

23 years of practical teaching experience TOEFL, TOEIC and SAT

Academic Listening – Writing – Reading and Public Speaking

Komazawa University and Toyo University

Shakespeare Scholar



TOEIC: Outside the Box



mnrenglish.com



S 2 I have over 23 years of practical teaching experience in TOEFL, TOEIC and SAT tests and teaching academic listening, academic writing, academic reading, and public speaking here in Japan at Komazawa University and Toyo University. I have also published several articles on the works of Shakespeare, I have a book explaining TOEIC test taking strategies on the Amazon bookstore, and I am co-owner of MR English school in Kiryu, Gunma, now in our 15th year.

Unique, interesting and dynamic techniques

NOT taught in traditional textbooks or in any online courses

Complex ideas

Easiest and simplest forms

S 3 This course contains layers of new approaches, and unique, interesting, and hopefully, dynamic techniques, many of which are not taught in traditional textbooks or in any online courses. These exceptional approaches to TOEFL are easy to understand and apply. The job of any good educator is to take complex ideas and explain them in their easiest and simplest forms for people who need rapid access to that information.

Keep it as a conversation

NOT a lecture

Important life skill

After extensive practice

Master them

S 4 Throughout this course, I will do my very best to keep it as a conversation, NOT a lecture. I want you to have fun, be engaged and realize that while the iBT test is a great challenge, it is by no means an impossible one. I want you to think about it as any other important life skill, like driving, cooking, or even kanji. All of these skills came after we learn how to do them, and only after extensive practice with the techniques and strategies, we master them.

Unique approach

Simplify complex information

Understand the basics

What you need to do

IBT NOT so difficult

S 5 I want you to enjoy this course and my unique approach to it. I will do my very best to simplify what initially seem to be very complicated concepts, so that you can understand the basics of what it is you need to do for each and every step of this test. I want you, by the end of this course, to feel that iBT is NOT so difficult after all, and that you realistically, can get a score that will enable you to enter any institution that will help you forward your goals and future plans.

What does the passage say about the production of the Model T?

- A. Ford company built fifteen million cars in fifteen years
- B. Henry Ford invented industrial production
- C. Black was the most popular color for a Model T
- D. Production time was reduced by paying close attention to each step in the process

The first car produced for a mass market was Henry Ford's Model T, and it became one of the most successful cars in the history of the industry. Remarkably, Ford manufactured fifteen million Model Ts between 1909 and 1927. The advances in industrial production, headed by Henry Ford were reflected in the production of the Model T. After five years of manufacturing the car, in 1913, the assembly time for a complete car was reduced to one hour and thirty-three minutes, from twelve hours and eight minutes. This was accomplished by hiring supervisors who increased worker productivity and lowered production costs by closely monitoring every step in the assembly process. Though many believe that all model Ts sold were black, the first models came in gray, red, green, and blue. A black model T wasn't available until 1913.

S 14 Here is a question about the early Model T Ford cars. Answer A looks good, but a quick scan will tell us that Ford build 15 million cars in 18 years, not 15 years. We know that B is false because Henry ford didn't '*invent*' industrial production. He improved it. C is also false. The passage tells us that the cars came in many colors, and black wasn't available for the first four years. Time to confirm answer choice in the passage. There it is. The assembly time was greatly reduced because of supervisors who increased productivity by checking every step of the manufacturing process. D is our answer here.

This passage suggests that...

A. Chinese women enjoyed their status in Confucian society

B. Confucianism is a non-repressive philosophy that honors men and women

C. Over the generations, women were conditioned to accept their lower status

D. Women in Confucian society produced a lot of writings

In the years after Confucianism was adopted as the Chinese government's official tenant, the Confucian structure of society determined that women had lower positions in society than men. A great deal of writing was produced to instruct women on etiquette, chastity, modesty, managing their households, and how to behave with their husband's families. As a method of instructing women about their social positions, narratives were produced with shining examples of notable women who were unfailingly loyal and subservient in order to support her husband and his family. This subtle sociopolitical manipulation reached deep into succeeding generations of Chinese women. It gave rise to interpretations of Confucian beliefs, which provided traditional maxims that had wide ranging effects on the historical status and social participation of women in successive generations.

S 31 This next one is about China and Confucianism which is the philosophy that has most influenced China's society and social structure. We see from the answer choices that the passage discusses Confucianism and women's roles in society. From what you know about Chinese history, do you think answer choice A is accurate? Let's check for the words Confucianism and society. They are here in the first paragraph telling us women had lower positions in society than men. I don't think that so many of them enjoyed that status. See, you already knew that answer choice was false. The same sentence tells us that choice B is also wrong. By giving women a lower status, you are '*repressing*' them. C is interesting. If you were planning to repress women in your society and in future generations, how would you do it? Answer choice C of course. The support for this answer has to do with creating a narrative and sociopolitical manipulation. I really like C here. How about D? Well common sense tells me that women wouldn't write the same narratives enforcing their lower social status, therefore those writers were most likely men. Let's go with C. It makes the most sense.

Homonyms

Weak — Week

Sun — Son

See — Sea

Plane — Plain

Meet — Meat

S 1 Last time in unit three, I talked about synonyms and acronyms. I'd like to open this lesson with two other '*nyms*', you really need to study. '*Homonyms*' and '*acronyms*.' A homonym is when two words share the same sound but are spelled differently and have different meanings. For example, in English you have 'fair' and 'fare'. The former can mean objective or un-biased, and the latter can be a fee you pay, like train fare. Here are a few more examples so that you can see clearly what I am talking about here.

On screen :

Weak — Week

Plane — Plain

Sun — Son

Meet — Meat

See — Sea

English homonyms can be confusing, and it would be a good idea to do a web search to get a list to study. There are many webpages like the ones we looked at last time on prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, and antonyms.

Acronyms

ASAP – As Soon as Possible

FYI – For Your Information

ETA – Estimated Time of Arrival

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

TBA – To Be Announced

PR – Public Relations

S 2 Finally, the last '*nym*', acronyms are also very important. We use them all the time. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation is known as the F.B.I. The university I attended in the US was U.C.S.D. or University of California at San Diego. Some of you studying here may wish to get an MBA or Master of Business Administration. Many government, military and educational institutions use acronyms, and it is very likely you will see them when you take a TOEFL test.

Here are a few examples of useful acronyms.

ASAP – As Soon as Possible.

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

FYI – For Your Information

TBA – To Be Announced

ETA – Estimated Time of Arrival

PR – Public Relations

As with the homonyms, there are many lists of these acronyms on the Internet. It would be helpful to know the most common ones. These acronyms are used in all aspects of American life, in the English language and on the TOEFL iBT test.

Paraphrase

In the 16th century, the exact orbits of the planets were a mystery.

Paraphrase: The correct paths of the planets were unknown in the 16th century

The most extreme form of legalized social inequality for both individuals and groups is slavery.

Paraphrase: The lawful institution of slavery is the most severe form of social disparity for groups and individuals.

S 3 Before we move into our next question style, 'Sentence Simplification', I'd like to touch on '*Paraphrasing*'. This will be especially useful in the reading, listening response and writing sections of the TOEFL Test. We'll have a closer look at how to **do** paraphrasing when we get to the listening and speaking sections. But for now I want to provide a few examples of how to recognize '*paraphrases*' in the reading section. That will really help you with sentence simplification questions.

In the 16th century the exact orbits of the planets were a mystery.

Paraphrase: The correct paths of the planets were unknown in the 16th century.

The most extreme form of legalized social inequality for both individuals and groups is slavery.

Paraphrase: The lawful institution of slavery is the most severe form of social disparity for groups and individuals.

Use Symbols and Abbreviations

Without = w/o

Small = sm

For example = ex.

Increase /Improve = ↑

Decrease / going down = ↓

Speaker 1 = sp1

Because = b/c

Main point = mp

Correct / happy = ✓

Incorrect / unhappy = ✗

S 10 This is because you definitely need to use symbols and abbreviations in your note taking. It helps you record information much faster. Here are some examples. Without is w slash o. Small is sm, For example would be ex, Increase/improve might be an upward arrow, while decrease or going down could be a downward arrow. Speaker 1 is sp1, because b slash c, main point might be mp, correct /happy just the swoosh, while incorrect or unhappy could be a simple x. Please search the web for note taking sites. There are many different code styles and you should choose the one that is easiest for you to remember or start developing your own code for note-taking. Whatever you do, remember your system and use it exclusively until you can do it in your sleep.



S 12 You should write down only content words. ‘*Content words*’ are meaningful words that contain significance or importance, such as people or places, actions, and descriptions. In these content words, are the answers to the questions about the conversations or lectures. It is best to leave out function words when you are taking notes. *Function words* are words like prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs (*have*), and modals (*may, could*), which provide almost no useful information about the material.

St	Prof
chk this b4 wrt	tpc?
sup euro tec hlp cortz	? Mor res thn jst tec
X	aztc pop w/ nebrz ?
x thnk @ tht	nebrz pt Cortz frcs
ok ned + res	dis in nw?
	otlin n 10 dyz

S 41 All right let's listen one more time. It seems the student wants the professor to check her research before she begins writing her essay. He wants to confirm her topic. She plans to write about how superior technology enabled Cortes to conquer a larger civilization. The professor tells her that there have to be more reasons than just superior technology. He asks if the Aztecs were loved by their neighbors. The student confirms that they weren't. The professor informs the student that the Aztec neighbors were a large part of Cortes' army greatly increasing its numbers. The student hadn't thought about that. The professor then asks her about European diseases in the New World. The student then realizes that she needs to do more research. Finally, the professor reminds her that her project outline is due in ten days.

Original Text

1.8 million years ago, the first sharp tools known as Acheulean tools, which were sharp on both edges, began to be used by early humans. These artifacts created by the homo genus, were created by working with stone repetitively on both faces, made a relatively flat object, resulting in a very sharp almond shaped blade after a long and arduous process. After this technology began to be used, what was previously merely 'cutlery' used to scrape food off of leftover remnants, could now be used as proper weapons. When fitted to a wooden haft they made first rate axes.

Paraphrase

The earliest cutting instruments that were sharp on both sides are called Acheulean tools. Made by the most primitive humans, they first appeared around two million years ago. Homo genus fashioned these tools by rubbing the stone on both sides over and over again, which then became a reasonably flat oval pointed at both ends which was very sharp. After this skill was developed, what was previously used to scratch pieces of food from what remained, became a weapon that could kill. After they were attached to a wooden handle, they became excellent axes.

S 20 Here is the original text and here is the paraphrase text. So how was the information paraphrased? You can see that *'1.8 million years ago'* becomes *'around two million years ago.'* *'The first sharp tools'* is paraphrased as *'the earliest cutting instruments.'* *'Sharp on both edges'* is rewritten as *'sharp on both sides.'* *'Early humans'* becomes *'the most primitive humans'*, and *'working with stone repetitively on both faces'* is rephrased as *'rubbing the stone on both sides over and over again.'* *'A very sharp almond shaped blade'* becomes *'a flat oval pointed at both ends which was very sharp.'* *'After this technology began to be used'* is paraphrased as *'after this skill was developed.'* *'Scrape food off of leftover remnants'* becomes *'scratch pieces of food from what remained.'* *'Proper weapons'* is rewritten as *'a weapon that could kill'*, and finally *'fitted to a wooden haft they made first rate axes'* is paraphrased as *'after they were attached to a wooden handle, they became excellent axes.'* You can see how close the two paragraphs are in meaning, but still different in word order and phrasing.

Try to use transitional phrases like...

“as a result,” “consequently,” “moreover,” “for example” and “therefore.”

“The rise of the troubadours in the Aquitaine and Provence regions of France in the 11th century, led to the widespread popularity of ‘Courtly Love.’ **Moreover**, the romantic ideals contained in the love ballads of the troubadours, laid the groundwork for cultural changes and how we experience love and courtship even today.”

Focus mostly on the examples

About 50 seconds long

Slow speaker?

Omit the conclusion

Mix of simple and compound sentences

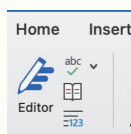
Conclusion should be a bit more detailed than your introduction

S 10 In your response, you should try to use transitional phrases like “as a result,” “consequently,” “moreover,” “for example” and “therefore.” These go a long way in giving more expansive answers and work in those very important supporting statements. For example, “*The rise of the troubadours in the Aquitaine and Provence regions of France in the 11th century, led to the widespread popularity of ‘Courtly Love.’ **Moreover**, the romantic ideals contained in the love ballads of the troubadours, laid the groundwork for cultural changes and how we experience love and courtship even today.*”

Again, please focus mostly on the examples. Those examples should make up about 50 seconds of your response. If you provide 3–5 sentences per example, then 50 seconds should pass quickly. The intro and conclusion will take ten seconds each respectively. If you are a slow speaker, omit the conclusion, focus on providing a clear answer to the question, this is more important than those last 10 seconds summarizing. Practice using a mix of simple and compound sentences if possible. We previously took a look at conjunctions in the reading section. Using words like ‘because’, ‘so’, and ‘while’ help you add additional clauses to your answer and make any response more informative. If you have time for a conclusion, it should be a bit more detailed than your introduction. Again a summary or re-statement of those key points.

Start your first sentence at a different point

Click on 'review' icon



Thesaurus

Use synonyms

Change the sentence structure

Break the information into separate sentences

S 27 When paraphrasing, start your first sentence at a different point from that of the original source. Also, try to use as many synonyms as possible. We took a long look at synonyms way back in unit three. Since you have been aware of and studying them for the last ten units, I don't need to explain why they are so important to paraphrasing in TOEFL writing. When you practice typing at home you can use the thesaurus in Word to help you get ideas. Just click on the 'review' icon on your toolbar, and you will see a little book in the middle on the right, next to 'editor' at the top left. That is the 'thesaurus.' Highlight your word in question, and click on the little book icon, and a list will pop up of similar word choices. On the iBT writing test be selective with your synonyms. For example, it would be a bit confusing to use synonyms for words like "technology". Next, change the sentence structure. For example, if the sentence was originally in the active voice, change it to passive. The active voice is when a sentence is led by the subject (the thing doing the action). For instance, when the object (the thing receiving the action) leads the sentence, that sentence is written in the passive voice. Finally, break the information into separate sentences. Although paraphrasing will usually result in a word count roughly the same as an original quote, you may be able to play with the number of sentences to make the text different.

The reading and the lecture are both about potential scientific explanations for the strange disappearances of ships and planes in the Bermuda Triangle. The author of the reading believes that there are three possible explanations for the unexplained disappearances, while the lecturer disputes the claims made by the author as he thinks that these explanations can be disproved.

To begin with, the author argues that one of the reasons for ships and aircrafts disappearing in the Bermuda triangle is methane gas escaping from the seabed. If large pockets of methane gas were released by some underwater seismic activity, it could bubble to the surface, reduce the density of water causing a ship to lose buoyancy and sink. This specific argument is challenged by the lecturer. He claims those methane bubbles would be small, larger ones would collapse and that they would merely push a ship off to one side, not sink it. In addition the lectures states that ships have watertight compartments that ensure buoyancy.

Secondly, the writer suggests that these disappearances may have been caused by magnetic anomalies that create compass variation. The article stated that certain places on earth have electromagnetic interference that can negatively affect compasses, making it difficult to find true north. This is rebutted by the lecturer who explains that the difference between magnetic north and true north is about 20 degrees and usually, a compass will point toward magnetic north and not true north.

Finally, the author proposes that the mysterious phenomena could have been caused by hexagonal clouds that create air bombs. These air bombs form at the bottom of hexagonal clouds, creating downward blasts of air hitting the ocean generating waves, sometimes massive in size. In contrast, the lecturer informs us that hexagonal clouds are a regular occurrence, taking place as part of a low-pressure system when cold air masses move over warm water, creating benign open-cell cloud formations.

S 7 Here is a sample essay explaining both positions. I'd like you to notice that in each of the body paragraphs, after the topic sentence and a statement from the passage, there is a sentence indicating an opposing opinion from the lecturer, followed by two longer sentences supporting the lecturer's opinion. As you might notice, this sample response doesn't have a conclusion. If you can write a response like this, you probably won't need a conclusion. If you can type 40 WPM though, you may have time enough for a brief summary paragraph.

7. Quality Not Quantity

8. Make an Argument	Clear opinion Do NOT try to see both sides of the argument.
9. Stay On The Subject	Keep Referring Back to the Question
10. Support, Support, Support	Emphasize the examples 60% – or more

S 5 Number seven on our list is Quality not Quantity. Often short responses can receive a four-to-five-point score and overlong responses can receive it two-to-three-point score. It's necessary to write concisely with proper structure and if the transitions are words that are clearly written and easy to follow, it will impress the examiner. Long essays might not allow checking grammar and vocabulary at the end of the exam.

Next is number eight, Make an argument. Have a clear opinion and stick to it. Do NOT try to see both sides of the argument. The concept of the independent writing task on the TOEFL is to have you make an argument and defend it. For this reason, it is important that you choose one side and one side only of an argument and strongly defend it. Again, as with other sections of the exam, it is not required that you actually believe your argument, but rather that you can find justification and examples that best back up your statement. While you plan, take some time to consider both sides of the argument and try to find three strong justifications. Whichever one you feel most comfortable with is the one that you should defend. In TOEFL independent writing task, candidates will be penalized for the following, going generic, having no clarity, and having an unclear or dual opinion. Remember, this is an opinion essay, so, take a stand and be specific. Clearly point out whether you agree or disagree with the prompt given with a valid explanation.

Number nine is Stay On The Subject: you cannot choose your own topic or change

the given topic. Remember to keep referring back to the question. Even if you craft a beautiful essay with perfect English, you won't get a good score if you don't answer the question properly. It can be easy to go off on a tangent or begin to discuss something other than what the question is asking. Do not write things irrelevant to the thesis. It will lower your score. Our final and equally important consideration is Support, Support, Support. One of the most important parts of your TOEFL writing is not only presenting coherent and well thought out arguments, but also strongly defending them. Emphasize the examples. It is the easiest part to write, so make it about 60% (or more) of each body paragraph. Think of examples that best defend your point and that can apply in the real world, maybe tell a personal story (or invent one) if it will help you to demonstrate your argument even more fully. An essay that only makes statements but does not contain examples to reinforce them is not a successful one and the TOEFL is looking for your ability to convey an idea in English.