

Understanding problems

A test question might ask you to identify one or more problems in a reading or listening passage. Expressions like *trouble*, *unfortunately*, and *problem* might indicate one. Also, statements with *but* or *however* might introduce a problem.

1 Practice recognizing problems and solutions

A. Read the magazine article.

What to Do with the *Titanic* Treasure?

The sinking of the ship *Titanic* in 1912 remains one of the most famous disasters of modern times. Going down with the ship were 1,522 people. Some of them undoubtedly left valuable jewelry on the ship, but *Titanic* carried no large quantity of gold or money. Nevertheless, every item in or on the wreck, even a plain piece of iron from the hull, has huge historical value. One of the biggest questions surrounding the *Titanic* now is, "Who owns the immense treasure?"

For decades, no one knew where the wreck was. The ship's surface location when it sank was documented, but its resting place on the bottom was hard to determine. The problem was that the *Titanic* went down where ocean waters are 2.5 miles deep. Then, in 1985, the well-known American oceanographer Robert Ballard demonstrated that the *Titanic* lay on the ocean floor 963 miles northeast of New York City. This spot is in international waters. Ballard has argued that the wreck should be a protected international monument and that disturbing it should be illegal. He, of course, has never claimed to own it.

Most sunken ships are legally the property of the company that owned the ship while it sailed. However, this principle doesn't work for the *Titanic*. Because it was considered impossible to raise, the ship was not mentioned in sale documents when its owner, the

White Star Line, was sold to Cunard Lines. Cunard's claims to the ship have not been supported in court. An almost incredible number of insurance companies—more than 700—banded together in the early 1990s to claim that, since they paid out money for losses in the disaster, they owned the wreck. Their claims were settled privately out of court, for undisclosed amounts of money, in 1994.

That same year, a court in Virginia gave a company named RMS *Titanic*, Inc. (RMST) "salvage rights." This, however, does not solve the ownership problem. RMST may remove items from the ship and may put them on display in public shows, but the company does not own them. Since then, RMST has been pleading for at least partial ownership of the precious artifacts. They point out that their many expeditions to recover items are too costly to be covered by admission fees from exhibits. They face big obstacles. Some courts in the U.S. and the U.K. have ruled that no one can ever own the wreck because it is, as Ballard argues, an international treasure. Ballard wants the courts, additionally, to declare that no one may even touch the wreck. Tourists have been descending in tough submersible ships and landing on the *Titanic*. Seawater eats away at the ship, which Ballard says is now so weak that the pressure of any landing could make it collapse.

B. Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. Why was it hard to locate the wreck of the *Titanic*?

- a. No one knew where it was when it sank.
- b. It sank in very deep water.
- c. It fell apart as it sank.

2. Why was the *Titanic* not sold to Cunard along with other property of the White Star Line?

- a. The companies believed the wreck could not be recovered.
- b. There was nothing valuable in the wreck.
- c. A sunken ship is not owned by the company that operated it.

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3. Even though they were given salvage rights to the *Titanic*, RMST is unhappy.
What problem do they have?

- a. Tourists have been damaging the wreck of the ship.
- b. They haven't yet found anything valuable on the wreck.
- c. They can't make enough money by showing the *Titanic* artifacts.

2 Check your understanding

Read the magazine article again. Write T for true or F for false.

- 1. T More than 1,500 people died in the sinking of the *Titanic*.
- 2. F The seafloor where the *Titanic* rests is inside the United States.
- 3. F Robert Ballard claims to own the *Titanic*.
- 4. T The structure of the wreck gets weaker year by year.

Choosing the best solution

Reading and listening passages about problems usually mention solutions. Several solutions may be mentioned where you have to choose the best one. Listen (or read) for positive word clues like *the best*, *practical*, or *probably*.

3 Understanding a conversation about problems and solutions

AUDIO FILE Listen to the conversation. Circle the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

- 1. Jen's problem with the wedding is caused by (scheduled exams / lack of money / her sister's poor health).
- 2. Three of Jen's professors have said they will not be (strict / concerned / flexible) about exam dates.
- 3. Jen doesn't want to (go to the wedding / talk to her professors / take her exams) because she would be embarrassed.
- 4. Brad suggests that Jen could take a (grade / class / exam) of incomplete.
- 5. Jen is afraid she might (be embarrassed / fail her classes / lose her scholarship) if she had three incompletes.
- 6. Brad suggests that Jen's (professors / advisor / parents) could write letters asking for flexibility in the exam schedule.

4 One-Minute Speaking Task

AUDIO FILE Some tests (like the TOEFL[®]) use a problem-related conversation as part of a speaking task. Listen again to the conversation between Jen and Brad. They discuss three possible solutions to Jen's problem. In 60 seconds (use a timer), describe her problem and the three solutions. Then say what the best solution is and why you think so. (Try recording and listening to your own response, or try the speaking task with your teacher.)

5 Skills in review

What do you think will happen to the wreck of the *Titanic*? Look again at Exercises 2 and 4 on pp. 29–30 of the Workbook. Use these future verb forms in your answer.

To answer questions about possible solutions, listen for good and bad points. The solution with few or no bad points is probably the answer.



Unit 6 | Categories and listening for numbers

Recognizing how ideas fit into categories

Test questions about organization may ask what group an idea fits into. The question may name categories and ask you to put ideas into them. As you read or listen, sort these ideas in your mind.

1 Practice with categories

A. Read the advertisement.

Get the Best Apps with Bandwidth!

Like your handheld? You'll love it with a Sweet Suite of apps from Bandwidth Synergies. We are America's top shop for networking, games, music, and everything else for your i-Life. Check out our Sweet Suites, packaging the apps you like best for less than half of what you would pay to buy them singly. (Each Suite \$24.99)

Suite #1 - The Manhattan

Feel the city vibe with the best metro apps. The package includes five new offerings. For dining, check out "Appetites" to find the best restaurants in town and even make reservations online. For entertainment, it's "Box Seat," your guide to what's on stage or screen. Pretend you're a traffic reporter with "Helicopter," the app that flies you above the city to see road congestion and plan alternate routes. Gaming fun comes from "Marathon Runner" and "Art Prize," both challenging your thumb action with tours through the best of the city. All apps are customizable to the 225 largest cities in the United States.

Suite #2 - The Napa

Lie back and taste the merlot. The Napa Suite is ripe with game apps—the rich wine-country landscapes of "Vintage," the excitement of "Eco-Warrior," and the high-tech inventions of "Silicon Valley." For a touch of real life, manage your finances with "Billionaire." Who needs a business manager anyway? Finally, let "News Cruise" send podcasts right to your handheld from the best financial news publications and shows—the *Wall Street Journal*, MSNBC, and more than 20 other sources.

Suite #3 - The Heartland

Here's a suite of apps as hardworking as an Iowa farmer. Manage your small business with "Owner Operator"—accounting spreadsheets, tax forms, and up-to-date alerts about market prices. "Satellite" offers the latest weather information, complete with satellite views updated every 15 minutes. Gamers will flock to "Snow Bird" to negotiate life as a winter resident down south. Then there's "College Courtside." Pick your conference (Big Ten, Missouri Valley, whatever), build a basketball dream team, and hit the hoops online. "News Cruise," with podcasts of the latest business news, is also part of the suite. Like your handheld? We wanna hold your hand!

B. Check (✓) the categories in the chart based on information from the ad.

	Game Application	Business Management Application	News/Current Conditions Applications
Billionaire		✓	✓
Helicopter	✓		
Vintage			✓
News Cruise		✓	
Owner Operator			
Snow Bird	✓		

Understanding numbers

Understanding numbers is especially hard in listening tests because the information goes by quickly. To prepare, practice reading numbers and listening to them in conversation, on TV, and in other settings.

2 Practice with numbers in a reading

Read the software advertisement again. Fill each blank with a number.

1. A Sweet Suite costs 249.
2. The apps in "The Manhattan" contain information about 255 cities.
3. "News Cruise" gets information from more than 10 sources.
4. The satellite views in "The Heartland" are updated every 15 minutes.

3 Practice with numbers in speech

AUDIO FILE Listen to the radio news report about a conspiracy theory. Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. About how many years before the report was the Brainerd fluoride controversy?
a. 10 b. 40 c. 70
2. In what year did the Minnesota Legislature pass a law requiring fluoridation?
a. 1967 b. 1970 c. 1980
3. How much would Minnesotans save on dentist bills if all drinking water was fluoridated?
a. \$7.50 b. \$1,455,046 c. \$1,455
4. Marge Tollefson says that ___ of people drinking fluoridated water have cancer.
a. about 17 percent b. 60 to 70 percent c. more than 70 percent
5. How old is Harvey Larson?
a. 26 b. 36 c. 76

4 Check your understanding

AUDIO FILE Listen to the news report again. Write T for true or F for false.

1. F Fluoride was added to water in order to kill living things in the water.
2. F The state government would not give fluoride to people in Brainerd.
3. T Gus Roper says that many people in the 1970s did not trust the government.
4. T Fluoride is now added to the water in Brainerd.

5 Skills in review

Look again at "Who's that girl?" on p. 40 of the Workbook. Scan the reading for the numbers. (Hint: Some are spelled out, not in numerals.) Practice pronouncing each of them.

When you listen for numbers, be ready for the word *and* (usually pronounced 'n') as part of some numbers. For example, the number 650 could be said as "six hundred 'n' fifty."

Unit 7 | Sentence insertion and pronoun reference

Organization: where to add sentences

Some reading tests (such as the TOEFL®) include **sentence-insertion** questions. You have to decide where a new sentence would fit best into the reading. Vocabulary and grammar clues in the reading can help you choose.

1 Finding the best place for new sentences

A. Read the article.

The Emptiness of Empty-Nesting

Life for Ron and Joanne Wickham used to be full of soccer games, birthday parties, school plays, and parent-teacher conferences. (A) Now the evenings are empty except for TV, and the weekends seem to last forever. The children whose activities used to fill their time have moved away and have left empty spaces. The Wickham parents have what is usually called Empty-Nest Syndrome.

(B) In their mid-50s, they have two children, Anne and Josh. Anne just graduated from California State University-Fullerton and is looking for a banking job in the Bay Area. Josh is still a junior at Claremont McKenna College near Los Angeles, but he can only rarely make the 460-mile trip home to visit his parents. Back in Ukiah, Ron and Joanne often feel the house is

too big. "It doesn't really echo," says Ron, "but it feels like it should. Where is everybody?"

Empty-nesters everywhere know the feeling. (C) They are typically between the ages of 48 and 60—still working, still involved in their communities, still rooted. This means they aren't free to travel for entertainment or to pull up stakes and move elsewhere. Generally, they live in the homes where they raised their children. Their daily routines may still echo their full-nest days, with wake-up times meant for driving kids to school or meals that include the children's favorite foods. (D) "Eventually, a so-called empty nest starts to feel normal and new routines develop," says UCLA psychology professor Jaswant Singh. "Most parents complete this journey just fine, but it usually feels pretty lonely."

B. Next to each sentence, write the letter from the article where it would fit best.

1. B Ron and Joanne both work for the Heritage Insurance Company in Ukiah, California.
2. D Therapists point out that Empty-Nest Syndrome doesn't last forever.
3. A For most of the past 20 years, they spent their evenings reminding their children to do homework and helping them complete it.
4. C They are entering a new stage of life, but they remain tied to their former stage.

Pronoun reference

Some test questions focus on **pronoun reference**. You have to understand the noun phrases or ideas that words like *he*, *it*, *they*, or *this* refer to. Note that *this*, *that*, *these*, or *those* may refer to a larger idea.

3 Understanding pronoun reference in a reading

Read the article again. Notice the pronouns in italics. In the chart, match each one with the noun phrase or idea it refers to. One noun phrase/idea will NOT be used.

Pronoun	Noun or Phrase Idea
1. <u>C</u> their (paragraph 1)	a. being tied to a place
2. <u>D</u> it (paragraph 2)	b. having an empty nest
3. <u>A</u> This (paragraph 3)	c. Ron and Joanne
4. <u>E</u> it (paragraph 3)	d. the house
	e. the journey

3 Understanding pronoun reference in a lecture

A. **AUDIO FILE** Listen to the lecture. Understand the main ideas. Also, try to listen for what the pronouns refer to.

B. **AUDIO FILE** Listen again to find the answer to each question. Circle the letter.

1. What word/phrase sounds like a reality show?
a. good morning b. situation c. celebrity homecoming
2. For whom was Independence, Missouri, a hometown?
a. Harry and Bess Truman b. high circles c. Churchill and Stalin
3. What did the community feel good about?
a. the town b. the presence of the Trumans c. some inconvenience
4. What did Mellencamp shoot many of his videos in and around?
a. Seymour b. his career c. his roots
5. According to the lecturer, where do people love John Mellencamp?
a. Seymour b. Mellencamp Pavilion c. Bloomington

4 Check your understanding

AUDIO FILE Listen to the lecture again. Write T for true or F for false.

1. F The main idea of the lecture is how people become famous.
2. T Both Truman and Mellencamp were musicians.
3. F Truman moved back to his hometown because he disliked politics.
4. F John Mellencamp provided money for a university sports building.

5 Skills in review

Look again at **CD 26** on p. 83 of the Workbook. Find places where the pronoun *it* is used. Try to figure out what *it* means in each case. To check the answer key for this exercise, number the lines in the dialogue from 1 to 37.

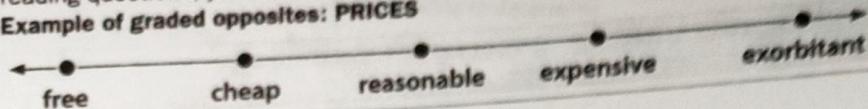
Usually pronouns come after the things they refer to. When you hear the pronoun, think quickly back to find its referent.

Unit 8 | Graded opposites and superlatives

Antonyms and graded opposites

Antonyms (e.g., cheap/expensive) are exact opposites. Other words are opposite in some ways but not exactly. These are **graded opposites**. To answer some reading questions, you have to understand the meanings of these words.

Example of graded opposites: **PRICES**



1 Understanding graded opposites

A. Read the passage from a textbook.

The Medieval Warm Period

Climate changes history, and the Medieval Warm Period (MWP) offers the clearest proof in modern history. The MWP stretched roughly from CE 800 to 1300, and it draws its name from the warmer sea and air temperatures during that time. Seawater temperatures were at least 1° C (1.8° F) warmer on average than now. Air temperatures over land were probably about 1.5° C (2.7° F) warmer than today's. To be precise, climatologists know for sure only that these temperatures occurred in the region of the North Atlantic Ocean. This includes the northernmost parts of Europe, Greenland, Iceland, and northeastern North America. It seems very unlikely that the Southern Hemisphere saw such warming. Similarly, evidence from ice cores and tree rings makes it doubtful that warming took place in other parts of the Northern Hemisphere. In fact, this period was one of the coldest in some parts of Asia.

During the MWP, the peoples broadly known as the Vikings took advantage of the warmth to reshape history. During the warm period, glaciers and polar ice melted, allowing the societies of northern Europe to flourish. Glaciers in Norway, Greenland, and Iceland retreated, exposing more farmland and allowing forests to expand. On the

Scandinavian peninsula, this provided more food and timber for towns and ships. It also enriched and strengthened warlords, the boldest of whom raided overseas targets to get riches and land. In southwestern Greenland, the retreat of the glaciers by approximately 100 kilometers (62 miles) allowed the Vikings to set up permanent settlements. Our knowledge of Viking history is relatively good because the Norse kept some of the most detailed records in Europe. Their sagas (tales of heroes) are not totally believable but do tell us a lot. The Icelandic sagas say that the warrior Eric the Red landed exactly 14 ships of colonists on Greenland's southwestern coast in CE 985. The number of actual settlers is impossible to determine, but estimates run from 2000 to 10,000. A great reduction in ice floating through the Atlantic allowed the Vikings to sail unimpeded not only to Iceland and Greenland but also to Canada and perhaps the northeastern U.S. The sagas say that in the year 1000, Eric's son, Leif Ericsson, landed at Vinland in North America. Previous uncertainty about whether the Norse actually reached North America has been dispelled. Archaeological findings at L'Anse aux Meadows in Canada are definitively Norse and date from the MWP.

B. Give each boldfaced phrase from the reading a number from 0 to 3 to show how exact it is.
Very exact = 3; not exact at all = 0. (Different students may come up with different numbers.)

1. 0 roughly from CE 800 to 1300
2. 0 about 1.5° C (2.7° F) warmer
3. 3 to be precise
4. 3 broadly known as the Vikings
5. 0 approximately 100 kilometers (62 miles)
6. 3 exactly 14 ships of colonists
7. 3 impossible to determine
8. 0 in the year 1000

Superlatives

Superlatives indicate that something is at the extremes. It is the *best*, *least*, *most*, etc. Look for the ending *-est* on short adjectives (tallest, quickest) and *most* with longer ones (most beautiful). A "negative" superlative always includes *least* (least well-known).

2 Recognizing superlatives in a reading

The reading in Exercise 1 contains five superlative adjectives. One of them is written below. Write the other four on the lines.

clearest

Coldest

Northemmost

boldest

Most detailed

3 Understanding superlatives in speech

AUDIO FILE Listen to the conversation between two friends. Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. What kind of snake kills more people than any other?
 - a. the funnel web
 - b. the inland taipan
 - c. the black mamba
2. Which city is farthest from Washington, D.C.?
 - a. Canberra, Australia
 - b. Wellington, New Zealand
 - c. Punta Arenas, Chile
3. What question do Diego and Maureen disagree about?
 - a. What is the closest populated place to Antarctica?
 - b. What is the most poisonous spider in the world?
 - c. Where is the best museum of Antarctic exploration?
4. According to Diego, what is New Zealand's most important "best"?
 - a. its location
 - b. its sheep
 - c. its rugby team

4 Check your understanding

AUDIO FILE Listen to the conversation again. Write T for true or F for false.

1. T Maureen knows approximately how far Canberra is from Washington.
2. F Humans often encounter inland taipan snakes.
3. F Diego was born in Chile.
4. F The New Zealand rugby team is called the All-Blacks.

When you listen for superlatives, the *-st* sound is a clue. So is *the*, because almost every superlative includes it.

5 Skills in review

Look again at Exercise 8 on p. 52 of the Workbook. Write three sentences using superlatives to describe Dangerman and his work.

