

# Preparing for the TOEFL® iBT Test

ESL PRO SYSTEMS



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# **Preparing for the TOEFL® iBT Test**

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## TOEFL® iBT Test FAQ

### ➤ Why is the TOEFL® test changing?

The new test will be an improved measure of what colleges and universities in Canada and the USA need to know: a prospective student's ability to use English in an academic setting. The new Speaking section evaluates a person's ability to use spoken English, and the new integrated Writing and Speaking tasks measure the ability to combine information from more than one source and communicate about it.

### ➤ How different is the new TOEFL® Test?

The TOEFL® iBT Test has a new Speaking section, and there is no longer a Structure section. Grammar is tested indirectly through questions and tasks in each section. Lectures and conversations in the Listening section are longer, and note taking is now allowed. The Reading section has new question types that ask examinees to categorize information and fill in a chart or complete a summary. Typing is now required for the Writing section. There is an integrated task in addition to the present independent task, and the scoring used for rating responses is different from the current test. The new TOEFL® test will be delivered via the Internet. Internet-based testing (iBT) allows the capture of speech and score responses in a standardized and fair manner. It will also make it possible to greatly expand test center access.

### ➤ When will the new TOEFL® test start?

It will be administered for the first time on September 24, 2005.

### ➤ Will the new test be available everywhere in September?

No. ETS® will introduce the new TOEFL® test to countries worldwide in phases rather than all at once.

### ➤ What is meant by "phases"?

The new test will be available first in the United States on September 24, 2005. It will be offered in the following countries on October 22, 2005: Canada, Germany, Italy, and France. The test will be available in the rest of the world in 2006.

### ➤ When do the CBT and PBT stop?

The computer-based and paper-based versions of the TOEFL® test will be available until the new Internet-based test begins in each country. In the USA, CBT registration closed on August 31, 2005, and the final date for computer-based testing was September 15th. In Canada, France, Germany, and Italy, the final paper-based test

administration will be on October 15, 2005, and the final computer-based test administration will be on October 8. The CBT and PBT will continue in the rest of the world until the iBT is introduced next year.

### ➤ Will the score system change?

Yes, the score scale will change to the following:

Listening	0 - 30
Reading	0 - 30
Speaking	0 - 30
Writing	0 - 30

Total score: 0 to 120.

The total score is the sum of the four individual skill scores.

### ➤ Is the new iBT more difficult than the current CBT?

The TOEFL® iBT Test Reading and Listening sections are not so different from those on the current TOEFL® Test. The integrated tasks in the TOEFL® iBT Test Speaking and Writing sections might be more challenging for some examinees because they are new. These integrated tasks will help learners build the confidence they need in order to communicate in the academic environments they plan to enter.

### ➤ How can I prepare for the iBT?

[ESL Pro Systems](#) offers a number of preparatory study guides and tests that can help you get the best score possible on the new TOEFL® iBT Test.

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## Getting Ready for the TOEFL® iBT Test

### » What is the TOEFL® Test?

The TOEFL® (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test is written and administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey. The test measures English proficiency in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing and is used for admissions by colleges and universities in North America. You can register for the test, offered at test centers in more than 170 countries, by visiting [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org), completing the registration form, and remitting payment. You will be given a morning or afternoon test-date appointment and will need about 4 hours to complete the test. You will receive an official score report approximately two weeks later. Scores are valid for admission up to two years after you take the test. The TOEFL® test changed to an Internet-based format (iBT) on September 24th in the USA.

### » Why is the TOEFL® Test Changing?

The TOEFL® test is changing so that it is a better measure of what colleges and universities in Canada and the United States need to know: a prospective student's ability to use English in an academic setting. The inclusion of a speaking section, the use of integrated language skills, and the focus on communicative competence are all crucial factors in providing an accurate indication of a person's ability to use a second language. The new Speaking section evaluates a person's ability to use spoken English, and the new integrated writing and speaking tasks measure the ability to combine information from more than one source and communicate about it.

### » Study Plan for the TOEFL® iBT Test

1. Check with the university or college you would like to attend in the USA or Canada to find out the English language requirements for foreign students. Do they require a TOEFL® test score, or do they use a different proficiency test?
2. If they require a TOEFL® test score, select a date when you want to take the test, and then contact ETS to register. Go to <http://www.ets.org/toefl/learners/cbt/register.html> for more information. Keep in mind that the new TOEFL® iBT test will be introduced throughout the world in phases; it will first be available in North America in September, and other countries will follow in stages. To see the exact dates, [click here](#).
3. Once you've registered for the test, it's time to prepare! The TOEFL® test measures proficiency in English, and language proficiency can only be achieved after a relatively long period of study and practice. An attempt to study English for the first time shortly before taking the test will not be very helpful, so give yourself plenty of time to study.
4. Familiarity with the format is very important in preparing for the test. To do this, go to [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org) and review practice TOEFL® iBT test questions to familiarize yourself with the new testing format and to determine where your weaknesses lie (eg: speaking, listening, writing, or reading).

5. Next, select high-quality TOEFL® test preparation resources to help you prepare for the test. Any college bookstore or library will have TOEFL® test study materials. However, if you are writing the TOEFL® test in North America, use study materials for the "Next Generation" TOEFL® iBT test (Internet-based test) and not the TOEFL® CBT test (computer-based test). If you are writing the TOEFL® test outside of North America before the TOEFL® iBT Test becomes mandatory in your country, select CBT study materials. For excellent, reasonably priced downloadable study materials written specifically for each of the TOEFL® tests by ESL and TOEFL® test instructors, be sure to visit [www.esl-pro.com](http://www.esl-pro.com) and order the study materials you need.

6. Study hard on a daily basis. Take practice tests frequently to measure your progress. Remember, studying for the TOEFL® iBT test and learning English is not unlike mastering any other skill - practice makes perfect! When preparing for the TOEFL® test, keep in mind the following tips:

- Become familiar with the formats and requirements of each section of the test. Use the allotted time for each section wisely, familiarize yourself with how to use the computer and the types of materials, questions, and directions that are in the test. You should also study with a clock or timer and keep to the time requirements.
- Read the directions carefully. The directions at the beginning of each section will tell you the total number of questions in the section and time allowed for the section. They explain exactly what is required to answer each question type and can be reviewed as needed.
- Read each question carefully. Before answering a question, determine exactly what is being asked. Always read and understand all possible answers. If you don't, you may miss important information.
- Pace yourself so that you have enough time to answer every question. Pay attention to the number of questions and the amount of time remaining during your testing session. Do not spend too much time on a single question. Keep your eye on your clock or timer and move on when your time for answering a question is up.
- Answer every question in each section, even if you have to guess at the answer. This will give you the best chance of getting the highest score possible.
- In the Listening section, confirm your answer only when you are certain you are ready to move on to the next question. You can't omit questions or go back and change answers. If you're unsure of the answer to a question, eliminate any answer choices that are obviously incorrect. In Reading, you will be allowed to go back and change your answers.

## Overview of the Reading Section

The Reading section on the TOEFL® iBT test will not be dramatically different from the current computer-based test (CBT) version. It will consist of three academic reading passages, each one followed by several comprehension questions. The passages will be approximately 650 to 750 words long. The question types will be a combination of existing TOEFL® CBT test questions types and new question types in which examinees will have to demonstrate what they have learned from the reading passage by either filling out a table or by completing a narrative summary. Other questions may require test takers to choose a correct paraphrase of a reading. Two added features of the new Reading section are a glossary and a review option. The glossary allows you to check the definition of key words in a passage, while the review option allows you to go back and review your answers to previous questions.

### How to Prepare for the Reading Section of the TOEFL® Test

- **Tip #1:** In order to be a better reader, you need to read a lot in the target language. Reading is not a skill that you just get or understand. You must do large amounts of extensive reading both from a text and from a computer screen in order to develop and learn the skill. Timing and concentration are extremely important skills for the Reading section of the TOEFL® Test. Read about a variety of topics that are relevant to this test, such as:

*Social science*

*Science and technology*

*North American history, geography, government, and history*

*Art*

*Biography*

- **Tip #2:** Keep a journal with new vocabulary and refer to it regularly. You can also go to [www.esl-pro.com](http://www.esl-pro.com) and order our [1000 Key English Words & Idioms](#) CD-ROM, which will really help you expand your vocabulary.

- **Tip #3:** Familiarize yourself with the testing tools on the TOEFL® iBT Test. You should be able to use a computer mouse and scroll bar with ease. Try a free [practice TOEFL® iBT test](#) at [www.free-english.com](http://www.free-english.com).

- **Tip #4:** Practice speed-reading techniques such as **skimming** and **scanning**:

**Skimming** is the skill used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. When you read the newspaper, you're probably reading a passage quickly in order to get the main idea. Quite often the first question after a reading passage on the TOEFL® test refers to a main idea.

- Skimming is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading. When you take the TOEFL® test, begin each new reading passage by skimming it.

- There are many strategies that can be used when skimming. Consider reading the first and last sentence of each paragraph, and also pay attention to any sub-headings or illustrations. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. It might be used to review graphs, tables, and charts. Keep in mind that time is your enemy on tests and you often do not have time to read every word of a passage at least not at first. On the TOEFL® iBT Test, you will have 60 minutes to finish the Reading Section. A lot of test takers run out of time before they've answered all the questions. Don't let this happen to you!

### **Skimming Method #1**

- Run your eyes down the middle of the text page.
- Focus only on the facts you need.

### **Skimming Method #2**

- Skim from the top left-hand corner to the bottom right-hand corner of the page. Then skim from the top right-hand corner to the bottom left-hand corner.

**Scanning** is a technique you often use when looking up a word in a telephone book or a dictionary. You search for key words or ideas . In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Once you've scanned the passage, you might want to go back and skim it again.

- When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, and steps. Transition words such as *for example, on the other hand, also, moreover, however, therefore, first, second, finally*, and so on can also be very useful when searching for details. Also look for words that are bold faced, italicized, or in a different font size, style, or color.

### **Scanning Method #1**

- Start at the beginning of the passage.
- Move your eyes quickly over the lines, looking for key words related to the information you want to find.

Stop scanning and begin reading as soon as you find any of the key words you're looking for. When you scan a passage for specific information, you know what kind of information because the TOEFL® test question tells you what you are to look for. And this is a very important point: quite often the question will contain the exact same words that are found in the passage close to where the answer will be found. This can be of enormous help to you while you are scanning.

*For the TOEFL® iBT Test, practice using the scroll bar to scan quickly through the text when you are looking for key words or phrases.*

**The following are additional textual clues that can help you better answer Reading section test questions:**

- **Quotation marks:** Sentences in quotation marks are usually direct quotes from other people, but may also be used for titles and for emphasis. Quotes are often related to detail questions.

Example: *What about the Southern leaders, all of whom were liable for charges of treason? One of these leaders, Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy, was the subject of an insulting popular Northern song, "Hang Jeff Davis from a Sour Apple Tree." This arose from the fact that Davis was temporarily chained in his prison cell during the early days of his two-year imprisonment. However, the other Southern leaders were released, partly because it was unlikely that a jury from Virginia, a Southern Confederate state, would convict them. President Johnson finally pardoned all the leaders in 1868, in an attempt to help reconstruction efforts proceed with as little bitterness as possible.*

Question: Why does the author mention a popular song in lines 22 - 23?

- (A) To give an example of a Northern attitude towards the South.
- (B) To illustrate the Northern love of music.
- (C) To emphasize the cultural differences between the North and the South.
- (D) To compare the Northern and Southern presidents.

The passage states, "*Jefferson Davis, president of the Southern Confederacy, was the subject of an insulting popular Northern song, "Hang Jeff Davis from a Sour Apple Tree."* Since we learn that the song expressed an insulting attitude, the correct answer should be (A) *To give an example of a Northern attitude towards the South.*

- **Transitions:** As mentioned earlier, you should pay particular attention to transitions in the reading passages as they signal key ideas or points. Questions are often asked in reference to such transitions. Commonly used transition words include *but, however, for example, nevertheless, rather than, on the one/ other hand, similarly, although, furthermore, in conclusion*, and so on. These key words and expressions can help you understand the relationships between ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs in a reading passage.

- **Tip #5:** Practice creating an outline of reading passages to distinguish between the main and supporting points. If a passage describes a process or is a narration, create an outline of the steps involved.

## Overview of the Listening Section

The Listening section of the TOEFL® exam measures your ability to understand conversations in English as it is spoken in North America. The Listening section on the TOEFL® iBT Test will not differ greatly from the current computer-based version (CBT). This section will now consist of two conversations and four classroom lectures with several questions for each listening passage. There will be question types similar to the present TOEFL® test as well as new question types that measure a test taker's ability to understand a speaker's meaning and/or attitude.

### ➤ How to Prepare for the Listening Section of the TOEFL® Test

- Familiarize yourself with the question types in this section of the test. Sample test questions can be found in [free online practice tests](http://www.free-english.com) from ESL Pro Systems at [www.free-english.com](http://www.free-english.com), or you can go to [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org) and hear sample questions there. Also offered by ESL Pro Systems is the [Listening Workbook for the TOEFL® iBT Test](#) and the [Listening Workbook for the TOEFL® CBT Test](#), which are outstanding resources for preparing for this section of the test.
- Practice listening to English language radio broadcasts on the Internet or watch TV programs/movies. Web sites we particularly recommend are [www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca) and [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org). Listen for key words, phrases, and idioms to help you understand the main idea of the listening passages.
- Since note taking will be allowed on the new TOEFL® iBT Test, you should take full advantage of this by jotting down any key words and phrases you catch, particularly in the conversation passages.

### ➤ Tips on Taking Notes

- Use abbreviations.
- Mark ideas that the lecturer emphasizes with an arrow or some special symbol.
- Pay close attention to transitional words, phrases, and sentences which signal the end of one idea and the beginning of another. Listen for words such as "therefore", "finally", and "furthermore." They usually signal an important idea.
- Listening and note taking are SKILLS. The more you practice these techniques, the more skilled you will become. REALLY TRY TO USE AND IMPROVE THESE SKILLS. You can even practice at home by taking notes while listening to TV or radio programs. Soon you will be able to record even the fastest-speaking lecturer to your satisfaction. While listening to a lecture on the TOEFL® test, use a simple outline like the one found on the following page:

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Ideas	Details

**\*For more valuable note taking instruction and practice activities, be sure to review ESL Pro Systems' [Note Taking - A Study Guide for the TOEFL® iBT Test](#) or the [Learning English Advanced Study Skills](#) workbook.**

- Expand your vocabulary on a daily basis; flashcards can be a great help for memorization.
  - When you listen to a fairly long passage, try to summarize it either verbally or in writing. Gradually increase the amount summarized.
  - When listening to lectures, think about how it is organized. Try to identify signal words that indicate the introduction, major steps or ideas, examples, and the conclusion. Also listen for words that show connections and relationships between ideas.
  - If you're listening to a recording of a conversation or talk, try putting the tape on 'pause' when topics are changing and try to predict what the speakers are going to discuss next.
  - Be actively involved when listening by asking yourself questions such as " *What is the main idea here?* "
  - Mentally screen out distractions, like background activity and noise. Don't be distracted by your own thoughts, feelings, or biases.
  - When listening for long stretches, focus on (and remember) key words and issues.
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## Overview of the Writing Section

This section of the test measures your ability to use writing to communicate in an academic environment. There are two types of writing tasks in the new Writing section. One is an integrated writing task, and the other is an independent writing task. Typing is now required for both writing tasks.

Make a list of frequently used words that are difficult for you to pronounce and ask a native speaker to pronounce them for you. Record these words, listen to them, and practice saying them.

### ➤ Scoring

Human scorers rate the responses. They evaluate the integrated writing task on the overall quality of the writing (development, organization, appropriate and precise use of grammar and vocabulary) and the completeness and accuracy of the content. Scorers evaluate the independent writing essay on the overall quality of the writing: development, organization, appropriate and precise use of grammar and vocabulary.

Part 1	1 integrated task	1 question	30 minutes (20 minutes to write a response)
Part 2	1 independent writing task	1 question	30 minutes
Total	2 tasks	2 questions	60 minutes

### ➤ Integrated Writing Task

The **integrated writing task** requires test takers to read a short text of approximately 250 - 300 words, and then listen to part of a lecture related to that reading passage. Note taking is allowed. After that, test takers will respond to a question using the information from the passage and the lecture. You will be given 20 minutes to prepare and write your response, which should be 150 to 225 words in length. The question does not ask you to express your personal opinion, and you will be able to see the reading passage again when it is time for you to write. The response will be scored on the basis of the quality of your writing and on how well it presents the points in the lecture and their relationship to the reading passage.

#### **Skills needed:**

Reading

Listening

Writing: summarizing, paraphrasing

## ➤ Independent Writing Task

The second type of writing task is called the **independent writing task**. It is similar to previous TOEFL® CBT Test essay writing requirements. You will be given 30 minutes to write a short essay of approximately 300 words on an assigned topic. Scratch paper will be available for making notes. The essay will be evaluated on the writer's ability to organize and support ideas, and to use standard written English. Special knowledge of the topic is not needed to write the essay. The essay will be read by two qualified essay readers who will rate it on a scale from 0 to 5.

### **Skills needed:**

Reading

Writing: essay writing

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## Overview of the Speaking Section

The new Speaking section consists of six tasks, two independent speaking tasks and four integrated tasks. The two independent speaking tasks require the test taker to take a position on a topic and support it based on personal experience. Of the integrated tasks, two integrate speaking with reading and listening; another two integrate speaking with listening. These integrated tasks represent both academic and social situations in which a student will use English. In their responses, test takers must integrate and synthesize the information they have listened to and read.

More specifically, the TOEFL® iBT Speaking section has:

- 2 independent tasks about familiar topics
  - Examinees state, explain, and support their response using personal knowledge and experience.
  
- 2 tasks based on Reading and Listening material
  - Tasks include a short reading passage and a short talk.
  - Questions require test takers to combine information from both the reading and the listening material in the responses.
  - One task is based on a campus-related situation, and the other is based on academic classroom material.
  - Note taking is allowed.
  
- 2 tasks based on Listening material, including a short lecture or conversation
  - Questions require test takers to summarize key ideas from the talks in the responses.
  - One task is based on a campus-related situation, and the other is based on academic classroom material.
  - Test takers can take notes and use them to respond.

Response time limits for each task vary from 45 seconds to 60 seconds. Preparation time also varies; it ranges from 15 to 30 seconds.

## ➤ Scoring

Each of the six tasks is rated on a scale from 0 to 4, and the sum of these scores is converted to a total score of 0 to 30. Responses will be evaluated in terms of topic development, delivery, and language use. Scoring guides (rubrics) and sample responses at each level for the TOEFL® iBT Test Speaking section are available at [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org).

## ➤ How to Prepare for the Speaking Section

-Familiarize yourself with the question types in this section of the test. Sample test questions, responses, and scores can be found in practice tests from ESL Pro Systems, or you can go to [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org) and read sample questions there.

## ➤ For the Independent Speaking Task:

-If possible, make friends with a native speaker of English and practice your conversation skills as much as possible. If you manage to make a friend, find out if he/she would be willing to practice the following with you:

-describing a familiar place

-talking about a personal experience

-stating an opinion or preference about something topical and present

reasons for that opinion or preference

-making a recommendation

**Note:** 1-minute responses to each of the areas above will suffice. It would be very beneficial for your native speaker friend to give you feedback on your pronunciation and fluency. You can print out a copy of the TOEFL® iBT Test Speaking rubrics at [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org).

## ➤ For the Integrated Speaking Task:

-Read a short article (around 200 words) in a newspaper or magazine. Write an outline of it that covers the main points of the article. Use this outline to summarize the information orally. Practice several times, trying to add more detail each time.

-Try to find listening and reading material on the same topic; the material can provide supporting or contrasting viewpoints. The Internet is a great resource for both listening and reading material. Take notes while listening to and reading the material you have selected, then summarize both orally. Be sure to mention how they relate to each other.

-Alternatively, you can practice stating an opinion about the information in both information sources. If both or either of the passages tells about a particular problem, you can suggest a solution to it in your response.

-Practice recognizing the attitude of the speakers and writers of your material through intonation, word/sentence stress, and word choice. This will help you plan an appropriate response to the questions.

-Work on your pronunciation with [ESL Pro](#), a software product that provides learners with native-speaker models to listen to and imitate. Learners are able to record their voices and then compare the result with a native speaker's voice. As they practice each lesson and build on prior lessons, their English speaking skills will continue to improve.

-Increase your vocabulary so you learn to use idiomatic speech appropriately. Try to learn at least 8-10 new words on a daily basis. Be sure to learn and use signal words and phrases such as *on one hand*, *on the other hand*, *however*, *One reason is...*, *another reason is that...*, etc.

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## Top Ten Tips For Reducing Your Accent

- **Watch the mouth movements of native speakers**  
Observe the mouth movements of native English speakers. Repeat what they are saying, imitating the intonation and rhythm of their speech. (This is perhaps best practiced while you're watching television!)
- **Slow down!**  
Until you learn the correct intonation and rhythm of English, slow down your speech. If you speak too quickly with the wrong intonation and rhythm, native speakers will have a difficult time understanding you.
- **Use your dictionary**  
Become familiar with the phonetic symbols of your dictionary and look up the correct pronunciation of words that are hard for you to say.
- **Ask someone for help**  
Make a list of frequently used words that are difficult for you to pronounce and ask a native speaker to pronounce them for you. Record these words, listen to them, and practice saying them.
- **Listen to books on cassette tape**  
Listen and read at the same time. Record yourself reading some sections of the book. Compare the sound of your English with that of the speaker.
- **Pay attention to word endings**  
Pronounce the ending of each word. Pay special attention to “-s” and “-ed” endings on verbs. Sometimes the “-s/-es” ending on verbs sounds like /s/ (e.g. *eat s*), sometimes like /z/ (e.g. *play s*), and sometimes like /ɪz/ (e.g. *wash es*). Past tense regular verb endings sometimes sound like /d/ (e.g. *play ed*), sometimes like /ɪd/ (e.g. *wait ed*), and sometimes like /t/ (e.g. *wash ed*). Consult a good ESL grammar book to learn about the rules that explain these pronunciation changes.
- **Read aloud!**  
Read aloud in English, such as a novel or the newspaper, for fifteen to twenty minutes each day. This will help you strengthen the mouth muscles that you use when you speak English. Research has shown that it takes about three months of daily practice to develop strong mouth muscles for speaking a new language.
- **Listen to yourself!** Record your own voice and listen for pronunciation mistakes. This is an excellent exercise because it will help you become conscious of the mistakes that you are making.
- **Be patient!**  
You can change the way you speak but it won't happen overnight. People often expect instant results and give up too soon. You can change the way you sound if you are willing to put some effort into it.

## Note taking skills for the TOEFL® iBT Test

Each month ESL Pro Systems presents informative articles and study tips to help our readers improve their English. We also present teaching ideas from time to time. This month we are focusing on note taking skills you can use to excel on the new 2005 iBT TOEFL®.

### The TOEFL® iBT Test

#### ➤ What's different about the TOEFL® Internet-based test (iBT)?

The TOEFL® iBT Test, which will be introduced later this year, has a new Speaking section, which includes independent and integrated tasks. There is no longer a Structure section. Grammar is tested on questions and tasks in each section. Lectures and conversations in the Listening section are longer, but note taking is now allowed. In fact, note taking is allowed throughout the entire test. The speech in the listening material sounds more natural, and one lecture may use a British or Australian accent. Also, there are new questions that measure understanding of a speaker's attitude, degree of certainty, and purpose. The Reading section has new questions that ask test takers to categorize information and fill in a chart or complete a summary. In the Writing section, typing is required. There is an integrated task in addition to the current independent task, and the scoring guides (rubrics) used for rating are different from the current test.

#### ➤ Preparing for the TOEFL® iBT Test

When using preparation materials such as ESL Pro Systems' *How to Study for and Master the TOEFL® iBT Test* and our *Practice Tests for the TOEFL® iBT* series, it's important to practice taking notes (especially in the Listening section) in order to maximize your chances of correctly answering the questions. Here are some tips on how you can improve your note taking skills:

- Use a large 8 1/2" x 11" notebook with plenty of paper. Divide the notebook into sections, one section for each subject (eg: biology, geography, history, etc.). If your notes for each subject are together, this consolidates your knowledge.
- Date your notes for each lecture. Use a pen, never a pencil. Write legibly.
- Keep your attention focused on what the speaker is saying. Listen for "signal statements" that tell you that what he or she is about to say is important to write in your notes. Examples of signal statements are "The most important point..." and "Remember that . . ." Be sure to include in your notes information that the speaker repeats or writes on the chalkboard. Try to keep your attention from wandering until the speaker finishes. Listen actively instead of passively. Put down main ideas, but also include supporting details. Listen for clues. If the speaker stresses specific pieces of information, write it down.
- Do not copy verbatim every word that is spoken. You are not a court reporter. Take notes selectively. Again, Do NOT try to write down every word. Remember that the average lecturer speaks approximately 125-140 words per minute, and the average

note-taker writes at a rate of about 25 words per minute. Think, analyze, judge, compare, digest what the lecturer says; then, in your own words, summarize the main ideas and key facts in a few brief, logical phrases. Try to use the language of the subject as often as you can.

- Don't be too concerned with spelling and grammar.

- Right after the lecture, or just as soon as possible, write the main points, questions, and cue words in the left-hand column. Try to develop some questions, and use your own key words and ideas. Underline some of them. Use colored pencils or pens. Draw arrows from your ideas in the summary to your notes. Star important points - make them stand out. Make each page look different.

- Review your notes right after you make them. Review by covering the right-hand section of your notes. Then, using your summary, see if you can recite the notes in your own words when they are covered up. If you can, you know them. If you can't, this is the best time to learn them. Review as often as you need to.

➤ Here's an example of notes taken from a lecture on ESP (extrasensory perception) using the outline method:

**July 2**

**Extrasensory perception**

**-definition: a means of perceiving without use of sense organs.**

**-three kinds -**

**-telepathy: sending messages**

**-clairvoyance: forecasting the future**

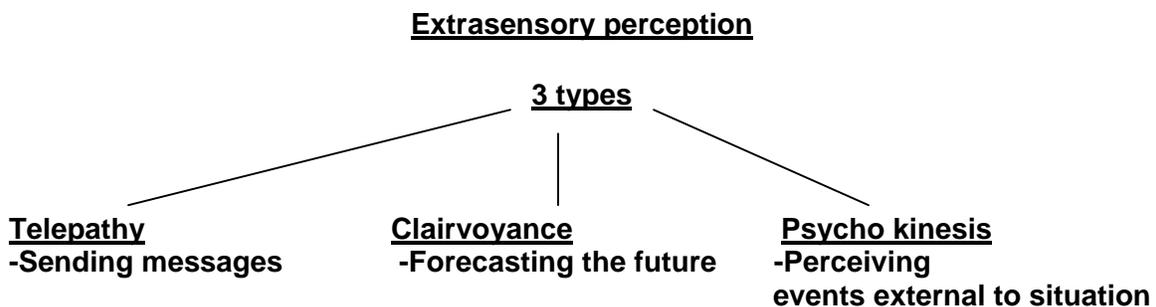
**-psychokinesis: perceiving events external to situation**

**- current status -**

**-no current research to support or refute**

**-few psychologists say impossible - door open to future**

➤ Here's another example from the same lecture using the mapping method:



➤ Here's one more example using the sentence method:

**(Original text from speech)**

*At first, Freud tried conventional, physical methods of treatment such as giving baths, massages, rest cures, and similar aids. But when these failed, he tried techniques of hypnosis that he had seen used by Jean-Martin Charcot. Finally, he borrowed an idea from Jean Breuer and used direct verbal communication to get an un-hypnotized patient to reveal unconscious thoughts.*

**Notes:**

**Freud 1st -- used phys. trtment; e.g., baths, etc. This fld. 2nd -- used hypnosis (fr. Charcot) Finally -- used dirct vrb. commun. (fr. Breuer) - got unhynop, patnt to reveal uncons. thoughts.**

Use a method you feel comfortable with and it may help you get a higher score on the TOEFL® test!

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