

Listening Comprehension Practice Questions

— Section 1

The **Listening Comprehension** section tests your ability to understand both short and long conversations in English. The section contains recorded material that is similar to what you might hear if you were with a group of students at an English-speaking college or university. The language includes

- vocabulary and idiomatic expressions common to spoken English
- special grammatical constructions used in speech

Directions and Practice Questions

Directions and examples of the types of questions you will find in the **Listening Comprehension** section of the *TOEFL*® test are below.

There are three parts to this section, with special directions for each part.

Answer all questions based on what is stated or implied by the speakers you hear.

Do not:

- take notes or write in your test book at any time
- turn the pages until you are told to do so.

Part A

Directions: In Part A, you will hear short conversations between two people. After each conversation, you will hear a question about the conversation. The conversations and questions will not be repeated. After you hear a question, read the four possible answers in your test book and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Sample Answer



Here is an example.

On the recording, you will hear:

(woman) *I don't like this painting very much.*

(man) *Neither do I.*

(narrator) *What does the man mean?*

In your test book, you will read:

A. He doesn't like the painting either.

- B. He doesn't know how to paint.
- C. He doesn't have any paintings.
- D. He doesn't know what to do.

You learn from the conversation that neither the man nor the woman likes the painting. The best answer to the question, "What does the man mean?" is A, "He doesn't like the painting either." Therefore, the correct choice is A.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. You will hear:

(man) *Shall I lock up the computer lab now before I go home?*

Don't bother. I'm not leaving for a while, I can check it on my way

(woman) *out.*

(narrator) *What will the woman probably do?*

- You will read:**
- A. Lock the computer lab later.
 - B. Leave with the man.
 - C. Buy a new lock for the computer lab.
 - D. Show the man where the lab is.

2. You will hear:

(man) *Do you mind if I turn the television off?*

(woman) *Well, I'm in the middle of watching a program.*

(narrator) *What does the woman imply?*

- You will read:**
- A. The man should watch the program too.
 - B. The man should leave the television on.
 - C. The program will be over soon.
 - D. She'll watch television later.

3. You will hear:

(woman) *I heard the math requirements for graduation are being changed.*

(man) *Yes. And I may be short one course.*

(narrator) *What does the man mean?*

- You will read:**
- A. He isn't sure what course to take.
 - B. The math course is too short.
 - C. He may not meet the graduation requirements.
 - D. The graduation date has been changed.

Part B

Directions: In this part of the test you will hear longer conversations. After each conversation you will hear several questions. The conversations and questions will not be repeated.

After you hear a question, read the four possible answers in your test book and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Remember, you are **not** allowed to take notes or write in your test book.

SAMPLE CONVERSATION AND PRACTICE QUESTIONS

(narrator) *Questions 4 through 7. Listen to a conversation about a trip.*

(man) *Are you ready for "The Big Apple"?*

(woman) *Excuse me?*

You know, New York City. You are going to New York with us, aren't you? I wanted to show everybody around my old

(man) *neighborhood.*

Oh...sure! I wouldn't miss it especially when the tour guide is a

(woman) *native New Yorker.*

I thought we could start at the Museum of Modern Art. Right now there's an exhibit on twentieth-century American painters.

(man) *there's an exhibit on twentieth-century American painters.*

(woman) *Fine with me...but what were you saying about...a big apple?*

"The Big Apple." It's a nickname for New York. I think I heard once that it started with jazz musicians in the 20's.

(man) *that it started with jazz musicians in the 20's.*

(woman) *Oh.*

Whenever they played a concert in a city, they called that city an "apple." In those days, New York was the biggest city in the country,

(man) *so they called it "The Big Apple."*

(woman) *Hey, I have an idea! Let's go to a jazz club while we're there.*

(man) *Sounds good.*

Questions:

**4. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *What is the man planning to see?*

- You will read:**
- A. An art exhibit.
 - B. A Broadway play.
 - C. A modern dance production.
 - D. An opera.

**5. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *What can be inferred about the man?*

- You will read:**
- A. He is a jazz musician.
 - B. He wants to join the woman's club.
 - C. He is in his twenties.
 - D. He was born in New York.

**6. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *What does the word "Apple" in the phrase "The Big Apple" refer to?*

- You will read:**
- A. An instrument.
 - B. A city.
 - C. A theater.
 - D. A concert.

**7. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *Who gave New York its nickname?*

- You will read:**
- A. Painters.
 - B. Tour guides.
 - C. Musicians.
 - D. Grocers.

Part C

Directions: In this part of the test you will hear several talks. After each talk, you will hear some questions. The talks and questions will not be repeated. After you hear a question, read the four possible answers in your test book and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Here is an example.

On the recording, you will hear:

(narrator) *Listen to an instructor talk to his class about a television program.*

I'd like to tell you about an interesting TV program that'll be shown this coming Thursday. It'll be on from 9 to 10 p.m. on Channel 4. It's part of a series called "Mysteries of Human Biology." The subject of the program is the human brain — how it functions and how it can malfunction. Topics that will be covered are dreams, memory, and depression. These topics are illustrated with outstanding computer animation that makes the explanations easy to follow. Make an effort to see this show. Since we've been studying the nervous system in class, I know you'll find it very helpful.

(man)

Sample Answer

A B C D

Here is an example.

You will hear:

(narrator) *What is the main purpose of the program?*

In your test book, you will read:

- A. To demonstrate the latest use of computer graphics.
- B. To discuss the possibility of an economic depression.
- C. To explain the workings of the brain.
- D. To dramatize a famous mystery story.

The best answer to the question, "What is the main purpose of the program?" is C, "To explain the workings of the brain." Therefore, the correct choice is C.

Sample Answer

A B C D

Here is another example.

You will hear:

(narrator) *Why does the speaker recommend watching the program?*

In your test book, you will read:

- A. It is required of all science majors.
- B. It will never be shown again.
- C. It can help viewers improve their memory skills.
- D. It will help with course work.

The best answer to the question, "Why does the speaker recommend watching the program?" is D, "It will help with course work." Therefore, the correct choice is D.

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PRACTICE TALK AND PRACTICE QUESTIONS

(narrator) *Questions 8 through 10. Listen to a talk about animal behavior.*

Today's discussion is about a common animal reaction — the yawn. The dictionary defines a yawn as "an involuntary reaction to fatigue or boredom." That's certainly true for human yawns, but not necessarily for animal yawns. The same action can have quite different meanings in different species.

For example, some animals yawn to intimidate intruders on their territory. Fish and lizards are examples of this. Hippos use yawns when they want to settle a quarrel. Observers have seen two hippos yawn at each other for as long as two hours before they stop quarreling.

As for social animals like baboons or lions — they yawn to establish the pecking order within social groups, and lions often yawn to calm social tensions. Sometimes these animals yawn for a strictly physiological reason — that is, to increase oxygen levels. And curiously enough, when they yawn for a physical reason like that, they do what humans do — they try to stifle the yawn by looking

(woman) *away or by covering their mouths.*

Questions:

**8. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *What is the speaker's main point?*

- You will read:**
- A. Animals yawn for a number of reasons.
 - B. Yawning results only from fatigue or boredom.
 - C. Human yawns are the same as those of other animals.
 - D. Only social animals yawn.

**9. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *According to the speaker, when are hippos likely to yawn?*

- You will read:**
- A. When they are swimming.
 - B. When they are quarreling.
 - C. When they are socializing.
 - D. When they are eating.

**10. You will
hear:**

(narrator) *What physiological reason for yawning is mentioned?*

- You will read:**
- A. To exercise the jaw muscles.
 - B. To eliminate fatigue.
 - C. To get greater strength for attacking.
 - D. To gain more oxygen.