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TEST

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Contents

Introduction	
Reading	
Reading Overview	1
Skills 1 and 2: Understanding Vocabulary from Context; Paraphrasing a Sentence	1
Skills 3 and 4: Recognizing Referents; Inserting a Sentence into the Passage	2
Skills 5 and 6: Understanding Detail and Fact Questions; Understanding Negative Fact Questions	3
Skills 7 and 8: Inferring Information; Understanding Rhetorical Purpose	4
Skills 9 and 10: Constructing a Summary; Table Completion	5
Reading Post-Test	6
Listening	
Listening Overview	7
Note-Taking Skills	8
Skills 1 and 2: Understanding the Main Idea; Understanding Details	8
Skills 3 and 4: Understanding the Function; Understanding the Speaker's Stance	9
Skills 5 and 6: Understanding Organization and Connecting Content; Making Inferences	11
Listening Post-Test	12
Speaking	
Speaking Overview	13
Independent Task 1: Paired-Choice	13
Skills 1, 2, and 3: Expressing Opinions; Supporting Your Choice or Preference with Reasons; Supporting Your Choice or Preference with Examples	13
Skills 4 and 5: Using Comparison and Contrast in your Response; Using More Precise Language	14
Integrated Task 2: Announcement or Notice (Reading + Conversation)	15
Skills 6 and 7: Summarizing; Paraphrasing	15
Integrated Task 3: General/Specific (Reading + Lecture)	17
Skills 8 and 9: Organizing and Addressing the Main Points in the Reading and the Lecture; Integrating General Information from the Reading with Specific Information from the Lecture	17
Integrated Task 4: Summary (Lecture)	18
Skills 10 and 11: Identifying and Explaining the Main Idea; Identifying and Explaining Supporting Points_	18
Speaking Post-Test	

Writing

Writing Overview	202
Integrated Task 1: Reading-Lecture	206
Skills 1 and 2: Outlining the Integrated Response Essay; Integrating Ideas	206
Independent Task 2: Opinion-Preference	218
Skills 3, 4, and 5: Outlining the Independent Essay; Organizing the Introduction and Conclusion; Using Transitions to Connect Ideas in the Body of the Essay	218
Writing Post-Test	237
Practice Test 1	240
Practice Test 2	265
Scoring Charts	
Scoring the Reading Post-Test	291
Scoring the Listening Post-Test	292
Scoring the Speaking Post-Test and the Speaking Sections of the Practice Tests	293
Scoring the Writing Post-Test and the Writing Section of the Practice Tests	294
Scoring the Reading Sections of Practice Tests 1 and 2	295
Scoring the Listening Sections of Practice Tests 1 and 2	297
Answer Key with complete answer explanations	299
Audioscripts	365

6 Contents

Reading Skills 1 and 2

UNDERSTANDING VOCABULARY FROM CONTEXT; PARAPHRASING A SENTENCE

Reading Skill 1: Understanding Vocabulary from Context

Vocabulary questions in the reading section test your ability to figure out the meaning of a word you don't know. Therefore, do not worry if you don't already know the word! There will be clues in the passage to help you guess its meaning. Check the other words in the sentence and also the sentences just before and after the one with the highlighted word.

Some words in English have several meanings. Even if you are already familiar with one meaning of the word, check the sentence carefully to see which meaning is appropriate for that passage. Pay attention to the part of speech (i.e., noun, verb, adjective, or adverb).

- The *cast* of the play was comprised of only male actors. (*cast* = noun, meaning the group of players who act in a theatrical production)
- The fisherman on the boat *cast* his nets into the water. (*cast* = verb, meaning "to throw")

EXPRESS TIP



One type of common clue is a contrast clue, which shows the unknown word in contrast to a more familiar word. Check for words and phrases such as *unlike*, *instead of*, and *on the other hand*.

Rats are active at night. The mongoose, on the other hand, is diurnal. (diurnal = "awake and active during the day")

The vocabulary questions will ask you about the word directly, and show you where to find it by highlighting it in the passage:

- The phrase on the clock in the passage is **closest in meaning to** ...
- The word unseemly in the passage could **best be replaced by** ...

The correct answer will be a synonym (or phrase) for the word (or expression) that could be used in the same place in the passage.

EXPRESS TIP



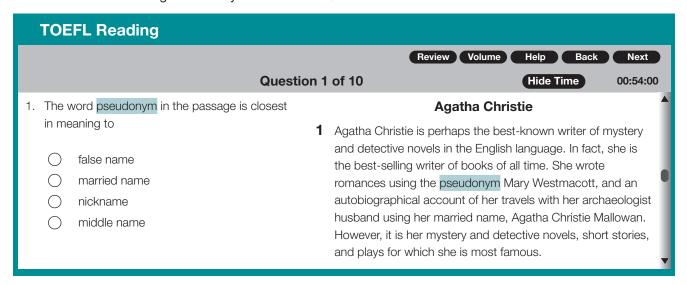
After you have selected an answer, mentally put it into the sentence, and "read" the sentence with your replacement to double-check that it makes sense.

You must wear your uniform as long as you are on the clock. = "at work" You must wear your uniform as long as you are at work. ✓

18 Reading

Look at this example of a vocabulary question on a computer screen.

EXAMPLE: Understanding Vocabulary from Context Question



SKILL BUILDER

Directions: Work with a partner. Read the paragraph and the questions. Discuss the clues in the paragraph that tell you the answers. Circle the contrast word in the paragraph that helps you figure out the answer to #2. Then mark the correct answers.

Agatha Christie

- 1 Agatha Christie is perhaps the best-known writer of mystery and detective novels in the English language. In fact, she is the best-selling writer of books of all time. She wrote romances using the pseudonym Mary Westmacott, and an autobiographical account of her travels with her archaeologist husband using her married name, Agatha Christie Mallowan. However, it is her mystery and detective novels, short stories, and plays for which she is most famous.
- 2 Agatha was painfully shy as a child. Perhaps as result of this, her mother decided that she would not receive a formal education, but would instead be taught at home. She taught herself to read by age five, and had lessons from part-time tutors. She was interested in the arts from a young age, first music and then story telling and writing. At age 16, she was sent to Paris to study singing and piano. However, because of her shyness, she never became a performing musician. Perhaps her shyness is partly to thank for her choice of writing as her favorite form of artistic expression as an adult.
- 1. The word pseudonym in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to
 - A. false name
 - B. married name
 - C. nickname
 - D. middle name
- 2. The word formal in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by
 - A. expensive
 - B. fancy
 - C. traditional
 - D. free

Reading 19



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- Desktop Apps: For MS Windows Vista (Internet Explorer 9 required)
- For MS Windows 7,8.1,10 (Internet Explorer 11 required)
- For MAC OS 10.11+
- Mobile Apps: Download the Android app from the Google Play Store (compatible version 5.0 and above); download the iOS app from App Store (compatible version 0.3 and above)



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