



# Practice Test #1

FOR THE TOEFL®  
LISTENING SECTION



**Practice Test #1**  
For the TOEFL®  
*Listening Section*



## The TOEFL Listening Section: *Directions*

 This section measures your ability to understand conversations and lectures in an academic setting in English.

You will first listen to a passage and then answer questions about it. You may listen to each passage **only once**. You are allowed to take notes while you listen.

You will be asked about the main idea and supporting details from each passage. Sometimes, you will be asked to infer meaning and determine the author's purpose. These answers are usually not explicitly stated in the passage but must be answered based on your own ideas in regard to the speaker's attitude, tone, and the context in which he or she is speaking.

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.](#)

Most questions are worth one point each. If a question is worth more than one point, it will be indicated in the directions.

**Answer each question in sequential order.** You will not be allowed to skip or go back to questions during the actual TOEFL iBT exam.

At the end of this test, you will find a scoring chart to help you determine your score and an answer key with explanations to help you understand the questions.

When you're ready, turn the page to listen to the first passage.



### **Passage #1**

 Directions: Now listen to a conversation between a student and a housing administrator.

NOTE TO STUDENT:

Do NOT look at the questions on the next page until after you listen. Get a pen and a piece of paper and get ready to take notes. Click the icon above or the link below when you're ready.

 [Listen to a conversation between a student and a housing administrator](#)



Directions: Now, answer the questions.

**1. Why does the student go to see the campus housing administrator?**

- a. To see if he can move to another dorm
- b. To discuss his research paper
- c. To complain about construction noise
- d. To explain why he prefers to stay in his dorm

**2. Listen again to this part of the conversation. Why does the student say this? | 🔊**

- a. To point out that the construction is right next to his bedroom wall
- b. To emphasize that he cannot focus on his paper because of the construction
- c. To confirm when the construction will end
- d. To find out how noisy the construction will be in the future

**3. Why does the student NOT want to study in the library?**

- a. He prefers the comfort of his own room
- b. Other students in the library are distracting
- c. The library does not have what he needs
- d. He cannot carry his things to the library

**4. At the end of the conversation, what does the campus housing administrator suggest to the student?**

- a. The student should move to another dorm
- b. The student should avoid his room during construction hours
- c. The student should find another place to study
- d. The student should be in class during construction

**5. What does the campus housing administrator imply about the construction plans?**

- a. The student should not complain because he has other places to study
- b. The construction does not bother other students because it is only noisy during class time
- c. The hours during which construction occurs shouldn't be problematic for students
- d. The student should find another place to study because it will last until the end of the semester



## **Passage #2**

 **Directions:** Now listen to part of a talk in an astronomy class.

NOTE TO STUDENT:

Do NOT look at the questions on the next page until after you listen. Get a pen and a piece of paper and get ready to take notes. Click the icon above or the link below when you're ready.

 [\*\*Listen to part of a talk in an astronomy class\*\*](#)

Source: Fraknoi, A., Morrison, D., & Wolff, S. C. (2016).

***\*\*\*Vocabulary is sometimes provided in written form when it may be unfamiliar to the student but essential for understanding the lecture.***

luminosity

apparent brightness

first-magnitude stars  
sixth-magnitude stars



**Directions:** Now, answer the questions.

**1. What is the lecture mainly about?**

- a. The apparent brightness of stars
- b. How to measure the distance of a star from the Earth
- c. Astronomical photometry
- d. The luminosity of the Sun and other stars

**2. What can we learn about a star from its luminosity?**

- a. How far away it is from Earth
- b. How bright it looks from Earth
- c. The amount of energy it emits
- d. Where it fits on the first to sixth magnitude scale

**3. What is the difference between first-magnitude and sixth-magnitude stars?**

- a. First-magnitude stars are larger than sixth-magnitude stars
- b. First-magnitude stars are closer to Earth than sixth-magnitude stars
- c. First-magnitude stars appear brighter than sixth-magnitude stars
- d. First-magnitude stars are younger than sixth-magnitude stars

**4. What does the professor say is one difference between visual astronomy and gamma-ray astronomy?**

- a. Magnitudes are measured differently
- b. Luminosity has a different meaning depending on the field of study
- c. Brightness is only relevant for visual astronomy
- d. Visual astronomy does not require any tools to view the stars



**5. Why does the professor say this? | 🔊**

- a. Because they both emit light in the form of energy
- b. To explain the concept of luminosity in a way that is easy to understand
- c. Because both have varying degrees of brightness
- d. To demonstrate how a star emits energy

**6. Why does the professor discuss radio astronomy?**

- a. To provide an example of how magnitude is measured today
- b. To change the topic from visual to radio astronomy
- c. To introduce the topic of the next class
- d. To prove that magnitude is not measured the same for every field of astronomy



**Practice Test #1**

For the TOEFL® Listening Section

**Passage #3**

 Directions: Now listen to a conversation between a student and a newspaper editor.

NOTE TO STUDENT:

Do NOT look at the questions on the next page until after you listen. Get a pen and a piece of paper and get ready to take notes. Click the icon above or the link below when you're ready.

 [Listen to a conversation between a student and a newspaper editor](#)



**Directions:** Now, answer the questions.

**1. Why does George want to talk with Mrs. Smith?**

- a. To ask if he can write for the school paper
- b. To give Mrs. Smith his ideas for some articles
- c. To see if he can be a journalism major
- d. To ask about how he can become a journalist after he graduates

**2. What does Mrs. Smith say is the problem with George's request?**

- a. He is not a journalism major
- b. He needs to wait two years before he can work
- c. He is not a junior or senior
- d. He has to prove that he is a good writer first

**3. Listen again to this part of the conversation. What does Mrs. Smith mean when she says this? **

- a. She is not sure if other staff members will allow George to write for the paper
- b. She does not want George to make any promises he cannot keep
- c. She thinks George should look elsewhere for a place to write
- d. She cannot let George write for the paper because he is a freshman

**4. By when does Mrs. Smith want George to write up a sample article?**

- a. By tomorrow
- b. The end of the week
- c. By next week
- d. As soon as possible



**5. How does the student feel by the end of the conversation?**

- a. He feels that writing for the school newspaper is not going to work
- b. He is looking forward to starting his new job at the school paper
- c. He is upset that he cannot write for the school paper
- d. He is eager to show Mrs. Smith his writing



## **Passage #4**

 Directions: Now listen to part of a talk in a psychology class.

NOTE TO STUDENT:

Do NOT look at the questions on the next page until after you listen. Get a pen and a piece of paper and get ready to take notes. Click the icon above or the link below when you're ready.

 [Listen to part of a talk in a psychology class](#)

Source: OpenStax. (2019). How memory functions.

***\*\*\*Vocabulary is sometimes provided in written form when it may be unfamiliar to the student but essential for understanding the lecture.***

semantic encoding

visual encoding

acoustic encoding



**Directions:** Now, answer the questions.

**1. What is the lecture mainly about?**

- a. The self-reference effect
- b. Information processing and encoding
- c. Processing and storing information in our memory
- d. Semantic encoding, visual encoding, and audio encoding

**2. Why does the professor compare memory to a computer?**

- a. To prove that the topic is relevant to technology
- b. To help the students better understand the topic
- c. To show how complex memory systems are compared to computers
- d. To simplify a topic that would otherwise confuse the students

**3. What is the professor implying when he says this? **

- a. He is trying to politely tell the student that he is incorrect
- b. He agrees with what the student said
- c. He acknowledges the student's response and uses it to transition to the next point
- d. He thinks the student's remarks were slightly off-topic

**4. Based on the information from the listening, indicate which characteristic on the left belongs to either semantic, audio, or visual encoding. This question is worth two points.**

	Semantic encoding	Acoustic encoding	Visual encoding
Rhyming of words			
Self-reference effect			
Font of written words			



**5. If given a list of words to remember, through which process do we remember these words best?**

- a. Acoustic processing
- b. Visual processing
- c. A combination of visual and acoustic processing
- d. Semantic processing

**6. What is the self-reference effect?**

- a. When information is easier to remember because it relates to you in some way
- b. When someone is better at memorizing things than others
- c. The ability to memorize any information connected to the self
- d. When you have trouble remembering things that have to do with other people



**Passage #5**

 Directions: Now listen to part of a talk in a biology class.

NOTE TO STUDENT:

Do NOT look at the questions on the next page until after you listen. Get a pen and a piece of paper and get ready to take notes. Click the icon above or the link below when you're ready.

 [Listen to part of a talk in a biology class](#)

Source: OpenStax. (2019). Determining evolutionary relationships.

***\*\*\*Vocabulary is sometimes provided in written form when it may be unfamiliar to the student but essential for understanding the lecture.***

phylogeny

morphological evidence  
genetic evidence

homologous  
analogous



**Directions:** Now, answer the questions.

**1. What is the lecture mainly about?**

- a. The spread of a harmful bacteria over the past 40 years
- b. Animal conservation and where to focus our efforts
- c. Why it is important to study the evolutionary history of animals
- d. How unrelated organisms can have some similarities

**2. Which of the following is not a homologous feature, as mentioned by the professor?**

- a. Bones in bat and bird wings
- b. Bodily shapes of fish and whales
- c. Human arms
- d. Forelegs of horses

**3. What reasons does the professor provide to support the study of the evolutionary history of animals? Select two.**

- a. To understand the history and transmission of disease
- b. People cannot contribute to conservation efforts without this knowledge
- c. To enhance our understanding of the history of species
- d. Scientists need this information in order to understand which species are endangered

**4. Why does the professor talk about a study of infectious bacteria?**

- a. To provide evidence for why it is important to study the evolutionary history of species
- b. To explain the causes and consequences of the spread of bacteria
- c. To prove that harmful bacteria could be prevented from spreading if people study evolution
- d. To illustrate the concept that bacteria are also a type of species we should be studying



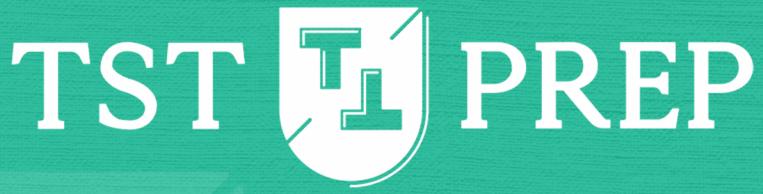
**5. What does the professor say is an objective way to decide which species we should try the most to conserve?**

- a. Knowing which species more recently evolved
- b. Considering the size and number of the animals
- c. Figuring out which species are lesser-known
- d. Considering phylogenetic diversity

**6. Why does the professor say this? **

- a. To make sure the students are really listening
- b. To get the students more involved in the lecture
- c. To emphasize the importance of the topic of the lecture
- d. To explain why she is discussing certain aspects of evolution





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**Practice Test #1**  
*For the TOEFL® Listening Section*  
*Answer Key*



## The Grading Rubric

Use the chart below to determine your score in the listening section.

There are only 28 questions in this section, but the highest raw score **might be** different. Questions that require multiple answers, usually in the form of tables, are worth two points.

For questions with two choices, if two choices are correct, you get one point. If one of the choices is incorrect, you earn zero points for the given question.

If you correctly filled out the given table, award yourself two points. If you made one mistake in the table, award yourself one point. If you made two or more mistakes, you earn zero points for the given question.

Raw Points	Score Estimate	Raw Points	Score Estimate	Raw Points	Score Estimate
29	30	19	20	9	9
28	29	18	18	8	8
27	28	17	17	7	7
26	27	16	16	6	6
25	26	15	15	5	5
24	25	14	14	4	4
23	24	13	13	3	3
22	23	12	12	2	2
21	22	11	11	1	1
20	21	10	10		



## Passage #1: Answer Key

### **1. C (Gist-Purpose)**

**C** is correct because, from the beginning, the student is complaining about construction near his dorm room. About 30 seconds into the conversation, he says, “*Well, I don’t really know about that... it’s possible... but I’m a graduate student and I have to work on a huge research paper, so I spend most of the day in my room. But lately, I can’t seem to focus or get anything done because this construction is driving me crazy! It’s so loud.*”. **B** and **D** are wrong because, while he does mention his research paper and explains his preference to work in his room, these are not the reasons why he went to see the campus housing administrator. **A** is also wrong because this is a suggestion from the administrator, not the reason he was there.

### **2. B (Understanding the Function)**

In this part of the conversation, the student says, “*Is it going to be this noisy the whole time? I mean will it get any better at some point? I’m so stressed about my paper and this noise is driving me up the wall!*” Although the student probably wants to know if the construction will last longer, he wants to emphasize that the construction is causing him problems, and he would like to know if the construction is going to be over soon. Therefore, **B** is the correct answer.

### **3. A (Detail)**

**A** is the correct answer. Near the end of the conversation, the student says, “*I always study in my room. I like working in my room because it’s comfortable and I have everything I need right next to me. The library is all the way across campus so it’s a pain to lug all my belongings over there and camp out for the day.*” **B** and **C** are wrong because the student does not mention them. **D** is also wrong because he says that he does not like to carry his stuff to the library, not that he cannot carry his things there.

### **4. A (Detail)**

The campus housing administrator suggests that the student should move to another dorm, so **A** is the correct answer. She says, “*I see... well perhaps if the noise is going to continue being a problem for you, maybe you can see if you can be moved to another dorm.*”



### 5. D (Making Inferences)

**C** is correct because the housing administrator says, “*The construction should only be taking place between 10 am and 4 pm so that it doesn’t disturb students in the mornings and when they come home from class to study.*” **A** is not correct because she apologizes for what he’s experiencing, “*I’m sorry to hear that you’re having trouble,*” and suggests other options, such as studying in the library and changing dorms; however, she never implies that he shouldn’t complain. **B** is not correct because the campus housing administrator never mentions other students and whether they are bothered by the noise. **D** is not correct because this is stated directly, not inferred.



## Passage #1: Transcript

**Woman:** Can I help you?

**Man:** Yea, umm, so I live in Johnson Hall, and lately, there has been this really loud construction going on every day. It feels like it's right outside my window.

**Woman:** Oh, you must be talking about the courtyard remodeling project.

**Man:** Yea, maybe. I'm not sure what exactly is going on, I can't see it from my room, but I'm on the second floor, so I hear everything. I mean... It's making it really difficult for me to work. I'm sure it must be annoying for some other students too.

**Woman:** I'm sorry to hear that you're having trouble. The construction should only be taking place between 10 am and 4 pm so that it doesn't disturb students in the mornings and when they come home from class to study. Has it been going on outside these hours?

**Man:** Well, I don't really know about that... it's possible... but I'm a graduate student and I have to work on a huge research paper, so I spend most of the day in my room. But lately, I can't seem to focus or get anything done because this construction is driving me crazy! It's so loud.

**Woman:** Unfortunately, there's nothing I can do about the construction. This project has to get done so the courtyard is up to code before the building inspectors come over in the fall.

**Man:** So... Wait... how long is this going to take? All semester?

**Woman:** That's about right. It probably won't be finished until the end of May or right before finals.

**Man:** Is it going to be this noisy the whole time? I mean will it get any better at some point? I'm so stressed about this paper and this noise is driving me up the wall!

**Woman:** I really don't know the answer to your question, I'm sorry, but can't you work in the library? That way, you won't have to deal with the noise.

**Man:** I always study in my room. I like working in my room because it's comfortable and I have everything I need right next to me. The library is all the way across campus so it's a pain to lug all my belongings over there and camp out for the day.

**Woman:** I see... well perhaps if the noise is going to continue being a problem for you, maybe you can just see if you can be moved to another dorm.

**Man:** I guess. That sounds like it might be difficult to do now that the semester has started. I guess we'll see...

**Woman:** Ok, I'm sorry again about the disturbance, but my hands are tied. There's really nothing I can do.

**Man:** I understand; thanks for your time.



## **Passage #2: Answer Key**

Source: Fraknoi, A., Morrison, D., & Wolff, S. C. (2016)

### **1. A (Gist-Content)**

**A** is the only answer that encompasses everything discussed in the lecture. **B** and **C** are mentioned in the lecture, as astronomical photometry is a way to measure the apparent brightness of stars, but they are not the main idea. **D** is defined at the beginning of the lecture and is compared to the apparent brightness of stars, but it also is not the main idea of the lecture.

### **2. C (Detail)**

This question is basically asking for the definition of luminosity, which is found at the very beginning of the lecture. The professor says, "*Perhaps the most important characteristic of a star is its luminosity, which is the total amount of energy it emits per second*", so **C** is the correct choice. **D** is not correct because the magnitude of a star is determined by the star's apparent brightness, not its luminosity.

### **3. C (Detail)**

The professor explains that Hipparchus devised a way to measure the brightness of stars using a one to six magnitude scale. The professor says that "*He referred to the brightest stars in his catalog as first-magnitude stars, whereas those so faint he could barely see them were sixth-magnitude stars.*" Therefore, **C** is the correct answer.

### **4. A (Detail)**

The way that the professor introduces the other fields of astronomy is by revealing the answer to this question: "*Although the magnitude scale is still used for visual astronomy, it is not used at all in newer branches of the field*", and "*infrared, X-ray and gamma-ray astronomy use energy per area per second rather than magnitudes to express the results of their measurements*". Therefore, **A** is the only correct choice.

### **5. B (Understanding the Function)**

When the professor talks about stars and light bulbs, he talks about them hypothetically. He does not actually say they are similar, so **A** and **C** can be eliminated. In addition, the professor is not describing how a star emits energy but rather explains the concept of luminosity and why luminosity does not tell us how far away stars are. The professor says, "*If all stars were the same luminosity—if they were like standard bulbs with the same light output—we could use the difference in their apparent brightnesses to tell us something we very much want to know: how far away they are,*" so **B** is the correct choice.



## 6. A (Understanding Organization)

D appears correct, but the professor is not trying to prove that magnitude is measured differently. Instead, he is simply providing an example of how it is measured today, stating that it is different among radio, visual, and other fields of astronomy. The professor says, *“Although the magnitude scale is still used for visual astronomy, it is not used at all in newer branches of the field. In radio astronomy, for example, there is no equivalent.”*. Therefore, A is the correct answer.



## **Passage #2: Transcript**

Source: Fraknoi, A., Morrison, D., & Wolff, S. C. (2016).

*All right, guys, settle down. Let's get started.*

*Perhaps the most important characteristic of a star is its luminosity, which is the total amount of energy it emits per second. Earlier, we saw that the Sun puts out a tremendous amount of energy every second. (And there are stars far more luminous than our Sun out there.) To make the comparison among stars easy, astronomers express the luminosity of other stars in terms of the Sun's luminosity. Take a look at the example on the board up here, so you can see this equation in action. The luminosity of Sirius is about 25 times that of the Sun.*

*Anyways, astronomers are careful to distinguish between the luminosity of a star and the amount of energy that happens to reach us on Earth. Stars are democratic in how they produce radiation; they emit the same amount of energy in every direction in space. Consequently, only a tiny fraction of the energy given off by a star actually reaches us on Earth. We call the amount of a star's energy that reaches a given area (say, one square meter) each second here on Earth its apparent brightness. If you look at the night sky, you see a wide range of apparent brightnesses among the stars. Most stars, in fact, are so dim that you need a telescope to see them.*

*If all stars were the same luminosity—if they were like standard bulbs with the same light output—we could use the difference in their apparent brightnesses to tell us something we very much want to know: how far away they are.*

*But alas, the stars do not all have the same luminosity. This means that if a star looks dim in the sky, we cannot tell whether it appears dim because it has a low luminosity but is relatively nearby or because it has a high luminosity but is very far away. To measure the luminosities of stars, we must first consider the effects of distance on light, and to do that, we must know how far away they are.*

*The process of measuring the apparent brightness of stars is called photometry (from the Greek photo meaning "light" and -metry meaning "to measure"). Astronomical photometry began with Hipparchus. Around 150 B.C.E., he built an observatory and cataloged nearly 1000 stars and included not only their positions but also estimates of their apparent brightnesses.*

*Hipparchus did not have a telescope or any instrument that could measure apparent brightness accurately, so he simply made estimates with his eyes. He sorted the stars into six brightness categories, each of which he called a magnitude. He referred to the brightest stars in his catalog as first-magnitude stars, whereas those so faint he could barely see them were sixth-magnitude stars. During the nineteenth century, astronomers attempted to make the scale more precise by establishing exactly how much the apparent brightness of a sixth-magnitude star differs from that of a first-magnitude star.*

*Although the magnitude scale is still used for visual astronomy, it is not used at all in newer branches of the field. In radio astronomy, for example, there is no equivalent. Rather, radio astronomers measure the amount of*



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energy being collected each second by each square meter of a radio telescope and express the brightness of each source in terms of, for example, watts per square meter.

Similarly, most researchers in the fields of infrared, X-ray, and gamma-ray astronomy use energy per area per second rather than magnitudes to express the results of their measurements. Nevertheless, astronomers in all fields are careful to distinguish between the luminosity of the source and the amount of energy that happens to reach us on Earth. After all, luminosity is a really important characteristic that tells us a lot about the object in question, whereas the energy that reaches Earth is an accident of cosmic geography.



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### **Passage #3: Answer Key**

#### **1. A (Gist-Purpose)**

**A** is the correct answer because George mentions twice at the beginning of the conversation that he wants to write for the school newspaper. At the start of the conversation, he says:

*"I'm sorry I don't have an appointment, but I was hoping I could talk to you really quickly about potentially writing for the school newspaper. My name is George, by the way.*

*-Nice to meet you, George, and sure, come on in.*

*-Thank you! Nice to meet you as well.*

*-So, what exactly are you interested in doing for the paper George?*

*-Well, I wrote articles for my high school newsletter, and I was hoping to continue doing so in college. I want to be a journalist after I graduate!"*

**B** is not correct because, even though he does mention some ideas for health and wellness articles, it is not the reason he wanted to talk to her. **C** and **D** are incorrect because he does not ask any questions about how to become a journalism major.

#### **2. C (Detail)**

**C** is correct because Mrs. Smith explicitly says that George cannot write for the paper because he is not a junior or senior. *"Ha, well I love your enthusiasm, but we have a problem. Unfortunately, only juniors and seniors, who are journalism majors, can write for the school."* George is a journalism major, so **A** is wrong. It is true that because he is a freshman, he would have to wait two years to work on the paper, but the amount of time is not important. What is important is whether he is considered a junior or senior, and this could take longer than the typical two years. Therefore **B** is also incorrect. Also, Mrs. Smith is willing to consider his ideas, but it is never stated that he has to *"prove"* that he is a good writer in order to write for the school paper. Therefore, **D** is also incorrect.

#### **3. A (Understanding the Function)**

**A** is the correct answer. Mrs. Smith admits that she likes George's ideas, however, she cannot ignore the rules that freshmen cannot write for the paper. So, she agrees to show others his writing and see what they think about allowing him to write for the paper now, but she clarifies by saying, *"...I can't make any promises though, and I don't want you to get your hopes up."* **B** is incorrect because it misstates the information in the passage. **C** is incorrect because the professor never suggests this. Although **D** is true, it's not why she tells him not to get his hopes up. Her statement refers to the fact that she's willing to see if an exception can be made for him.



**4. B (Detail)**

**B** is the correct answer because, at the end of the conversation, Mrs. Smith says, *"Have something for me by the end of the week and we'll see what we can do. Now head to class before you're late!"*

**5. D (Understanding the Speaker's Attitude)**

In order to join the paper, Mrs. Smith wants George to prepare a piece of writing to show her. In response, he says, *"I'd be more than happy to get something to you ASAP! I have so many ideas I can't wait to write about. Thank you so much!"*. Therefore, **D** is the correct answer, and **A** is clearly incorrect, as it states the opposite of the actual outcome. In the middle of the conversation, he is upset because he does not think he is going to get to work on the paper for two years, but this was not how the conversation ended, so **C** is not correct. **B** is also incorrect because Mrs. Smith does not say for sure that he can write for the school paper, only that he can submit his writing to her.



### Passage #3: Transcript

**Man:** Excuse me, Mrs. Smith?

**Woman:** Yes?

**Man:** I'm sorry I don't have an appointment, but I was hoping I could talk to you really quickly about potentially writing for the school newspaper. My name is George, by the way.

**Woman:** Nice to meet you, George, and sure, come in.

**Man:** Thank you! Nice to meet you as well.

**Woman:** So what exactly are you interested in doing for the paper, George?

**Man:** Well, I wrote articles for my high school newsletter, and I was hoping to continue doing so in college. I want to be a journalist after I graduate.

**Woman:** That's great. I love to hear that. Are you a journalism major?

**Man:** I am! In fact, I have my Foundations of Journalism class in 20 minutes.

**Woman:** Okay, did you just switch majors? Normally Foundations of Journalism is a class for freshmen.

**Man:** No, I didn't switch majors. I am a freshman. I came to your office first thing because I know that I want to write as much as possible. It's my passion.

**Woman:** Ha, well, I love your enthusiasm, but we have a little problem. Unfortunately, only juniors and seniors, who are journalism majors, can write for the school.

**Man:** Oh, so that means I won't be able to contribute to the school newspaper for 2 whole years?

**Woman:** Not necessarily. There are definitely some things you can do in the meantime and work your way up.

**Man:** That's not too bad. I was really hoping to start publishing articles right away. Are you sure there aren't any exceptions you can make? I really think I could contribute a lot to this paper. For example, I noticed there isn't a health and wellness section, and that's a hot topic right now. I could help get that set up and running.

**Woman:** I'm sorry. I wish I could do something, but it wouldn't be fair for me to bend the rules just for you. If I let you write as a freshman, then I would have to let all the other underclassmen write.

**Man:** Ah, you're right. I understand.

**Woman:** Look, your idea about a wellness section sounds good. I can't personally make an exception, but if you're really determined, why don't you write up something for me? I'll take a look and see what the others think. I can't make any promises, though, and I don't want you to get your hopes up.

**Man:** I'd be more than happy to get something to you ASAP! I have so many ideas I can't wait to write about. Thank you so much!

**Woman:** Have something for me by the end of this week and we'll see what we can do. Now head to class before you're late!

**Man:** Thank you, Mrs. Smith! Have a good day!



### **Passage #4: Answer Key**

Source: OpenStax. (2019). How memory functions

#### **1. C (Gist-Content)**

**A** and **D** are too specific, whereas **B** is too general. **B** and **C** are actually fairly similar, but **C** provides the specificity needed to accurately portray the main idea of the lecture.

#### **2. B (Understanding Organization)**

When the professor first introduces the topic of memory, he immediately compares it to a computer. This helps the students better understand the topic because the professor is assuming that the students are familiar with the basics of how computers work. **A** can be eliminated because the professor is not implying that memory is relevant to technology. **C** is a little extreme, and the professor does not say that memory is a complex topic. On the other hand, he is making it seem like a fairly simple topic. **D** assumes that the teacher underestimates his students, and that does not fit well with the typical values of a professor in the classroom.

#### **3. C (Making Inferences)**

Considering the professor's tone, **A** seems correct because it is in line with the way a North American professor would respond to a student, but the professor's response does not have to do with being right or wrong (thus also eliminating **B**). **D** is inaccurate because the student did stay on topic. This is why the professor is acknowledging what the student said, and using that as a starting point to then answer the question himself, so **C** is the correct choice.

#### **4. (Connecting Content)**

	Semantic encoding	Acoustic encoding	Visual encoding
Rhyming of words		X	
Self-reference effect	X		
Font of written words			X



### 5. D (Detail)

The answer here comes from when the professor describes the results of a study that was done comparing the different types of processing. The professor states that semantic processing proved to be better than acoustic and visual: *"Well, words that had been encoded semantically were better remembered than those encoded visually or acoustically. Semantic encoding involves a deeper level of processing than the shallower visual or acoustic encoding. The researchers concluded that we process verbal information best through semantic encoding, especially if we apply what is called the self-reference effect."*. Therefore, **D** is the correct choice.

### 6. A (Detail)

**A** is the correct answer. **B**, **C**, and **D** are irrelevant to the lecture and are not mentioned at any point. **C** is almost correct, but the modifier "any" is too strong. He says, *"The self-reference effect is the tendency for an individual to have better memory for information that relates to oneself in comparison to material that has less personal relevance."*.



### **Passage #4: Transcript**

Source: OpenStax. (2019). How memory functions.

*So, now, let's move on to memory. Memory is an information processing system; therefore, we often compare it to a computer. Memory is the set of processes used to encode, store, and retrieve information over different periods of time.*

*Right, so, we get information into our brains through a process called encoding, which is the input of information into the memory system. Once we receive sensory information from the environment, our brains label or encode it.*

*Now there are three types of encoding. The encoding of words and their meaning is known as semantic encoding. It was first demonstrated by William Bousfield in 1935 in an experiment in which he asked people to memorize words. The 60 words were actually divided into 4 categories of meaning, although the participants did not know this because the words were randomly presented. When they were asked to remember the words, they tended to recall them in categories, showing that they paid attention to the meanings of the words as they learned them.*

*Visual encoding is the encoding of images, and acoustic encoding is the encoding of sounds. Now, I'm going to put a couple of words up on the board, and I want you to read them over.*

*Here they are car, dog, level, truth, book, value.*

*If you were asked later to recall the words from this list, which ones do you think you'd most likely remember?*

*Jill?*

***Well, I think a dog would probably be easiest, because I immediately think of my own little puppy, Rex.***

*That's a perfect illustration Jill, thank you. Yes, car, dog, and book would be much easier than the words like level, truth, and value.*

*Now, why do you suppose this is? It was mentioned in the reading, Frank?*

***Well, I think I remember it saying that words like truth are more abstract. Like it's easier to imagine a dog in the real world, but it's hard to imagine what truth looks like.***

*Yes, in short, images are easier to recall than words. When you read the words car, dog, and book, you probably created images of these things in your mind like Jill did of her dog, Rex. These are concrete, high-imagery words. On the other hand, abstract words like level, truth, and value are low-imagery words. High-imagery words are encoded both visually and semantically, thus building a stronger memory.*



## Practice Test #1

### For the TOEFL® Listening Section

Now let's turn our attention to acoustic encoding. So, imagine you are driving in your car, and a song comes on the radio that you haven't heard in like the last 10 years, but you sing along, recalling every word. In the United States, children often learn the alphabet through song, and they learn the number of days in each month through rhyme. These lessons are easy to remember because of acoustic encoding. We encode the sounds the words make. This is one of the reasons why much of what we teach young children is done through song, rhyme, and rhythm.

So now, which of the three types of encoding do you think would give you the best memory of verbal information?

Yes, Frank.

**Well, I can only speak from personal experience, but I find images much easier to remember than words. I even make flashcards with pictures when I need to study vocabulary.**

That's great. Of course, everyone has their preference, but some years ago, a couple of psychologists conducted a series of experiments to find out.

Participants were given words along with questions about them. The questions required the participants to process the words at one of the three levels. The visual processing questions included such things as asking the participants about the font of the letters. The acoustic processing questions asked the participants about the sound or rhyming of the words, and the semantic processing questions asked the participants about the meaning of the words. After participants were presented with the words and questions, they were given an unexpected test.

The results? Well, words that had been encoded semantically were better remembered than those encoded visually or acoustically. Semantic encoding involves a deeper level of processing than the shallower visual or acoustic encoding. The researchers concluded that we process verbal information best through semantic encoding, especially if we apply what is called the self-reference effect.

The self-reference effect is the tendency for an individual to have better memory for information that relates to oneself in comparison to material that has less personal relevance.

Now I wonder if it might be a good idea to stop here and ask you guys to do a bit of semantic encoding right now about this lecture. Take out a piece of paper and a pen, please.



## **Passage #5: Answer Key**

Source: OpenStax. (2019). Determining evolutionary relationships

### **1. C (Gist-Content)**

**A** and **B** are too specific to certain parts of the lecture. **D** simply restates one specific fact from the lecture, whereas **C** accurately captures the overall idea.

### **2. B (Detail)**

**B** is the correct answer because it is not a homologous feature. The professor states in the passage, "*For example, the bones in the wings of bats and birds, the arms of humans, and the foreleg of a horse are homologous structures.*". The professor mentions the bodily shapes of fish and whales as examples of analogous structures.

### **3. A, C (Detail)**

**B** can be eliminated because the professor never says this knowledge is necessary in order to contribute to conservation efforts. **D** is more difficult to eliminate, but the professor never says that some species are more endangered than others, but rather that people should make informed decisions when deciding which species are more unique. **A** and **C** are the correct answers because the professor asks a rhetorical question and then follows it by stating, "*Well, in addition to enhancing our understanding of the history of species, our own included, it also has a lot of practical applications. Two of those applications include understanding the evolution and transmission of disease and making decisions about conservation efforts.*".

### **4. A (Understanding Organization)**

**A** is the correct answer. The professor said that a practical implication of studying the evolutionary history of species is to understand the history and transmission of disease. Thus, to support her claim, she describes a study that was done on "*an infectious bacteria*", providing students with evidence for why it is important. **B** is incorrect because the focus of this part of the lecture is on "*how*" bacteria spreads, not the effects or consequences of bacteria. **C** is not correct because it is not "*proving that the spread of bacteria can be prevented*," but instead showing why it is important. **D** is incorrect because it omits the fact that the transmission of bacteria is what should be studied, not bacteria in and of itself.

### **5. D (Detail)**

The very last sentence of the lecture contains the answer to this question. The professor says, "*While many criteria affect conservation decisions, preserving phylogenetic diversity provides an objective way to protect the full range of diversity generated by evolution.*". Therefore, **D** is the correct choice.



### **6. C (Understanding the Function)**

The professor is asking a rhetorical question in this part of the lecture. A rhetorical question generally precedes important information. That is exactly what is happening here: the professor asks a rhetorical question and follows it up with important information. Thus, **C** is the correct answer.



### **Passage #5: Transcript**

Source: OpenStax. (2019). Determining evolutionary relationships

*All right, so we are going to do a bit of detective work today, which is what most of evolutionary biology consists of. You see, scientists collect information that allows them to make evolutionary connections between organisms. Similar to detectives, scientists must use evidence to uncover the facts. In the case of the evolutionary development and diversification of species, which is known as phylogeny, investigations focus on two types of evidence: morphologic evidence (which is a fancy way of saying how a species looks and what it does) and genetic evidence.*

*Organisms that share similar physical features and genetic sequences are usually more closely related. Features that overlap both morphologically and genetically are referred to as homologous structures; in other words, the similarities stem from common evolutionary paths. For example, the bones in the wings of bats and birds, the arms of humans, and the foreleg of a horse are homologous structures. Notice the structure is not simply a single bone, but rather a grouping of several bones arranged in a similar way, even though the elements of the structure may have changed shape and size for each organism.*

*Unrelated organisms may be distantly related yet appear very much alike. Usually, this is because of common adaptations to similar environmental conditions evolved in both. An example is the streamlined body shapes found in many species that live in water. Mammals like whales may have a similar bodily structure as the average fish, but they look the same due to adaptations to moving in the same environment—water. When a characteristic that is similar occurs by adaptation to the environment, and not because of a close evolutionary relationship, it is called an analogous structure.*

*Now, similar traits can be either homologous or analogous. Homologous traits share an evolutionary path that led to the development of that trait, and analogous traits do not. Scientists must determine which traits are homologous due to similar evolutionary ancestors and which are analogous, owing to adaptation to similar environmental conditions.*

*But why is it so important to study the evolutionary history of animals in the first place?*

*Well, in addition to enhancing our understanding of the history of species, our own included, it also has a lot of practical applications. Two of these applications include understanding the evolution and transmission of disease and making decisions about conservation efforts.*

*A 2010 study of a harmful infectious bacteria, traced the origin and spread of the strain throughout the past 40 years. The study uncovered the timing and patterns in which the resistant strain moved from its pinpoint of origin in Europe to centers of infection in South America, Asia, North America, and Australia. The study suggested that introductions of the bacteria to new populations occurred very few times, perhaps only once, and then spread from that limited number of individuals. This is in contrast to the possibility that many individuals had carried the bacteria from one place to another. This result suggests that public health officials should*



## Practice Test #1

### For the TOEFL® Listening Section

concentrate on quickly identifying the contacts of individuals infected with a new strain of bacteria to control its spread.

Now, a second area where evolutionary biology comes in handy is in animal conservation. Biologists have argued that it is important to protect a group of common species rather than a single one. Doing this will preserve more of the variation produced by evolution. For example, conservation efforts should focus on a single species without similar species rather than another species that has a bunch of similar species that recently evolved. One study recommended protecting some large mammals, such as the orangutans, the giant pandas, and the African and Asian elephants. But they also found that some much lesser-known species should be protected based on how evolutionary distinct they are. These include a number of rodents, bats, and hedgehogs. While many criteria affect conservation decisions, preserving phylogenetic diversity provides an objective way to protect the full range of diversity generated by evolution.



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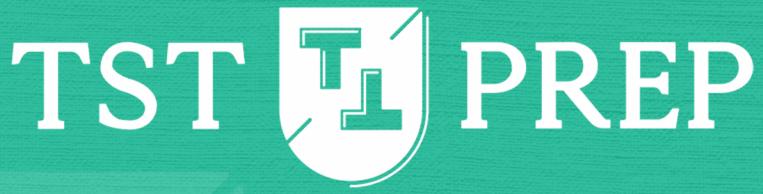
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