

# TOEFL® Practice Test

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# TOEFL® Preparation Test

## Writing Practice

### Section A – Integrated Writing (Tasks 1–5)

**Directions:** For each task, read the passage, then read the lecture summary. Write a response (150–225 words) explaining how the lecture challenges or supports specific points in the reading.

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#### Task 1

##### Reading Passage:

Urban green spaces—such as public parks, community gardens, and tree-lined boulevards—are vital to city life. Environmentally, they reduce the urban heat-island effect: vegetation provides shade and cools the air via evapotranspiration, lowering temperatures by several degrees. Plants also filter pollutants (particulate matter, nitrogen oxides) and convert carbon dioxide into oxygen, improving air quality. Furthermore, green areas absorb stormwater, reducing runoff and flood risk.

Socially, parks foster cohesion: residents of diverse ages and backgrounds gather for recreation (jogging, picnics, concerts) and informal interaction, which builds trust and lowers local crime. Economically, proximity to well-maintained green amenities raises property values and attracts business investment.

Health benefits include stress reduction, lower blood pressure, and better mental well-being. Physical activities—walking, cycling, yoga—in parks combat obesity and related diseases; safe playgrounds support children’s development.

Finally, green spaces promote biodiversity. Native plants and wildflower meadows offer habitat for pollinators and birds, maintaining ecosystem balance. Educational signage and community planting events increase environmental awareness and stewardship.

##### Lecture Summary (bullet points):

- **Water Usage Concern:** In arid cities, parks consume vast water resources—straining municipal supplies.
  - **Maintenance & Safety:** Under-lit or poorly maintained parks can become crime hotspots, undermining social benefits.
  - **Alternative Solutions:** Green roofs and vertical gardens deliver cooling, air-filtration and biodiversity on smaller footprints.
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## Task 2

### Reading Passage:

Universities have trended toward STEM, cutting arts programmes. Advocates claim that arts courses distract from “real-world” skills, strain budgets, and suffer low enrolment. They argue resources should focus on disciplines with clear vocational outcomes—engineering, computer science, medicine. Furthermore, they maintain that arts degrees yield lower graduate earnings and thus represent a poor return on investment for students and institutions.

### Lecture Summary:

- **Creativity Argument:** Arts training enhances creative problem-solving essential even in technical fields.
  - **Cost Efficiency:** Arts programmes often share facilities and faculty with other departments, so are not budget drains.
  - **Rising Demand:** Recent data show steady or growing enrolment in arts majors, contradicting “low demand” claims.
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## Task 3

### Reading Passage:

Remote work promises cost savings—reduced office rent and utilities—but critics warn it undermines team cohesion and creativity, and complicates management. They argue face-to-face interaction fosters spontaneous idea exchange, while remote setups lead to communication delays. Additionally, managers lose informal oversight and struggle to maintain productivity standards.

### Lecture Summary:

- **Enhanced Creativity:** Collaboration tools (virtual whiteboards, breakout rooms) can boost, not stifle, remote brainstorming.
  - **Case Study Success:** A fully remote start-up cut overheads *and* saw a 20% rise in employee satisfaction and idea generation.
  - **Data-Driven Management:** Real-time performance dashboards simplify oversight, offering more precise metrics than in-person monitoring.
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## Task 4

### Reading Passage:

Urban sprawl is often praised for lowering housing costs, driving suburban economic growth, and relieving inner-city congestion. By expanding outward, cities accommodate more residents at lower per-unit land prices. Suburbs flourish as retail and service hubs, and traffic disperses across a broader network.

### Lecture Summary:

- **Hidden Costs:** Longer commutes impose fuel expenses, time losses and higher emissions, negating housing savings.
- **Profit Leakage:** Big-box retailers in suburbs often repatriate profits to corporate headquarters, offering limited local economic benefit.
- **Induced Demand:** Expanding road capacity invites more traffic, worsening inner-city congestion over time.

## Task 5

### Reading Passage:

Online consumer reviews are criticised as unreliable: they can be falsified, reflect bias, and deter authentic feedback. Critics claim fake reviews mislead buyers; biased opinions (positive or negative) skew perceptions; and fear of backlash prevents honest commentary.

### Lecture Summary:

- **AI Countermeasures:** Platforms now use machine learning to detect and remove fraudulent reviews.
  - **Verification Tools:** “Verified purchase” badges and reviewer histories help users assess trustworthiness.
  - **User Confidence:** Surveys indicate 85% of customers feel secure leaving honest reviews, encouraged by these safeguards.
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## Section B – Independent Writing

**Directions:** Write an essay (300–350 words) expressing your view, with relevant examples.

6. Do you agree or disagree with the statement: “It is better to work in a team than alone”?
7. Some believe that governments should invest in public transport rather than build new roads. Do you agree or disagree?
8. Do you prefer living in one place all your life or moving to different cities? Explain your choice.
9. Some argue that advertising creates needs rather than meeting them. Do you agree or disagree?
10. Do you agree or disagree that children should have homework every day?

## Section A – Integrated Writing (Tasks 1–5)

### Task 1

The reading praises urban green spaces for cooling cities, filtering pollutants, managing stormwater, fostering social cohesion, boosting property values, improving public health, and supporting biodiversity. The lecture challenges these benefits in three ways. First, it notes that in arid regions parks demand extensive irrigation, straining municipal water supplies and challenging the notion that they're universally sustainable. Second, the speaker warns that poorly maintained or under-lit parks can attract crime, undermining the social and safety advantages the reading claims. Third, the lecturer proposes green roofs and vertical gardens as compact alternatives that deliver similar cooling, air-filtration, and biodiversity gains on rooftops—questioning whether large ground-level parks are always the optimal solution in dense urban cores.

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### Task 2

The passage contends that universities should cut arts programmes to focus on STEM, arguing arts distract from practical skills, drain budgets, and suffer low enrolment. The lecture refutes each point. It first argues that arts education actually enhances creative problem-solving crucial even in technical fields, demonstrating real-world value. Second, the speaker explains that arts departments often share space and faculty with other disciplines, so they do not disproportionately burden budgets. Third, contrary to the reading's claim of declining interest, the lecturer cites recent data showing stable or rising arts enrolments, indicating strong student demand. Thus, the lecture directly challenges all three criticisms of arts programmes.

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### Task 3

The reading warns that remote work, despite cost savings, harms team cohesion, stifles creativity, and complicates management. The lecture counters these concerns. First, it describes how virtual collaboration tools, interactive whiteboards and video breakout rooms, can boost creative exchange rather than inhibit it. Second, a case study of a fully remote start-up shows that by cutting office overheads, the company also achieved a 20% rise in employee satisfaction and idea generation, demonstrating enhanced morale and innovation. Finally, the speaker explains that managers now use real-time productivity dashboards, tracking tasks

completed, code commits, or support tickets, making oversight more precise and straightforward than informal in-person monitoring. Each reading claim is thus systematically overturned.

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## Task 4

The passage argues urban sprawl lowers housing costs, drives suburban economies, and relieves city congestion. The lecture challenges this. Firstly, it notes that longer suburban commutes impose hidden costs, fuel expenses, lost time, and increased vehicle emissions, negating apparent savings. Secondly, although sprawl spurs retail growth, the lecturer warns that large chain stores repatriate profits to distant headquarters, yielding little local economic benefit. Thirdly, the talk explains the phenomenon of induced demand: expanding roads to serve sprawl simply attracts more traffic, worsening inner-city congestion. Hence, all three touted advantages of sprawl are undermined by unintended negative impacts.

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## Task 5

The reading claims online reviews are unreliable, prone to fakery, bias, and discouraging genuine feedback. The lecture disputes these assertions. It first explains that major review platforms deploy AI algorithms and pattern analysis to detect and remove fraudulent entries, effectively confronting fake reviews. Second, the speaker describes verification tools such as “verified purchase” badges and visible reviewer histories, which help users gauge bias and authenticity. Third, the lecturer cites a survey showing 85% of customers now feel confident sharing honest opinions, reassured by these safeguards. Thus, each of the reading’s three criticisms is directly challenged by improvements in review-site technology and policy.

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## Section B – Independent Writing

### Task 6

I agree that working in a team is preferable to working alone. First, collaboration combines diverse skills and perspectives, leading to more innovative solutions than any individual might produce. For example, in a recent project I contributed research skills while a teammate provided design expertise; together, we delivered a report far richer in insight and presentation quality. Second, teams foster accountability and mutual support, colleagues motivate one another, share workloads, and offer constructive feedback. When deadlines loom, this camaraderie helps distribute tasks efficiently and maintain morale. While solo work can allow deep focus, it lacks the dynamic exchange of ideas and shared responsibility that often sparks

breakthroughs. Ultimately, teamwork enhances productivity and cultivates interpersonal skills indispensable in professional life.

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### Task 7

I strongly believe governments should invest in public transport rather than building new roads. High-capacity trains and buses move far more people per hour than extra traffic lanes, reducing congestion and emissions simultaneously. Cities like Madrid demonstrate this: an expanded metro network has cut average commuter times and urban air pollution. Moreover, robust public transport promotes social equity by offering affordable mobility for lower-income groups. In contrast, road expansions often induce further car use, known as “induced demand”, which simply shifts, rather than solves, traffic problems. Governments can achieve long-term environmental sustainability and inclusive economic growth by prioritizing mass transit infrastructure, whereas continual road building perpetuates gridlock and undermines urban livability.

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### Task 8

I prefer moving to different cities rather than living in one place all my life. Experiencing varied cultures, climates, and communities broadens my perspective and builds adaptability. For instance, residing first in Bandung and then in Manchester exposed me to new languages, social norms, and weather, each relocation taught resilience and intercultural empathy. Frequent moves also expand professional networks and open unexpected career pathways. Although lifelong stability offers deep local roots, I find that periodic relocation challenges me positively, preventing complacency and fostering continuous personal growth. Therefore, mobility fuels learning and self-discovery more effectively than remaining in a single locale indefinitely.

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### Task 9

I agree that advertising often creates needs rather than simply meeting existing ones. Through targeted emotional appeals, social-media influencers, and repeated exposure, marketers cultivate desires for products people previously had no interest in. For example, a beauty ad may imply that happiness and self-esteem hinge on owning a specific skincare line, creating a perceived necessity out of mere choice. While advertising can inform consumers of genuinely useful innovations, its primary function is to shape preferences and drive sales. Consumers must therefore remain critical, recognising how persuasive techniques exploit psychological triggers to manufacture rather than fulfil real needs.



## Task 10

I disagree that children should have homework every day. Although regular practice can reinforce learning, excessive daily assignments can cause stress, impede family time, and reduce enthusiasm for study. Young learners benefit equally from play, creative projects, and extracurricular activities, experiences essential for social and emotional development. For example, my nephew's two-hour nightly homework routine left little time for art classes he enjoys, leading to burnout and declining motivation. Instead, homework should be moderate, assigned three or four times per week and tailored to each child's pace, ensuring that reinforcement of classroom lessons does not come at the expense of overall well-being.