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# TOEFL SPEAKING



# **STARTING AUGUST 1, 2019, THE TOEFL EXAM CHANGED IN MANY WAYS.**

**TOEFL** is becoming easier and it started August 1, 2019. Over the last few years, TOEFL has seen a decline in the total number of tests taken per year and it was concluded that TOEFL was TOO difficult.

**GOOD NEWS!** It now takes three hours instead of three-and-half hours to pass the exam.

The bad news is that now you'll only get a single overall score for speaking and a single overall score for writing. So you won't know the exact parts of the exam where you did better or worse. In case you need to make a second attempt, it will therefore be harder to prepare for it now.

As you noticed, many changes were made. But today we are going to focus on the speaking part.

Not only did they reduce the number of tasks in the speaking part, but you also now get more time for each of them.

## **SPEAKING NOW CONSISTS OF FOUR TASKS**

**1 Personal Choice**

**2 Campus Announcement**

**3 General to Specific**

**4 Academic Lecture**

The problem with the new version is that almost nobody knows exactly what will be in the test or if there are questions from the old version. But here is all the information there is so far.

# TASK 1 PERSONAL CHOICE

Task 1 can take one of four different formats: Paired Choice, Multiple Choice, Agree/Disagree, Advantages/Disadvantages. Be sure to look through the older version of the tasks to be prepared in case you get one of them.

1. Paired Choice: You're given two opposing options to choose. You're supposed to pick one of them and support your choice with some explanation.
2. Multiple Choice: In comparison to the older question types, the new ones are getting much longer. Not only are there tasks themselves but also options as answers. This type is similar to Paired Choice but has more options to choose. However, the technique is the same. Pick one of them and explain why you think it's correct. Don't forget the details and some examples.
3. Agree/Disagree: This is simple. There is a statement and you either agree with it or you don't.
4. Advantages/Disadvantages: You might be presented with the statement and asked to specify its good and bad features. Sometimes you might be asked which of the several options you prefer and then to describe the advantages and disadvantages.

## Main template for choice questions (1-3)

### 1. State your main point

I agree/I disagree with the idea.

In my opinion, this idea is better.

I believe that...

While some may disagree, I believe that...

### 2. Aim for a smooth transition from the statement to the reasons

I think/feel this way for several reasons.

### 3. First reason

First, + example (personal experience with a conclusion supporting the statement).

### 4. Second Reason.

Second, + another example (more details)

This sample doesn't have a conclusion. Some believe that you shouldn't waste your time on it.

Remember to avoid repeating the same words twice or more. Demonstrate your vocabulary to the best of your ability. Try to vary it as much as you can.

Use different linking words and transitional phrases: First, Second, As a result, In my opinion, That's why, Moreover, Therefore, etc.

Be more direct in your opening line.

Be more accurate with your vocabulary and don't use several words or complicated constructions when you can use one instead. Use idioms only in case you're completely sure about the meaning and their usage.

## Main template for Advantages/Disadvantages (4)

### 1. Intro statement

There are certainly both pros and cons of something.

### 2. State the advantage

First of all, First, At the beginning, one advantage is/the advantage is (and describe it a little).

### 3. State the disadvantage

However, a major disadvantage is/one of the main disadvantages is (and describe it a little).

### 4. Your opinion

Overall, though, I believe/I guess/I think it is better to...

During this task, you should show your skills in the delivery of the idea (how you sound and was it difficult to listen to you), language use (grammatical correctness, strength, and efficiency of the vocabulary) and topic development (arguments and integrity of the answer). You can get from 1 to 4 points for it.

## TASK 2 CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENT

### Structure of the question

- First, you read a short campus announcement, article or a letter in a campus newspaper. Usually, it is about 100 words and concerns some present or future changes. It includes two reasons why the change is happening or reasons for or against the change (about 45 sec to read).
- Then you'll hear a conversation between two students where one would make their point (agree/disagree) and then explain it with two reasons. They can also challenge the reasons from the text (1-minute recording).
- In this task, you'll be asked to state those two reasons or sometimes you're also required to summarize the announcement (preparation 30 secs, answer 1 min).

### Template

Make short notes while reading and the longer ones while making conversation notes (write everything important you hear).

1. Make a statement about the change.  
According to the article, announcement, letter.
2. State two reasons from the reading.
3. Transition to the reasons for.  
There are two reasons why the man opposes/supports it.
4. First reason.
5. Second reason.

Remember that the most important part of your answer should be based on the listening part. Don't waste a lot of time speaking about the reading. If you are not a confident speaker you can even skip the reasons from the reading.

Always try to use linking words to make your narration logical and complete. Don't repeat the words, vary your vocabulary.

### Same as in Task 1

During this task you should demonstrate your skills in the delivery of an idea (how you sound and was it difficult to listen to you), language use (grammatical correctness, strength, and efficiency of the vocabulary) and topic development (arguments and integrity of the answer). You can get from 1 to 4 points for it.

# TASK 3 GENERAL TO SPECIFIC

## Structure of the task

1. You read a short passage of about 100 words for 45 to 60 secs.
2. Then you listen to the lecture which lasts approximately a minute and a half.
3. You will be asked a question about the lecture you heard. You will have 30 secs to prepare your response and then 60 secs to record your response.

First, read the task and then make quick notes about the topic and how you might describe it.

Do the same while listening to the short lecture.

Review your notes and plan how to answer the question which always asks you to explain using an example to illustrate something

It is important to understand the template first before applying it to your answer. Don't just memorize it without thinking. Use your critical thinking.

The template helps to build the structure of how you're going to present and introduce the topic and the content.

## Template

1. State the topic (... is defined as ... / The article addresses/discusses something; The article tells us about.../We learn from the article about...) In your answer, you need to explain the title (what the article discusses).
2. Give the reading detail — explain the definition - What the passage defines (which the passage defines as.../the reading states that...) Be careful, the reading can be not only a definition but also an explanation or description.  
Spend only about 10-13 secs on for points 1 and 2.
3. Transition to the examples (The professor provides an example / The professor talks about something to illustrate/illustrates it with; The lecturer provides an example/two examples / The lecturer elaborates on this by providing an example/two examples).
4. Explain what example or examples (two) are provided in the audio. (Somebody provides an example of ... to illustrate this; First of all, he mentions...; In addition, he says ...) This is the majority of your speech. Most of your score in this task comes from the lecture summary. Include all the details or as many as you can. They are all relevant. You should spend about 37 secs explaining and describing how the lecture illustrates an example.
5. Last 3 secs — conclusion (And so, this/these example/examples clearly illustrate(s)...)  
Some think that the conclusion is unnecessary, however, others believe that it is a little bit of insurance for you because not only do you draw a line under what you've stated but you also get the opportunity to quickly re-cap it.

## TASK 4 ACADEMIC LECTURE

A lecture is about 1.5 - 2 mins about an academic term or a concept. It is illustrated with two examples or one with two clear parts (before/after; cause/effect). There will be a short intro and a definition of the subject (3-5 sentences) and then examples.

The task is usually just to summarize the examples.  
(Preparation — 20 sec; speaking — 60 sec).

### Template

1. State the lecture subject and details.  
The lecture is about (subject) which is (detail)...
2. State the first example (3-5 sentences).  
First, the professor notes that ... For example, ...
3. State the second example (3-5 sentences).  
Secondly, he says that ... For instance, ...

There are a lot of details in the lecture but you should try and remember them all for your answer. To do that, you should take notes. As usual, understand first and only then take notes. (Introduction notes / Ex. 1 notes / Ex. 2 notes)  
Use the points from the lecture to answer the question.

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