



Practice Test #1

FOR THE TOEFL®
SPEAKING SECTION



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Speaking Section



The TOEFL Speaking Section: *Directions*

 The following Speaking section of the test will last between 20-30 minutes. To complete it, you will need a recording device that you can play back to listen to your responses. You should also have a pen and a piece of paper ready to take notes.

During the test, you will answer four speaking questions. One of the questions asks about familiar topics. Three questions ask about short conversations, lectures, and reading passages.

When you see the audio icon,  it means that there is an audio passage you must listen to. [Please click the icon to get redirected to the audio file.](#)

The time you have to prepare your response and speak is printed below each question. You should answer all of the questions as completely as possible in the time allowed.

If you would like to read and listen to a sample response to the question you are answering, you can refer to the answer key.

When you are ready, turn the page to see the directions for the first speaking task.



Speaking Task 1

 **Directions:** You will now be asked a question about a familiar topic. After you hear the question, you will have 15 seconds to plan your response and 45 seconds to speak.

Some people prefer that their children have cell phones. Other parents think it's a bad idea for their children to have a cellular phone. Which do you prefer? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Preparation Time: 15 seconds

Response Time: 45 seconds



Speaking Task 2



Directions: You will now read a short passage and then listen to a conversation on the same topic. You will then be asked a question about the passages. After you hear the question, you will have 30 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

You have 45 seconds to read the passage below. You may begin reading now.

Changes in the Menu

The university has decided to discontinue serving deep-fried food in the university dining halls. Instead, meats and vegetables will be grilled. There will also be a large variety of cereals, fresh fruit, salads, and dairy products available for students. There has recently been a growing number of complaints from the student body about the poor dining options. Demand for healthier food has increased significantly, and we are responding to the changing wants of our students. These new menu items will also be more affordable since there is no longer a need for large amounts of oil or deep-frying equipment.



[Now listen to a conversation about the same topic](#)

Now answer the question.

The woman expresses her opinion on changes to the dining hall menu. State her opinion and explain the reasons she gives for holding that opinion.

Preparation Time: 30 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds



Speaking Task 3

 **Directions:** You will now read a short passage and then listen to a lecture on the same topic. You will then be asked a question about the passages. After you hear the question, you will have 30 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

You have 45 seconds to read the passage below. You may begin reading now.

Mimicry

According to evolutionary biology, there are various features that living organisms have developed in order to adapt to their environment and to survive in it. While most people are familiar with characteristics like camouflage, mimicry is another common defense mechanism. Mimicry is when one species copies or mimics the look of another animal that is better adapted to the environment. Living things that use mimicry might copy the size, shape, color, smell, or behavior of another to either attract a mate, find food, or avoid predators. In some cases, they may even adapt several of these traits simultaneously.

 [Now, listen to a lecture about this topic in a biology class](#)

Now answer the question.

Using examples of the king snake and drongo bird from the lecture, explain the concept of mimicry.

Preparation Time: 30 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds



Speaking Task 4

 **Directions:** You will now listen to part of a lecture. You will then be asked a question about it. After you hear the question, you will have 20 seconds to prepare your response and 60 seconds to speak.

 **Now, listen to part of a lecture in a biology class**

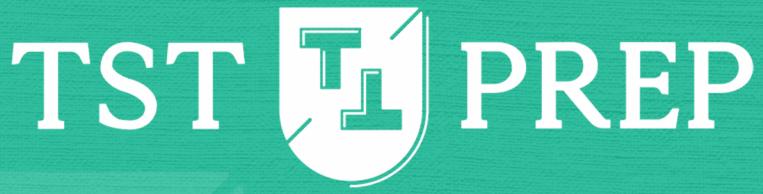
Now answer the question.

Using the examples from the talk, describe what hemiparasites and holoparasites are and how they get energy.

Preparation Time: 20 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds





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Practice Test #1
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Answer Key



Speaking Task 1: Sample Answer

Some people prefer that their children have cell phones. Other parents think it's a bad idea for their children to have a cellular phone. Which do you prefer? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.

 To me, I don't think it's a good idea for kids to have cell phones because they're addicting. Take my nephew, Michael, he's 12 years old, and whenever I meet my brother and his family, the kid just stares at his screen the whole time. It's ridiculous. I was so mad the other day that I actually yanked the phone out of his hand and told him that he was being rude. And then he just started screaming in the middle of the restaurant, and he wouldn't stop until I gave it back. At that moment, I realized how addicting cell phones are, especially for kids. So, to sum up, I definitely don't think kids should have mobile phones.



Speaking Task 2: Sample Answer

 According to the announcement, the school administration has decided to stop serving fried food on campus. They believe that grilled dishes will benefit the student's health and be more cost-effective. Right off the bat, the woman completely disagrees with this plan. To start, there are plenty of students who never complained about the food. For her, students should be given the freedom to choose what they eat. The school shouldn't tell students what to do. On top of that, she believes the school may have miscalculated the cost. Fresh fruits and vegetables are usually more expensive than other kinds of foods, especially the shipping fees, so school meal plans may actually end up costing more in the future. Clearly, the woman thinks the school is making a mistake with this new rule.



Speaking Task 2: Transcript

Man: Hi Janie. Do you know they're changing the menu in the university dining halls? There's no more fried chicken, fried shrimp, or any other deep-fried foods.

Woman: Yeah, I've just read the announcement and I'm not crazy about it.

Man: Really? Don't you think it is a step in the right direction?

Woman: Well, I mean, we all know that eating junk food is bad for our health. And I understand that the university is just trying to meet the demands of some students, but not everyone feels the same way. I mean, I like some fried foods. I love french fries. And if I want to eat healthier, that's my choice. I don't think the school should tell us how to eat.

Man: Well, maybe you can try some other foods. They promise to offer a better selection of salads and fruits as well.

Woman: That's the other thing. I really don't know how they can expect to save money. Fresh produce is expensive. Bringing in more types of food would actually increase costs rather than reduce them. They may have projected that they can save a bit from decreasing the amount of cooking equipment, but I don't think they have properly calculated the price of actually shipping all these new foods to campus.

Man: You might have a point there. The administration is terrible at making predictions. Do you remember when they ordered the wrong number of books for the biology department?



Speaking Task 3: Sample Answer

 The reading passage goes into detail about mimicry, which is when one animal will try to copy some aspect of another animal in order to survive. At first, the lecturer talks about the king snake. Now, this snake isn't poisonous, but it knows how to change its skin to red, so it looks like a coral snake, which is poisonous. The professor also mentions the drongo bird, which has learned to mimic the sound of other birds. So, after these other birds have killed some prey, the drongo bird will start copying their alarm sound, signaling that there are predators nearby. The birds soon fly away, and the drongo bird enjoys a free meal. As you can see, both the king snake and drongo bird use mimicry to help them survive and thrive.



Speaking Task 3: Transcript

"Okay, so mimicry is a useful adaptation that usually protects helpless animals against dangerous predators. For some species in the animal kingdom, it is clear that they wouldn't survive long without these crucial defense mechanisms.

One popular type of mimicry is for a relatively harmless animal to look like a poisonous or dangerous one. This is known as Batesian mimicry. Now, you don't have to remember that name, but just remember that this is when one species tries to look like a more dangerous one. For example, the king snake is not poisonous, but over time, it has adapted the ability to look like the venomous coral snake. The king snake often adopts the coral's red color when it encounters potential predators. The predators believe the harmless king snake is a dangerous coral snake, and they leave it alone.

Now, as you know, mimicry is not limited to appearance. There are species that imitate the behavior of others or even their sound. An interesting example of this is the fork-tailed drongo bird. Now, you have probably never heard of the fork-tailed drongo bird, and that's okay. Again, the name is not nearly as important as the behavior. These birds can imitate the alarm call sound of other birds. So, after the other birds have caught or killed some prey, the drongo bird will copy the alarm call sound, causing the other birds to fly away. As a result, the mimicking drongo bird enjoys a free meal."



Speaking Task 4: Sample Answer

 In the lecture, the professor talks about two types of parasitic plants. The first type is known as a hemiparasite. This kind of plant can perform some photosynthesis, but they also need to rely on a host plant as an additional source of food. One popular example of this type of plant is the European Mistletoe, and it can get additional nutrients from over 200 different species of host plants. The other kind of parasitic plant is the holoparasite. A famous example of this one is from Indonesia, and it is known as the meat flower. This plant emits a strong, smelly odor that attracts flies and insects. When the insects land on these sticky plants, they are absorbed by the meat flower for energy. So, the bottom line here is that parasitic plants rely on others to survive.



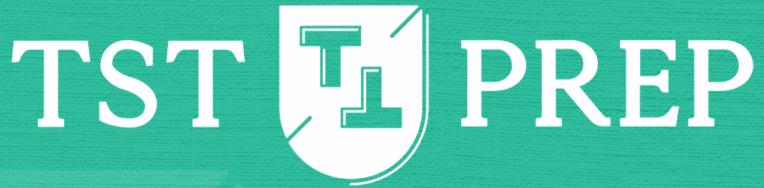
Speaking Task 4: Transcript

"Okay, so, as most of you already know, green plants get energy and nutrition through photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is the process where plants use sunlight to synthesize foods from carbon dioxide and water. Photosynthesis not only generates food for the plant but also creates the air we breathe. Anyways, there are some plants that have a limited ability to photosynthesize, so they must depend on other plants to gather the energy they need to survive. They are called parasitic plants, and they are classified into two main types: hemiparasites and holoparasites.

Let me start with the more popular type of parasitic plant, hemiparasites. Hemiparasites are, in fact, able to perform some photosynthesis, but they need a bit more help from other plants. These other plants, sometimes referred to as host plants, serve as a hemiparasites' additional source of food. One of the most famous parasitic plants is the European Mistletoe. This symbolic plant, often used as a household decoration, is a hemiparasite. This means it doesn't totally depend on a host plant due to its ability to go through photosynthesis, but it does still need some additional nutrients. There are over 200 species of host plants that it can feed on. In some cases, this may cause the death of the host plant.

Well, besides hemiparasites, the other popular type of parasitic plant is the holoparasite. Now, holoparasites are completely unable to perform photosynthesis, so they totally rely on the host for sustenance. An interesting example is the state plant of Indonesia, which is nicknamed the meat flower. This unique plant gives off a strong odor that smells like rotten flesh. This scent attracts flies and other insects that are soon caught in its huge, sticky flowers and are absorbed into the plant for energy. While the host of some hemiparasites may survive the encounter, no organism will live once a holoparasite like the meat flower catches it."





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