

Teacher's Copy of TOEFL Speaking Mock Test 5

This is meant to accompany The English Formula's "[TOEFL Speaking Mock Test 3](#)" - it is to be used for educational purposes only; not for profit. Use this handout to run students through a mock examination in your TOEFL exam prep course. Break students into pairs, and have them take turns completing each task. So, student A will complete Task 1 while student B (student A's partner) acts as monitor. Then, student B will complete Task 2 while student A acts as monitor, and so on.

If you want every student to practice each task, then, after student B completes Task 6, inform your class that you will be running through the mock examination a second time. However, this time you will swap positions, so whoever completed Task 1 will complete Task 2 instead.

A note for teachers -- pay special attention to the following aspects of your student's responses:

- **Delivery:** How clear your speech is. Good responses are those in which the speech is fluid and clear, with good pronunciation, natural pacing, and natural-sounding intonation patterns.
 - **Language Use:** How effectively you use grammar and vocabulary to convey your ideas. Raters will be listening for how well you can control both basic and more complex language structures and use appropriate vocabulary.
 - **Topic Development:** How fully you answer the question and how coherently you present your ideas. Good responses generally use all or most of the time allotted, and the relationship between ideas and the progression from one idea to the next is clear and easy to follow."
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Instructions:

Tasks 1 and 2 are independent speaking tasks. You have 15 seconds to prepare your response, and 45 seconds to deliver it.

Task 1

Talk about a time when you experienced success. Describe the experience, and say why it was a success for you. {15s prep, 45s answer}

Key Points:

- An understanding of the question, especially the words “success” and “experience”.
 - Google’s definition of success is, “the accomplishment of an aim or purpose.”
 - Merriam-Webster’s definition of experience is, “something personally encountered, undergone, or lived through.”
- A description of the experience (of success), for example:
 - “I played soccer in high school, and I scored two goals (as captain), to lead our team to victory on senior night, the send-off game for players in their final year of school...”
- An explanation of *why* it was a success for you.
 - “... We were playing against a tough, rival team, and the win secured us a spot in the playoffs. It was the culmination of four years of hard work -- all the time I spent running sprints, drilling, sweating, and bleeding on the field with my teammates paid off the moment I scored the game-winning goal. And most importantly, it wasn’t just about me. It was about the team. We won together. I wouldn’t have scored without an assist from my friend Kevin, and that goal wouldn’t have mattered if not for the

hard work of our defenders. It was an incredible moment, and living it with my teammates made it all the more special.”

Task 2

Some people think that they can learn better by themselves than with a teacher. Others think that it is always better to have a teacher. Which do you prefer? Include details and examples in your explanation. {15s prep, 45s answer}

Key Points:

- State your preference.
 - “I think I can learn better by myself...”
 - “I think it’s better to have a teacher...”
- Explain your preference, for example:
 - “I think it’s better to have a teacher for a couple of reasons. First, they will hold you accountable for whatever it is that you’re learning. If you don’t have a teacher, then it’s easier to give up -- especially when the going gets tough. On the other hand, a good teacher will motivate you to keep learning, even when it’s hard. A good teacher will also help you select (and correctly interpret) the best learning materials, like books and online resources. This way you won’t waste time learning from suboptimal sources, and you will avoid dangerous misunderstandings. Finally, having a teacher gives you the opportunity to ask questions, and, with their help, you’ll clear up any confusing points. Those are some of the reasons why I think you should always find good teachers to help you.”

Instructions (continued):

Tasks 3 and 4 are integrated speaking tasks. You have 45 seconds to read a short text, you will then hear a short conversation, or part of a lecture, on the same topic. **You may take notes** during both the reading and listening sections. Next you will see a question concerning the information you read and heard. Finally, you will have 30 seconds to prepare your response, and 60 seconds to respond.

Task 3

“The Student Government Association is holding a person of the year award. Read the announcement about the award. You will have 45 seconds to read the announcement. Begin reading now.”

A Student Government Announcement... The Student Government Association, SGA, has decided they would like to sponsor a Person of the Year award at the university. This award is for a teacher, student, or member of the staff who has made a difference or has had a positive impact on the university community. Please submit nominees' names, and a brief essay detailing the impact this person has made on the community, to the SGA office in Building 400, Rm 107. Nominees' names must be submitted before October 23rd. For more information, stop by the SGA front desk.

[listen to audio] ... {instructor's note: begin at 5:43 mark}

Question: The man expresses his opinion about nominations for an award. State his opinion and explain the reasons he gives for holding that opinion. {30s prep, 60s answer}

Key Points:

- State the man's opinion. Here's a summary of his opinion:

- He's going to nominate the groundskeeper of the football field, Corey Peace, for person of the year.
- Explain his reasons for holding that opinion. Here are his reasons:
 - He's an exceptionally talented groundskeeper (in other words, he's great at his job). He's in charge of the bushes around our football field, and they're always trimmed perfectly. The grass on our field is always nice and green thanks to him, and he spends a lot of time tending the flowers that spell out our school's name in the stadium. Did you know that our field was recently featured in a college sports magazine, as one of the top ten fields in the nation? Now that's something special.

Task 4

Hacking: Crime or Service to Society? ... In the world of computers, the term "hacker" gets two different responses. One hacker can be productively designing games, programs, and ways to improve security of information, while the other hacker tries to break into systems in a way that causes individuals and companies to lose, distort or release information without permission. How do we define a "hacker"? A hacker can improve programs in business so that the business or individual will be protected from unwanted tampering. This hacker explores the limits of the program. Or, is a hacker the term for activity that is unlawful? A hacker in this case is one who deliberately invades programs and causes computer problems. Some do this for fun; however, this can cause great hardship for businesses and individuals. People who play around with computers would say hackers are exercising their skills. Others may say hackers are criminals. Which definition is it?

[listen to audio] ... {instructor's note: begin at 9:16 mark}

Question: Two opinions on computer hacking are given in the reading. Explain which of these views the professor holds and how she supports her opinion. {30s prep, 60s answer}

Key Points:

- Explain which view the professor holds, like this:
 - Hackers are criminals. "If you are hacking, you are breaking the law as it is a felony here in the U.S. Only if a company or individual hires a hacker to test their systems is hacking alright and ethical."
- Explain how she supports her opinion.
 - Hacking in the academic environment v. computer security (in the real-world)
 - In the academic environment, a hacker is a person who enjoys designing software, with an eye for aesthetics and playful cleverness.
 - In computer security (the real-world), a hacker is someone who actively seeks to compromise secure systems.
 - In common use, the term "hacker" refers to someone who illegally breaks into computer and network systems. This is wrong.
 - Compare hacking to hotwiring a car for a joyride. Sure, the owner gets their car (or their system) back in one piece, but you still stole it for a period of time.

Instructions (continued):

Tasks 5 and 6 involve a short listening passage. **You may take notes** as you listen. After listening to the conversation or lecture, you will see a

question. You have 20 seconds to prepare your response, and 60 seconds to deliver it.

Task 5

“Now listen to a conversation between two students.”

[listen to audio] ... {instructor’s note: begin at 12:30 mark}

Question: The students discuss several possible solutions to the woman’s problem. Describe the problem. Then state which solution you prefer and explain why. {20s prep, 60s answer}

Key Points:

- Describe the woman’s problem, here’s a summary:
 - She wants to speak with her advisor about her schedule for next semester, but he never seems to be around. She tried scheduling appointments with him, but he always misses them. What’s more, she doesn’t want to change advisors because this one is famous, helpful (when he’s available), and very knowledgeable.
- Give reasons to support your preferred solution, for example:
 - She should send him an email explaining the situation, something like: “I have already scheduled several appointments with you, but you weren’t there for any of them...” After reading this, hopefully he will carve out some time for her in his busy schedule. She should also find out his class schedule, and meet him immediately after he finishes teaching to (briefly) discuss the situation. That way, even if he doesn’t read her email, she will still be able to explain her situation to him.

Task 6

"Now listen to a talk in an economics class."

[listen to audio] ... {instructor's note: begin at 15:31 mark}

Question: The professor describes the law of diminishing returns. Explain this concept and how it works using examples from the lecture. {20s prep, 60s answer}

Key Points:

- What is the law of diminishing returns?
 - The law of diminishing returns -- also known as "the law of diminishing marginal returns" or "the law of increasing opportunity costs" -- is one of the most famous or recognizable economic concepts, and it states that as you increase input, add more and more resources, your output will increase by less and less. It won't stop increasing, it just won't increase by as much.
 - According to Google, the it is, "a point at which the level of profits or benefits gained is less than the amount of money or energy invested."
- Explain how it works using examples from the lecture.
 - For example, let's say that you own a simple pencil factory. It has ten rooms, with ten people in each room making one-hundred pencils a day. Then you hire more people, but now the employees can't make one-hundred pencils a day because the rooms are too crowded to work efficiently. Nevertheless, you continue hiring more and more people, resulting in less and less space for employees to work. Now they can only make sixty or

seventy pencils a day. The point is that adding another person to the process doesn't necessarily mean that they'll be able to make one-hundred pencils a day. This is the law of diminishing returns in action.