



Practice Test #10

FOR THE TOEFL®
WRITING SECTION



Practice Test #10
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Writing Section



The TOEFL Writing Section: *Directions*

 This section measures your ability to use writing to communicate in an academic environment. There will be two writing tasks.

For the first writing task, you will read a passage and listen to a lecture and then answer a question based on what you have read and heard.

For the second task, you will read an online discussion. A professor has posted a question about a topic, and some classmates have responded with their ideas. You will write a response that contributes to the discussion.

When you see the audio icon  it means that there is an audio version of the text. [Please click the icon to get redirected to the audio file.](#)

If you would like to see a model essay of the question you are answering, you can refer to the answer key.

When you're ready, turn the page to see the directions for the first writing task.



Writing Task 1 - Integrated Question

 Directions: For this task, you will read a passage and listen to a lecture about an academic topic.

You may take notes during this time. After the passages have finished, you will then be asked a question about them. After the question, you will have 20 minutes to write your response. Effective responses are usually between 250 to 350 words. You may look at the reading passage and your notes as you write. Keep in mind that the question will not ask for your opinion.

You have three minutes to read. You may begin reading now.

More than 90% of people get married at least once in their life, and divorce has become a common experience for many. It's a painful process, but statistics show that 40% to 50% of marriages in America end in divorce. Only Cuba and Belarus claim slightly higher divorce rates than the US. Researchers generally agree that there are three main causes of the high divorce rate.

While most feel that the growing awareness of gender inequality in America is having a positive effect on society, it has also led to an increase in divorce. Women are now more active in both professional and social settings. They have more job opportunities and no longer rely on a husband for financial and emotional support. This is in contrast to other countries, where women still worry about the social disapproval associated with divorce.

There are some sociologists who believe that economic concerns might be the leading cause of divorce. It's certainly true that divorce is more common in low-income households. The inability to satisfy the needs of a family hurts relationships and often leads to divorce. Financially stable families are more likely to preserve their relationship because they can afford a better quality of life for every family member.

Lastly, the 21st century is an age of instant gratification. In a society where people are used to quick fixes, many don't have the emotional skills needed to work through problems in a relationship. Some couples would prefer to just end their marriage and look for another partner than try to address issues affecting their relationship. Nowadays, even disputes over minor tasks, like forgetting to do household chores, could lead to divorce.



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Now listen to part of a lecture on the same topic you just read about.

After you listen to the passage, answer the question.

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they cast doubt on the specific points made in the reading passage.

You have 20 minutes to plan and write your response.



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Writing Task 2 - Writing for an Academic Discussion

Your professor is teaching a class on sociology. Write a post responding to the professor's question.

In your response, you should do the following.

- Express and support your opinion.
- Make a contribution to the discussion in your own words.

An effective response will contain at least 100 words.



Mr. Singh

Social media has become an integral part of modern society, impacting various aspects of our lives. Discuss the influence of social media on interpersonal relationships. Do you believe it has strengthened or weakened social connections? Why or why not?



Anika

I believe that social media has both strengthened and weakened interpersonal relationships. On the one hand, you can stay connected with friends and family regardless of geographical distance. However, excessive reliance on social media can lead to superficial interactions and a lack of face-to-face communication.

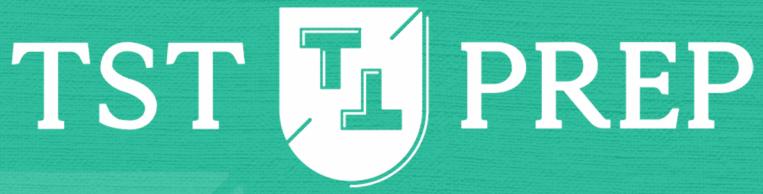


Maryam

Social media platforms have largely weakened social connections. The focus on online interactions often leads to a diminished sense of genuine connection and empathy. People may prioritize virtual interactions over real-life interactions, resulting in a loss of meaningful human connection.

Space for typing answers on test day. You will have ten minutes to read and write.





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Practice Test #10
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Answer Key



Integrated Writing Transcript

You may have heard that half of the marriages in the United States end in divorce, but this is just plain false. This stereotype comes from 1980 when one census report revealed that 40% of American marriages end in divorce, and that number was likely to increase in the upcoming decades. However, current data suggests that the divorce rate is now less than 40% and that number is likely to decrease in the near future.

The first argument made in the reading is that female empowerment is somehow to blame for the rising divorce rate. But think about that for a minute: There are two people in a relationship! Are women solely to blame for the end of a marriage? Further still, there are other countries where women enjoy equal rights with men, and marriages in these countries don't have high divorce rates.

Secondly, the author says that money is another reason why marriages fail. But, if that's the case, why are divorce rates highest in the richest countries in the world? There is some connection between overall wealth and gender equality, but there are poorer nations where women have the same rights as men and the divorce rate is not nearly as high as in the States. Statistics like this tell us that divorce hardly has anything to do with a family's finances.

And perhaps the most ridiculous idea of all from the reading is that people think it's easier to get a divorce than work through their problems. All you have to do is a quick Internet search to find dozens, perhaps hundreds of marriage counselors and relationship specialists in your neighborhood. Couples try hard to work through their problems, investing not just their time, but also their money in seeing the relationship work. Indeed, recent surveys indicate that such professionals see many clients both in-person and through online platforms. This makes it clear to us that it is not a need for instant happiness that is to blame for the high divorce rate in this country.



Task #1: Integrated Writing (block method)

The article introduces the topic of high divorce rates in the US. The reading passage outlines three main reasons for this statistic. The professor, however, disagrees. He claims that the data relied on by the author is false and explains the flaws in the writer's position.

First of all, the writer says that one cause for high divorce rates is increased gender equality. They posit that because more women are a part of the workforce, they do not have to rely on their husbands for financial support. Secondly, the author also blames the bad economy. The text explains how those with unstable financial situations are more likely to get divorced, according to some sociologists. Lastly, the writer contends that due to the "quick fix" kind of society we have today, there are higher divorce rates because spouses do not have the emotional capabilities to work out their issues.

In contrast, the lecturer first states that women should not be to blame for increases in divorce rates because it takes two people to make a marriage work. Furthermore, he argues there are countries with the same level of gender equality that do not have high divorce rates. As to the second point in the reading, the speaker claims that, in truth, divorce is more common in countries with better economies. He posits that there are poorer nations that have lower divorce rates than the US. Therefore, he says that a family's financial state is not a cause of divorce. Finally, the lecturer suggests that the need for instant gratification is not to blame for high divorce rates. To support this claim, the professor points to the hundreds of marriage counselors and relationship specialists that exist for and are used by couples.

In conclusion, the professor casts doubt on all the theories on the causes of the high divorce rate made by the author.



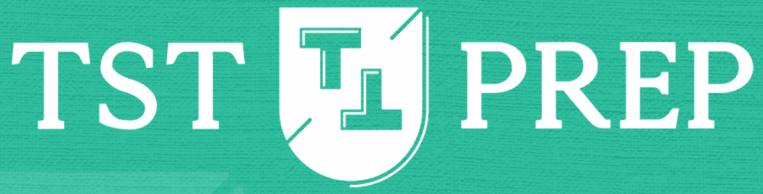
Writing Task 2 - Writing for an Academic Discussion

"Discuss the influence of social media on interpersonal relationships. Do you believe it has strengthened or weakened social connections? Why or why not?"

Many people disagree about the influence of social media. I personally believe it has had a largely negative effect on interpersonal relationships. While I acknowledge Anika's point that it can help people stay connected regardless of distance, I would argue social media often makes people less likely to communicate. This is because people often create very selective posts meant to show themselves in the best possible light. For example, a couple may only post pictures of their beautiful beach vacation. This may cause sadness or envy from others who are busy at their jobs or struggling financially. Further still, viewers may feel less likely to send their friend a message since they look so joyful.

Additionally, posting on social media can take quite a bit of time. This is time that could otherwise be spent meeting friends in the real world. For example, a recent study said the average person spends 43 minutes a day on Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok or Instagram. While doing this, they do not have real interpersonal communication with anyone. For these reasons, I believe social media hurts interpersonal relationships. (184 words)





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