

Writing Section

This section measures your ability to use writing to communicate in an academic environment.

The audio portion of the Writing section is provided where you see the headphones icon:



These audio files are available:

- in the PDF version of *Quick Prep Volume 3* (click the headphones icon)
- on the Quick Prep Web site at <http://www.ets.org/toefl/quickprep>.

Listen to the recording only **one** time.

A written transcript of the audio portion is located in Appendix B. If you do not have access to the audio portion, but do have access to a person with good English pronunciation, ask the person to read the transcript aloud to you. Listening to the transcript is better practice than reading it to yourself. If someone reads the transcript to you, make sure you see the picture. You may take notes while you listen, and you may use your notes to help you answer the question. Listen to or read the transcript only **one** time.

For Writing Practice Set 1, you will read a passage and listen to or read a lecture. Then you will respond to a question that asks you about the relationship between the reading passage and the lecture. Try to answer as completely as possible using information from the reading passage and the lecture. The question does **not** ask you to express your personal opinion. You may consult the reading passage again when it is time for you to write.

Typically, an effective response will be 150 to 225 words. Your response is judged on the quality of your writing and on the completeness and accuracy of the content.

Now begin the Writing section.

Writing Practice Set 1: Passage, Lecture, and Question**Directions:** Give yourself 3 minutes to read the passage.**READING TIME:** 3 minutes

Toward the end of his life, the Chevalier de Seingalt (1725–1798) wrote a long memoir recounting his life and adventures. The Chevalier was a somewhat controversial figure, but since he met many famous people, including kings and writers, his memoir has become a valuable historical source about European society in the eighteenth century. However, some critics have raised doubts about the accuracy of the memoir. They claim that the Chevalier distorted or invented many events in the memoir to make his life seem more exciting and glamorous than it really was.

For example, in his memoir the Chevalier claims that while living in Switzerland, he was very wealthy, and it is known that he spent a great deal of money there on parties and gambling. However, evidence has recently surfaced that the Chevalier borrowed considerable sums of money from a Swiss merchant. Critics thus argue that if the Chevalier had really been very rich, he would not have needed to borrow money.

Critics are also skeptical about the accuracy of the conversations that the Chevalier records in the memoir between himself and the famous writer Voltaire. No one doubts that the Chevalier and Voltaire met and conversed. However, critics complain that the memoir cannot possibly capture these conversations accurately, because it was written many years after the conversations occurred. Critics point out that it is impossible to remember exact phrases from extended conversations held many years earlier.

Critics have also questioned the memoir's account of the Chevalier's escape from a notorious prison in Venice, Italy. He claims to have escaped the Venetian prison by using a piece of metal to make a hole in the ceiling and climbing through the roof. Critics claim that while such a daring escape makes for enjoyable reading, it is more likely that the Chevalier's jailers were bribed to free him. They point out that the Chevalier had a number of politically well-connected friends in Venice who could have offered a bribe.

**Directions:** Listen to Track 11.

Directions: You have 20 minutes to plan and write your response. Your response will be judged on the basis of the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the points in the lecture and their relationship to the reading passage. Typically, an effective response will be 150 to 225 words.

RESPONSE TIME: 20 minutes

35. Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they respond to the specific points made in the reading passage.

SECTION

Writing Practice Set 1

35. What is important to understand from the lecture is that in discussing whether the memoirs of the Chevalier de Seingalt are accurate, the professor disagrees with the points made in the reading, namely that because the Chevalier borrowed money, he could not have been rich; that there is no way the Chevalier could have accurately recorded conversations with Voltaire so many years after they occurred; and that instead of escaping from prison, the Chevalier purchased his freedom by giving his jailers a bribe.

In your response, you should convey the reasons presented by the professor for why the Chevalier's memoir is accurate. A high-scoring response will include the following points made by the professor that cast doubt on the points made in the reading:

Point made in the reading	Counterpoint made in the lecture
In the memoir, the Chevalier claims that he was wealthy while living in Switzerland, but since the Chevalier is known to have borrowed money there, he cannot have been very rich.	The Chevalier's wealth was in the form of property that had to be sold in order to generate cash. So he wasn't poor; he just had to borrow money for a few days while he waited for his property to be sold.
The memoir claims to recount accurate conversations between the Chevalier and the famous writer Voltaire; this cannot be true, since it was written so many years after the conversations occurred.	Each night after the conversations took place, the Chevalier wrote down everything he could remember from them. Witnesses confirm that when writing his memoir years later, the Chevalier regularly consulted these notes.
The memoir states that the Chevalier escaped from a Venetian prison by making a hole in the ceiling and climbing through the roof; this is unlikely, since the Chevalier could have asked politically well-connected friends to offer his jailers a bribe to free him.	Other prisoners who had even more powerful political connections were never able to bribe their way to freedom, so the Chevalier probably couldn't either. Also, prison records indicate that soon after the Chevalier's escape, the ceiling of his room in the prison had to be repaired.

This task is scored using the Integrated Writing Rubrics (see Appendix A). A response that receives a score of 5 clearly conveys all three of the main points in the table using accurate sentence structure and vocabulary.

TOEFL iBT® Integrated Writing Scoring Rubric

Score	Task Description
5	A response at this level successfully selects the important information from the lecture and coherently and accurately presents this information in relation to the relevant information presented in the reading. The response is well organized, and occasional language errors that are present do not result in inaccurate or imprecise presentation of content or connections.
4	A response at this level is generally good in selecting the important information from the lecture and in coherently and accurately presenting this information in relation to the relevant information in the reading, but it may have minor omission, inaccuracy, vagueness, or imprecision of some content from the lecture or in connection to points made in the reading. A response is also scored at this level if it has more frequent or noticeable minor language errors, as long as such usage and grammatical structures do not result in anything more than an occasional lapse of clarity or in the connection of ideas.
3	A response at this level contains some important information from the lecture and conveys some relevant connection to the reading, but it is marked by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the overall response is definitely oriented to the task, it conveys only vague, global, unclear, or somewhat imprecise connection of the points made in the lecture to points made in the reading. • The response may omit one major key point made in the lecture. • Some key points made in the lecture or the reading, or connections between the two, may be incomplete, inaccurate, or imprecise. • Errors of usage and/or grammar may be more frequent or may result in noticeably vague expressions or obscured meanings in conveying ideas and connections.
2	A response at this level contains some relevant information from the lecture, but is marked by significant language difficulties or by significant omission or inaccuracy of important ideas from the lecture or in the connections between the lecture and the reading; a response at this level is marked by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response significantly misrepresents or completely omits the overall connection between the lecture and the reading. • The response significantly omits or significantly misrepresents important points made in the lecture. • The response contains language errors or expressions that largely obscure connections or meaning at key junctures, or that would likely obscure understanding of key ideas for a reader not already familiar with the reading and the lecture.
1	A response at this level is marked by one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response provides little or no meaningful or relevant coherent content from the lecture. • The language level of the response is so low that it is difficult to derive meaning.
0	A response at this level merely copies sentences from the reading, rejects the topic or is otherwise not connected to the topic, is written in a foreign language, consists of keystroke characters, or is blank.

WRITING TRANSCRIPT

Writing Practice Set 1:

Transcript for Track 11:

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

Professor No memoir can possibly be correct in every detail, but still, the Chevalier's memoir is pretty accurate overall and is, by and large, a reliable historical source. Let's look at the accuracy of the three episodes mentioned in the reading.



First, the loan from the merchant: Well, that doesn't mean that the Chevalier was poor. Let me explain. We know that in Switzerland, the Chevalier spent huge amounts of money on parties and on gambling. And he had wealth, but it was the kind of property you have to sell first to get money. So it usually took a few days to convert his assets into actual money. So when he ran out of cash, he had to borrow some while he was waiting for his money to arrive—but that's not being poor!

Second, the conversations with Voltaire: The Chevalier states in his memoir that each night, immediately after conversing with Voltaire, he wrote down everything he could remember about that particular night's conversation. Evidently, the Chevalier kept his notes of these conversations for many years and referred to them when writing the memoir. Witnesses who lived with the Chevalier in his later life confirm that he regularly consulted notes and journals when composing the memoir.

Third, the Chevalier's escape from the prison in Venice: Other prisoners in that prison had even more powerful friends than he did, and none of them were ever able to bribe their way to freedom, so bribery hardly seems likely in his case. The best evidence, though, comes from some old Venetian government documents. They indicate that soon after the Chevalier escaped from the prison, the ceiling of his old prison room had to be repaired. Why would they need to repair a ceiling unless he had escaped exactly as he said he did?