

# TOEFL

*Test of English as a Foreign Language*



WASHTENAW  
LITERACY





## **Washtenaw Literacy's Mission:**

Believing that literacy is the foundation for a sustainable community, Washtenaw Literacy provides literacy support, free of charge, to adults through a network of trained tutors.

It is our **Vision** to eliminate illiteracy in Washtenaw County.



PASSION



DIVERSITY  
EQUITY  
INCLUSION



INTEGRITY

[www.washtenawliteracy.org](http://www.washtenawliteracy.org)

734-337-3338

# Training Guidelines



This is a self-paced training module.

You may take as much or as little time as you'd like on it, but treat this time as though you were in a class.

- Limit distractions (turn off devices, email notifications, don't engage in side conversations).
- **Be a fully engaged, active learner!**
- Trust the process and plunge into activities.

# TUTOR OBJECTIVE

To partner with an adult in pursuing their personal goals by improving their ability to understand, speak, read, and write basic English and do math through customized, research-based tutoring.

# Training Objectives



## 1. Develop skills needed for tutoring adults

- Establish tutoring strategies that support adult learners with TOEFL preparation
- Develop approaches to tackling each section of the TOEFL

## 2. Build knowledge needed to engage with agency

- List the TOEFL test sections, costs, scoring, and scheduling requirements
- Identify how to register for the TOEFL

## 3. Align your perspective and expectations with the needs of adult learners

- Compare two versions of the test and determine which is best for your learner
- Recognize the difficulty and complexity of TOEFL test questions
- Express the importance of practice tests, note-taking skills, and typing skills

# The TOEFL



## Purpose

- To measure the English proficiency and academic skills of non-native speakers of English
- Often required for admission at English-language universities and institutions
- May be required by some scholarship programs, government agencies (e.g., visas), employers, etc.

## Computer skills are essential!

- Using a mouse
- Navigating software/webpages
- Typing skills

# The TOEFL



## Administered by ETS

Educational Testing Service



## Test Types

- TOEFL iBT (internet-based test)
  - Most commonly taken and accepted form of the test
- TOEFL Essentials Test
  - New test format (became available August 2021)
- Other versions include:
  - Primary (ages 8-11)
  - Junior (children ages 11+)
  - TOEFL PDT (paper-delivered test, used in areas without computer/internet access)
  - TOEFL iBT Home Edition (popularized during COVID-19 pandemic)

# TOEFL iBT vs. TOEFL Essentials



	TOEFL iBT	TOEFL Essentials
<b>What does it measure?</b>	Comprehensive communicative language ability in an academic context	Basic functional ability in both academic and non-academic contexts
<b>Who should take it?</b>	An individual looking to stand out for admission into an academic institution	An individual looking for a test that blends quality and convenience with an engaging format
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% academic English</li> <li>• Tasks that represent what students must do in an academic environment, requiring integration of all language skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% academic English, 50% general English</li> <li>• Tasks designed to measure proficiency, tailored to the test taker's ability level</li> </ul>
<b>Length</b>	About 3 hours	About 1.5 hours
<b>Format</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 sections: Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 sections: Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking</li> <li>• 5-minute personal video statement</li> </ul>
<b>Computer Adaptive</b>	No. Each test taker receives the same questions.	Yes. Questions adjust to the test taker's skill level in an adaptive format.
<b>Cost</b>	Typically \$185-\$325 (varies by country)	Typically \$100-\$125



# TOEFL iBT Scoring



*Not a pass/fail test*

## Scoring

- Each section has a score range of **0–30**.
- These are added together for a total score of **0–120**.
- Institutions may require a certain total score and/or specific scores in each section.
- **MyBest™ scores** combine your highest section scores from all test dates within the last 2 years.
  - *Note: Not all institutions accept MyBest scores.*

**Tip: Find out what TOEFL score the target institution requires and make that score the goal!**



# How/Where to Take the TOEFL



## Locations

- Authorized Test Centers
  - Offered 60+ times each year
- At Home
  - Offered by appointment (4 days per week)

## Registration

- The easiest way to register is online by creating an ETS account:
  - <https://www.ets.org/toefl/test-takers/ibt/take/register>
- Individuals can also register by phone or by mail.

## Scheduling (ETS Recommendations)

- Pick a test date at least **2-3 months before the earliest deadline.**
  - *For example, when a college application is due.*
- Register more than 4 months before the desired test date.

# TOEFL iBT Format



Section	Questions / Tasks	Time
<b>1: Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Read passages and respond to questions</li><li>● 3-4 reading passages (standard = 3)</li><li>● 10 questions per passage</li></ul>	54 minutes (if 3 passages); 72 minutes (if 4 passages)
<b>2: Listening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Listen to lectures/conversations and respond to questions</li><li>● 3-4 lectures (standard = 3)</li><li>● 2-3 conversations (standard = 2)</li><li>● 6 questions per lecture; 5 questions per conversation</li></ul>	41 minutes (if 3 lectures, 2 convos); 57 minutes (if 4 lectures, 3 convos)
<b>10-minute break</b>		
<b>3: Speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Talk about a familiar topic and discuss reading/audio materials</li><li>● 4 tasks: 1 independent + 3 integrated</li><li>● Independent task: Speak for 45 seconds</li><li>● Integrated tasks: Speak for 60 seconds</li></ul>	17 minutes
<b>4: Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Read passages, listen to recordings, and respond to prompts</li><li>● 2 tasks: 1 independent + 1 integrated</li><li>● Independent essay: Write for 30 minutes</li><li>● Integrated essay: Write for 20 minutes</li></ul>	50 minutes

## Why are there different lengths for the Reading and Listening sections?

- The standard length for the Reading section is 3 passages, and the standard length for the Listening section is 3 lectures + 2 conversations.
- *However:* Every test taker will get ONE extra section:
  - 1 extra reading passage **OR**
  - 1 extra lecture + 1 extra conversation
- The extra section is not scored; ETS uses this to try out new material.
  - Individuals will not be told which section is extra.

## What does “independent” and “integrated” mean?

- **Independent** means you use only your ideas; there are no extra materials.
  - *Independent speaking:* Speak about your opinion on a question.
  - *Independent writing:* Write about your opinion on a question.
- **Integrated** means you use information from other materials to answer the question.
  - *Integrated speaking:* Read and/or listen to a passage(s), then speak about it.
  - *Integrated writing:* Read and/or listen to a passage(s), then write about it.

# General TOEFL Preparation Strategies



It's important to discuss *with your learner* what strategies can best support their areas of growth.

**Become familiar with the TOEFL format.**

- Teach and “quiz” learners on the structure, timing, etc.
- Use timed practice.
- Take official practice tests.

**Show learners examples of “good” Speaking and Writing responses, as well as “not so good” examples.**

**Encourage learners to read, listen, speak, and write in English as much as possible!**

- Read the news or books of interest.
- Listen to podcasts or TED Talks, and watch movies.
- Find a conversation partner.
- Write in English every day.
- Establish a vocabulary journal for learning new words.

# Let's Look at the TOEFL iBT: Reading



## Length

- 3 or 4 reading passages
  - Approximately 700 words per passage
- 54-72 minutes (depending on the number of passages)

## Question Types

- 10 questions per passage
- All questions are some variant of selected-response (e.g., multiple choice, insert the missing sentence, prose summary with provided options, etc.).

**Test takers are able to navigate forward and backwards between sets of passages and questions.**

# Sample Reading Question

Barron's TOEFL® Test 1 Reading Section

Question 1 of 39

Hide Times

59:30

Beginning

According to paragraph 1, which of the following is true about *Beowulf*?

- (A) It is the only manuscript from the Anglo-Saxon period.
- (B) The original story was written in a German dialect.
- (C) The author did not sign his name to the poem.
- (D) It is one of several epics from the first century.

Paragraph 1 is marked with an arrow [▶].

## Historical Background

▶ The epic poem *Beowulf*, written in Old English, is the earliest existing Germanic epic and one of four surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. Although *Beowulf* was written by an anonymous Englishman in Old English, the tale takes place in that part of Scandinavia from which Germanic tribes emigrated to England. *Beowulf* comes from Geatland, the outeastern part of what is now Sweden. Hrothgar, king of the Danes, lives near what is now Leire, on Zealand, Denmark's largest island. The *Beowulf* epic contains three major tales about Beowulf and several minor tales that reflect a rich Germanic oral tradition of myths, legends, and folklore.

The *Beowulf* warriors have a foot in both the Bronze and Iron Ages. Their mead-halls reflect the wealthy living of the Bronze Age Northmen, and their wooden shields, wood-shafted spears, and bronze-hilted swords are those of the Bronze Age warrior. However, they carry iron-tipped spears, and their best swords have iron or iron-edged blades. Beowulf also orders an iron shield for his fight with a dragon. Iron replaced bronze because it produced a blade with a cutting edge that was stronger and sharper. The Northmen learned how to forge iron in about 500 B.C. Although they had been superior to the European Celts in bronze work, it was the Celts who taught them how to make and design iron work. Iron was accessible



# Preparing for the Reading Section



## Encourage learners to develop a personal approach.

- Skim the entire passage first, then go to the questions.
- Read a paragraph at a time and answer questions along the way.
- Read the questions first, then scan for answers.
- Use some combination of the above.

## Practice basic reading skills.

- Making inferences
- Using context to understand vocabulary and unfamiliar topics
- Summarizing
- Finding details and factual information

## Practice using grammar skills in reading.

- Finding signal words and phrases (e.g., “as a result,” “nevertheless,” “at the same time,” “similarly,” “for example”)
- Finding pronouns and their referents (i.e., the person, thing, or idea that it refers to)

# Preparing for the Reading Section



## Practice skimming.

- For many learners, there isn't enough time to read an entire passage word for word.
- Model reading the first sentence of every paragraph and the last sentence of the first and last paragraphs to get a general understanding of the passage.

## Practice scanning.

- It's necessary to identify the key word(s) in questions and answer choices.
- Model moving your eyes quickly over the passage and looking for the key word(s).
- Read the sentence with the key word(s). The answer will often be in that sentence, the sentence right before, or the sentence right after.

## Keep an eye on the time.

- Recommend the learner spend about 18 minutes total on each passage.

# Let's Look at the TOEFL iBT: Listening



## Length

- 5 to 7 listening passages
  - Lectures
    - Academic lectures, one person speaking
    - 3-4 passages, 3-5 minutes each
  - Conversations
    - Campus-related, two people speaking
    - 2-3 passages, 3 minutes each
- 41-57 minutes (depending on the number of passages)

## Question Types

- 6 questions per lecture
- 5 questions per conversation
- All questions are some variant of selected-response (e.g., multiple choice, matching, etc.).

**Test takers can only listen to each passage once.**

# Sample Listening Questions

TOEFL iBT Exit Pause Listening 2 of 17 OK NEXT

9 : 51

What does the professor mean when he says this:

- He wants the student to develop his research skills.
- He does not think the student is up to the standard of the class.
- He believes the student's latest work is not as good as previous ones.
- He is considering inviting the student to do research with him.

TOEFL iBT Complete Practice Test V4 Listening REPLAY TALK REVIEW VOLUME HELP OK NEXT

PAUSE TEST SECTION EXIT GUESS:  SHOW SOLUTION Question 8 of 17

What does the professor say about disinhibition?

- It can prevent displacement activities from occurring.
- It can cause animals to act on more than one drive at a time.
- It is not useful for explaining many types of displacement activities.
- It is responsible for the appearance of seemingly irrelevant behavior.

# Preparing for the Listening Section



## Develop a routine for listening to passages.

- Preview any titles, visuals, etc., that accompany the passage.
- Take notes while listening to the passage.
- Answer the questions.
- Listen to the passage again to check answers.
- Read a transcript of the passage for confirmation/clarification.

## Practice basic listening skills.

- Identifying topics vs. main ideas
- Making inferences
- Restating or paraphrasing information
- Finding details and factual information

# Preparing for the Listening Section



## Practice using grammar skills in listening.

- Finding signal words and phrases (e.g., “first,” “today we’ll talk about,” “another example is,” “however,” “on the other hand”)

## Practice note-taking.

- Note-taking leads to active listening and helps trigger memory when recalling details.
- Model taking notes while listening.
  - Don’t write down every word; focus on main ideas and key details.
  - Use abbreviations (ex., diff., ASAP) and symbols (+, <) to write faster.

## Be conscious of visuals that may accompany a passage.

- Some aren’t very important (picture of the person speaking).
- Some are useful or important (illustrations/charts related to the topic, important vocabulary mentioned by the speaker, etc.).

# Let's Look at the TOEFL iBT: Speaking



## Length

- 4 speaking tasks total
- 17 minutes

## Task Types

- All questions are constructed-response (in the form of recorded response with a headset/microphone).
- Independent (use own ideas, opinions, experiences, etc.)
  - 1 task
    - 15 seconds to prepare a response
    - 45 seconds to record a response
- Integrated (includes reading and listening skills)
  - 3 tasks
    - 20 or 30 seconds to prepare a response
    - 60 seconds to record a response

## Speaking task scoring rubrics

[https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl\\_speaking\\_rubrics.pdf](https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl_speaking_rubrics.pdf)

# Sample Speaking Independent Task

*Look at the topic below for 15 seconds. You may make notes if you wish*

**Some people think they can achieve more when they are with other people. Others think they are more productive when they are alone. What is your opinion? Explain why.**

Preparation Time: 15 seconds

Response Time: 45 seconds

After 15 seconds, please speak into the microphone. You should speak for 45 seconds. Afterwards you can compare your recording to a sample answer.



Recording



43 Seconds



# Sample Speaking Integrated Task

Read the following text from a college course manual and listen to the conversation that follows it. Then, answer the question.

**Course: GL202**

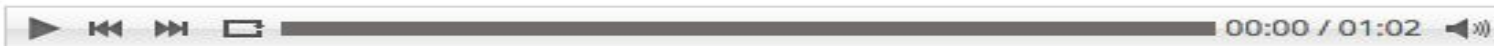
**Assessment Procedure Cont.**

### **Part 3.6 - Group Work**

The geology department is aware of the problems surrounding of group work, and its unpopularity among students. We realize that in some cases students do not contribute and thus gain marks they do not deserve, while stronger students are frustrated at being held back by weaker students. Similarly, it is very difficult for tutors to award marks for group projects, as it is unclear who is responsible for each part.

However, the department feels that there is a great deal to be gained from group work, in terms of self-organization and communication skills. To this end, we plan to introduce a system whereby the group work itself is not formally assessed, but each student will undertake an individual piece of work based on the group project, which will be designed to ensure participation in the project.

Listen to the conversation.



**Question:** *The man expresses his opinion of group work. State and explain his opinion. Compare his opinion with the opinion of the geology faculty.*

Preparation Time: 30 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds

After 30 seconds, please speak into the microphone. You should speak for 60 seconds. Afterwards you can compare your recording to a sample answer.

# Preparing for the Speaking Section



## Develop a routine for practicing speaking tasks.

- Read the prompt.
- Take notes on the listening and reading passages (for the integrated tasks).
- Use preparation time (15-30 seconds) to plan out what to say.
- Record the learner speaking.
- Play back the learner's response again to check answer.
- Make a transcript of the answer for confirmation/correction.

## Practice note-taking.

- Model taking notes while listening and preparing a response.
  - Don't write down every word; focus on main ideas and key details.
  - Use abbreviations (ex., diff., ASAP) and symbols (+, <) to write faster

## Practice using grammar skills in speaking.

- Use transitions and connectors (e.g., "first," "today we'll talk about," "another example is," "however," "on the other hand") to organize the response.

# Preparing for the Speaking Section



**It is very important to do timed practice!**

## **Speak at normal speed.**

- Don't speak too fast or too slow.
- Pronounce words clearly.
- Try to avoid long pauses.
- Use the preparation time (15-30 seconds) to plan out what to say.
  - Don't write sentences; there isn't enough time.
  - Write phrases for the main idea and supporting evidence.
  - Write key vocabulary you want to use.

## **Speak for the entire time.**

- Independent task: 45 seconds
- Integrated tasks: 60 seconds
- Don't finish early; keep speaking until the end.

# Let's Look at the TOEFL iBT: Writing



## Length

- 2 writing tasks total
- 50 minutes

## Task Types

- All questions are constructed-response (typed response).
- Integrated essay (includes reading and listening skills)
  - 20 minutes
  - 150-225 words
  - Test takers hear the listening passage only once but are able to see the reading again while typing their essay.
- Independent essay (use own ideas, opinions, experiences, etc.)
  - 30 minutes
  - 300+ words

## Writing task scoring rubrics

[https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl\\_writing\\_rubrics.pdf](https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl_writing_rubrics.pdf)

# Sample Writing Independent Task



Test Section	Question Number	Review Tools
Writing	2 of 2	Sample

HELP ?   BACK   NEXT

HIDE TIME   27:48

Cut   Paste   Undo   Word Count   0   Hide

**Directions:**  
Read the question below. You have 30 minutes to plan, write, and revise your essay. Typically, an effective response will contain a minimum of 300 words.

**Question:**  
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
**A teacher's ability to relate well with students is more important than excellent knowledge of the subject being taught.**  
Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

# Sample Writing Integrated Task

TOEFL Writing

Question 1 of 2

HIDE TIME 00:19:53

**Directions:** You have 20 minutes to plan and write your response. Your response will be judged on the basis of the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the points in the lecture and their relationship to the reading passage. Typically, an effective response will be 150 to 225 words.

**Question:** Summarize the points made in the lecture you just heard, explaining how they cast doubt on points made in the reading.

In many organizations, perhaps the best way to approach certain new projects is to assemble a group of people into a team. Having a team of people attack a project offers several advantages. First of all, a group of people has a wider range of knowledge, expertise, and skills than any single individual is likely to possess. Also, because of the numbers of people involved and the greater resources they possess, a group can work more quickly in response to the task assigned to it and can come up with highly creative solutions to problems and issues. Sometimes these creative solutions come about because a group is more likely to make risky decisions that an individual might not undertake. This is because the group spreads responsibility for a decision to all the members and thus no single individual can be held accountable if the decision turns out to be wrong.

Taking part in a group process can be very rewarding for members of the team. Team members who have a voice in making a decision will no doubt feel better about carrying out the work that is entailed by that decision than they might doing work that is imposed on them by others. Also, the individual team member has a much better chance to "shine," to get his or her contributions and ideas not only recognized but recognized as highly significant, because a team's overall results can be more far-reaching and have greater impact than what might have otherwise been possible for the person to accomplish or contribute working alone.

Out Paste Undo Redo Hide Word Count 0

According to the lecture, nonartists.

I

Time left

Number of words

Previous passage

# Preparing for the Writing Section



## Practice basic writing skills.

- Writing introduction and conclusion paragraphs
- Developing topic sentences and concluding sentences
- Writing supporting paragraphs
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Comparing/contrasting opinions

## Include as many details and examples as possible.

- Independent task: Use examples from your personal life to support ideas.
- Integrated task: Use as many relevant details from the reading and listening passages as possible.

## Practice using grammar skills in writing.

- Use transitions and connectors (e.g., “first,” “furthermore,” “moreover,” “another,” “finally,” “as well as,” “in fact,” “consequently,” “for instance”) to organize the response.

# Preparing for the Writing Section



**It is very important to do timed practice!**

## **Practice note-taking.**

- Model taking notes while listening and preparing a response.
  - Don't write down every word; focus on main ideas and key details.
  - Use abbreviations (ex., diff., ASAP) and symbols (+, <) to write faster

## **Save a couple minutes at the end for editing.**

- Read the response again and correct any grammar mistakes.
- Try to use correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

**Learners may want to practice typing in English.**



# Training Objectives



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- List the TOEFL test sections, costs, scoring, and scheduling requirements
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## 3. Align your perspective and expectations with the needs of adult learners

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# RESOURCES & DEEPER LEARNING

- Explore the [ETS TOEFL](#) website
  - Official test information, instructional videos, practice tests, registration, and more
- Visit the [Test Resources TOEFL Preparation](#) YouTube Channel
  - Helpful videos about every section of the TOEFL
  - Strategies and tips for getting your best score
- Read the [Magoosh Blog](#)
  - Huge collection of articles on different topics related to the TOEFL
- Check Out Other Free Practice Sets and Practice Tests
  - [Best My Test](#)
  - [Exam English](#)

## HOMework

*(on the website: choose one or more)*

- Read our Test-Taking Guide
- Quiz
- Share a resource
- Share an idea

# Thank you!



## Washtenaw Literacy Tutor Training TOEFL Module

*Last Updated: August 2022*

*Thank you to Claire Fields and John Mask  
for the content of these slides!*

## Questions?

Contact Alison at [austin@washtenawliteracy.org](mailto:austin@washtenawliteracy.org).