

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 1

In this part you have to speak for 45 seconds about a topic.

Look at the topic below for 15 seconds. You may make notes if you wish

Talk about an enjoyable or memorable experience that you had when you were alone. Explain what made this event so memorable.

Preparation Time: 15 seconds

Response Time: 45 seconds

After 15 seconds, please speak into the microphone. You should speak for 45 seconds. Afterwards you can compare your recording to a sample answer.

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 2

In this part you have to speak for 45 seconds about a choice. You will be presented with two situations or opinions. You'll be asked which you prefer and you need to explain your choice.

Look at the topic below for 15 seconds. You may make notes if you wish

Some people think they can achieve more when they are with other people. Others think they are more productive when they are alone. What is your opinion? Explain why.

Preparation Time: 15 seconds

Response Time: 45 seconds

After 15 seconds, please speak into the microphone. You should speak for 45 seconds. Afterwards you can compare your recording to a sample answer.



The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 3

Read the following text from a college course manual and listen to the conversation that follows it. Then, answer the question.

Course: GL202

Assessment Procedure Cont.

Part 3.6 - Group Work

The geology department is aware of the problems surrounding of group work, and its unpopularity among students. We realize that in some cases students do not contribute and thus gain marks they do not deserve, while stronger students are frustrated at being held back by weaker students. Similarly, it is very difficult for tutors to award marks for group projects, as it is unclear who is responsible for each part.

However, the department feels that there is a great deal to be gained from group work, in terms of self-organization and communication skills. To this end, we plan to introduce a system whereby the group work itself is not formally assessed, but each student will undertake an individual piece of work based on the group project, which will be designed to ensure participation in the project.

Listen to the conversation.

Question: *The man expresses his opinion of group work. State and explain his opinion. Compare his opinion with the opinion of the geology faculty.*

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 4

Read a passage from a teaching textbook and listen to the lecture that follows it. Then answer the question. (Reading time in an actual test would be 45-50 seconds.)

VAK Theory

One theory of learning states that we use three sensory receivers: visual (V), auditory (A), and kinesthetic (K) when we take in information. According to the VAK theory, one or two of these receiving styles is normally dominant and thus defines the best way for a person to learn new information. Thus a visual learner learns best using their sight; an auditory learner learns best when listening, and a kinesthetic learner learns best through physical activity.

VAK is one of the most popular learning models nowadays due to its simplicity. Teachers are beginning to incorporate a range of stimuli and activities into their lessons so as to cater for all types of learner. Although it is not yet proven that using one's preferred sense provides the best means for learning, having a range of activities can reduce boredom and increase motivation in the classroom.

Listen to the lecture.

Explain *VAK Theory* and how the example used by the professor illustrates how the theory can be applied.



The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 5

In this part you have to speak for 60 seconds to show your understanding of a problem and suggest a solution.

Listen to the conversation. You may make notes if you wish

Briefly summarize the man's two options for the holidays. Then state which solution you would recommend. Explain the reasons for your recommendation.

Preparation Time: 20 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds

After 20 seconds, please speak into the microphone. You should speak for 60 seconds. Afterwards you can compare your recording to a sample answer.

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 6

In this part you have to speak for 60 seconds to summarize an academic lecture.

Listen to the talk. You may make notes if you wish

Listen to the lecture and the sample answer.

Using information from the talk, describe what we know about water on Mars, and how we know it.

Preparation Time: 20 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds

After 20 seconds, please speak into the microphone. You should speak for 60 seconds. Afterwards you can compare your recording to a sample answer. You may have to 'allow' this page to use your microphone.



Transcription:

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 1

Sample answer:

A few years ago, I went on a really long bike ride on my own. One of my tutors at college had told me about a rare falcon which had given birth to some chicks. It had a nest on the side of a cliff, and birdwatchers were really gathering there to see it. I decided to see it too, even though I wasn't really interested in birds. I wanted to go on a bike ride, and this gave me something to aim for. I took a route via several beautiful beaches. The scenery was really pretty. I remember that it was very hot and I got sunburn across one side of my body. I don't remember much about the falcon. I couldn't see it very well because I didn't have any binoculars. What I remember most is how much I travelled. It was about thirty miles to the cliff each way, but because of my roundabout route, I probably cycled over eighty miles there and back. That's the most I've ever done in a day.

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 2

Sample answer:

I'm in two minds about this. In some cases it can be really beneficial to be with other people when you're trying to achieve something. For example, when I was trying to lose weight, I formed a group with some friends. We got together to weigh ourselves once a week. We went swimming and running together too. Being with other people motivated and encouraged me to eat less fatty food and do more exercise, so I think that was really beneficial. On the other hand, I once got together with my friends to form a study group before an exam, and to my mind, that was a waste of time. We spent too long chatting about our teachers, rather than focusing on the work. Then my friends spent ages discussing a topic I knew a lot about already. I'd have accomplished a lot more if I'd spent the afternoon reading on my own. So all in all, I think it depends on the activity whether I'd feel more productive doing something alone or with others.

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 3

(Male student) Thank goodness the department has made changes to the way they assess group work! I had a nightmare last term with our geology project. I couldn't bear going through that again!

(Female student) Why, what happened?

(Male student) Well, there were three of us in the group. One guy worked really hard, but he didn't trust anyone else to do anything. He just wanted to do it all himself.

(Female student) It sounds like you were freeloading.



(Male student) Well, I wasn't. I offered up plenty of ideas, but he kept saying they were no good. In the end, I stopped trying and left it to him. The other guy was a waste of space. He didn't pull his weight at all. We barely saw him.

(Female student) Did you get a good grade?

(Male student) A reasonable one, considering how little work I did. But I'm sure I'd have done better if I'd been given the chance to say what I wanted.

(Female student) Well, the new system should give you that opportunity.

(Male student) Yeah, I hope so, though I wish they'd abolish group work altogether. All this organization and communication is just a waste of time. It's got nothing to do with geology.

Sample answer:

The man is not keen on group work. In his experience, group work was frustrating because another group-member wasn't interested in his ideas and so did the work himself. He denies being a freeloader because he did try, unlike the other team-member, but he admits that he did not deserve the marks he was awarded, because so little of the group work was his own. So it sounds as if the faculty is right in identifying that group marks don't correctly reflect the amount of work students have done. Another problem is that the man wishes he'd had the opportunity to approach the task in an individual way. The faculty seems to recognize this. That is why they have decided to implement a system whereby students do an individual piece of work based on a group project.

The man and the faculty don't agree on everything, though. The man doesn't think that the skills required in group work; that is, group organization and communication, are useful for a student of geology. However, the faculty thinks they are, and that's why they aren't abolishing group work altogether.

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 4

An example of how you might go about this is, well, I'll describe a lesson I observed a few weeks ago. The teacher was teaching children about nature... about plants – specifically about how to identify different trees. The first thing she did was to play a game where students had to name as many trees as they could – without writing anything down, just speaking out loud. Then after that little activity, she described the different ways you can identify trees – from the shape of their leaves, their buds, their bark and so on. But you can imagine that the kids who don't have very good imaginations... they couldn't really visualize what she was talking about... their minds were starting to wander, they were shuffling in their seats and getting distracted. But that was okay, because next she showed some photos for them to look at on the electronic whiteboard, then passed around some picture books. Students then copied some of the pictures into their exercise books. After that, students got the chance to go out into the school grounds and physically identify some of the trees that were there. So it was quite an effective lesson – very memorable, and the pupils looked very engaged. A week later I asked one of them to describe to me the leaf of an oak tree, and she did so perfectly.

Sample answer:

The idea behind the VAK theory is that everyone has a preferred way of learning. Visual people learn best through looking at things, auditory learners learn best when they hear something, and kinesthetic learners learn best by doing. The theory suggests that teachers need to include a range of activities in



their lessons so that all pupils, whether they are visual, auditory or kinesthetic, get the chance to learn. The professor's example shows a teacher doing just this. The game, where the students name trees, and the teacher's opening talk, is designed to suit auditory learners, because at this point, they're only using their ears. The photos, and the part where the students copy pictures of leaves is visual, although you could say that copying pictures is kinesthetic too. The part where they go outside and look at leaves is kinesthetic. The fact that the student could remember the shape of the oak leaf suggests that applying the VAK theory is a useful way of helping students to learn. However, we can't assume it was the VAK theory that helped her remember. Perhaps the variety of activities kept her motivated, or maybe she was just a particularly bright student with a good memory.

The TOEFL® Speaking Test, Part 5

(Female student) Did you hear about the work experience scheme that the college is offering for the vacation?

(Male student) I heard something about it, yes.

(Female student) You get to work in a law office and see how all the things we've been learning in our lectures are relevant and can be put into practice.

(Male student) It sounds useful.

(Female student) I'm sure it is. We need practical skills to really understand this job. We'll be able to use what we've learned in our assignments next term, and it'll make us more employable in the long term too. Plus, we get paid, which is a real bonus!

(Male student) Yes, it's a shame I won't be able to go.

(Female student) Won't you? Why not?

(Male student) I want to retake one of my exams again – the exam on family law.

(Female student) Did you fail it? I didn't realize.

(Male student) No, I didn't fail it. But I didn't do very well. I was sick a lot last term and I missed a lot of lectures. I know I can do better, and my tutor says I can retake it if I complete a two-week revision course during the holidays.

(Female student) So it isn't necessary.

(Male student) No, but our final grade depends on our exam results for all the units we've studied. Every grade counts, and I want to do as well as I can. Besides, the revision course doesn't cost anything. It's free, and since there won't be many students there, I'll be able to talk in depth to the tutors about any aspects of family law that I find confusing.

(Female student) Well, to my mind, getting some work experience at a real law firm is far more interesting and useful, especially since you don't *need* to take the exam again.

(Male student) I suppose you could be right. Well, I can still drop out. I'll think about it.



Sample answer:

The man has two options for the holidays. The first is the one the girl was recommending. The college has arranged for students to get work experience at a law firm. Here, the students will be able to learn on-the-job skills. The man's other option is to attend a two-week course so that he can retake one of his exams: a family law exam. Both options have advantages. The work experience will be useful because it will help students learn what it is like to work in a real law firm, and it may help them find a job in the future. Not only that, but they may be able to use what they've learned in future assignments at the college. A third advantage is that the work is paid, and most students are short of money, so I expect this would be a real bonus, because it's difficult for students to find temporary jobs in the college holidays. However, the exam option is also beneficial. If the man went on the course, he'd be able to get a better grade in his exam, and this will boost his final mark overall. Plus, he will be able to spend more time talking to the tutors, which would be useful for him, because he missed a lot of classes last term because of his illness. Thirdly, the course doesn't cost anything, so the man may as well take advantage of it.

As for which option I'd recommend, it's a difficult decision. They are both good options. But I think I'd suggest the man goes on the course and re-takes his exam. It's really important that he understands this topic, and in order to be successful, he needs to get a good final grade. It's great that the college puts on a study course in the holidays like this one. I doubt if many colleges would, so he should make the most of it. I dare say the work experience option will be available during the next holidays, so he can take part in that next time.

