experience through television! Last night I watched a program about life in Antarctica, and it was fascinating!

Sample Responses

Task 2 – This is a mid-level response.

In my opinion, television makes the life more interesting and fun. There are so many interesting channels and programs, and they make people laugh during watching TV. I think this is a big effect that television on people, as time is passing by. Especially these days, people lives with the serious problems and accidents. People need something fresh and can entertain. Televisions do these kind of works very well. Through Music program, people can have relaxing time, through comedy program, people can laugh... and so on. Therefore, the television influences people's feeling much better, and I think this is very important effect!!

Rationale:

This essay is in the medium writing proficiency range. It would probably earn the score of 3 based on the Academic Discussion Scoring Rubric. It is a mostly understandable contribution to the discussion. The writer provides a different point of view than either Kelly or Paul, arguing that TV “makes the life more interesting.” (But including the article “the” in “the life” is a mistake. The correct phrase is “makes life more interesting.”) The writer then explains why people welcome a bit of TV fun: they “lives with the serious problems and accidents” (the correct phrasing would be “they live with serious problems or experience accidents”), and “through Music program” (should be “when watching music programs”) they can relax, “through comedy program” (should be “when watching comedy programs”) they can laugh, and so on. But there is quite of bit of repetition of the same idea: TV is fun and makes people laugh. Also, some ideas are unclear: what does the writer mean by “as time is passing by” in the third sentence? The writer seems unable to provide many clearly expressed details or to elaborate on the basic ideas, and so the contribution to the discussion feels only partly successful. There are noticeable errors in almost every sentence. In addition to the ones indicated above, there is “a big effect that television on people” (which should read “a big effect that television has on people”), “People need something fresh and can entertain” (which should read “People need something fresh and entertaining”), and others. However, most of the meaning is still understandable despite the errors.

Task 2 – This is a high-level response.

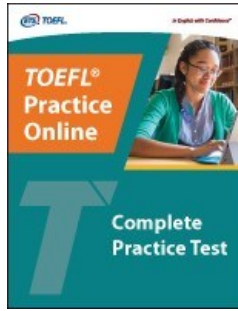
In my opinion, Paul is right when he says that watching television might broaden your experience. By watching for example science programs, you can gain valuable insights into new topics. On the other hand, I think that a high percentage of people don't watch TV to increase their knowledge. I am of the opinion that many people watch TV in order to get distracted from their real lives. They watch films or series to be entertained and to forget problems they have at work or in their private lives. At least for me this works well - for instance if I am sad, I watch a comedy or a funny soap opera and afterwards, I am in a better mood. Therefore, I think that being entertained and distracted is the most significant effect of TV.

Rationale:

This response is in the high writing proficiency range. It would probably earn the score of 5 based on the Academic Discussion Scoring Rubric. The writer conveys complex and well-argued ideas that contribute nicely to the discussion. While the writer mentions Paul's point of view, the writer does not just repeat it. Instead, the writer takes Paul's ideas as the starting point, and goes on to present a different point of view, arguing that watching TV is not mainly educational but rather a relaxing experience. The writer then goes on to develop this point of view, explaining why people need to relax, and providing the writer's own personal experiences: why the writer usually watches TV, which programs, and so on.

The language the writer uses has a nice variety, both in how the sentences are formed and in the range of the vocabulary used. There are almost no errors; the word "valuable" in the second sentence is misspelled, but that may be expected from even competent writers writing under timed conditions, as the Scoring Rubric explains.

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