Course Companion

# TOEFL Junior

Every topic handout in one volume

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# The tests, scores and study plan

TOEFL Junior

## What this topic covers

TOEFL Junior is a family of English tests from ETS for students in middle school and the first years of high school. This topic explains what is in each test, what the numbers on a score report mean, and how to plan your practice.

| **Standard** 600–900 | **Speaking** 0–16 | **Writing** 0–16 |
|---|---|---|
| **Listening** 42 Qs, 40 min | **Task 1** Read Aloud | **Task 1 (two sets)** Edit |
| **Language Form and Meaning** 42 Qs, 25 min | **Task 2** Picture Narration | **Task 2** E-mail |
| **Reading** 42 Qs, 50 min | **Tasks 3 and 4** Listen-Speak (two) | **Tasks 3 and 4** Opinion, Listen-Write |
| multiple choice, 1 h 55 min | recorded, about 18 min | typed, about 40 min |

*Three tests, one family: most schools give Standard; some add Speaking and Writing*

- **TOEFL Junior Standard**: 126 multiple-choice questions in three sections, 1 hour 55 minutes, total score 600–900.
- **TOEFL Junior Speaking**: 4 recorded tasks in about 18 minutes, score 0–16.
- **TOEFL Junior Writing**: 4 task types (5 questions) in about 40 minutes, score 0–16.
- Your school or a local test centre arranges the test. You do not book a seat alone online.
- Memory hook: **Standard = choose**, **Speaking = record**, **Writing = type**.

## The Standard test, section by section

| Section | Questions | Time | What you do |
|---|---|---|---|
| Listening Comprehension | 42 | 40 min | Hear announcements, conversations and short lessons once; answer A–D |
| Language Form and Meaning | 42 | 25 min | Choose the word or phrase that completes a sentence in a text |
| Reading Comprehension | 42 | 50 min | Read notices, e-mails, stories and academic passages; answer A–D |

- The sections always come in this order: Listening, Language Form and Meaning, Reading.
- Divide the time by the questions: Language Form and Meaning gives about **35 seconds** per question; Reading about **70 seconds**, including reading time. In Listening the recording sets the pace.
- △ Every question has four options and one answer. A blank earns nothing, so never leave one empty.

## Speaking and Writing in one view

**Speaking** (recorded on a computer, scored by ETS-trained raters):

1. **Read Aloud**: one minute to read a passage silently, one minute to read it aloud.
2. **Picture Narration**: six pictures, one minute to prepare, one minute to tell the story.
3. **Non-academic Listen-Speak**: hear a talk about school life, 45 seconds to prepare, one minute to speak.
4. **Academic Listen-Speak**: hear a short lesson, 45 seconds to prepare, one minute to speak.

**Writing** (typed, scored by an automated scoring engine trained on human ratings):

1. **Edit** (two sets): choose the correct options in an academic paragraph, 2 minutes 30 seconds each.
2. **E-mail**: answer the questions in a school e-mail, 7 minutes.
3. **Opinion**: one paragraph of about 100–150 words, 10 minutes.
4. **Listen-Write**: hear a short academic talk with pictures, then write about it, 10 minutes.

Topics 5 and 6 teach each task in depth.

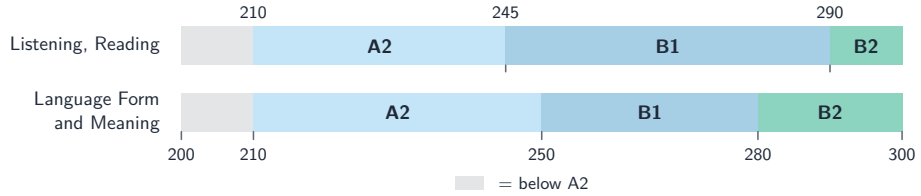


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## How to read a score report

Each Standard section is a **scaled score** from 200 to 300, in steps of 5. The total is the three sections added together, so it runs from 600 to 900.

ETS also maps each section to a **CEFR** level. Listening and Reading share one table; Language Form and Meaning has slightly different cut-offs.

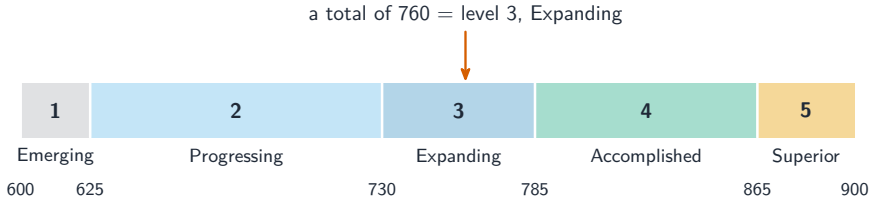



*The same section score can mean a different CEFR level in Language Form and Meaning*

The total also gives an **overall score level** from 1 to 5, each with a short description of what students at that level can usually do:

| Total | Level | Name |
|---|---|---|
| 600–620 | 1 | Emerging |
| 625–725 | 2 | Progressing |
| 730–780 | 3 | Expanding |
| 785–860 | 4 | Accomplished |
| 865–900 | 5 | Superior |

The report also shows a Lexile measure , which suggests how hard a book you can read comfortably. There is no pass or fail: a school or programme decides which score it wants. ETS says the tests measure progress and support placement; they are not meant for high-stakes decisions such as admission, and they do not predict a TOEFL iBT score.




*A total of 760 is Expanding (level 3); 785 would be the next level*

Speaking and Writing use 0–16 with their own CEFR links: Speaking B1 from 11 and B2 from 14; Writing B1 from 10 and B2 from 13.

## Raw scores are not scaled scores

On a practice set you count your correct answers, for example 31 out of 42. That is a **raw score** . ETS uses **equating** : it adjusts every test form for its difficulty, so the same raw count can give a different scaled score on a different form.

- △ Never turn 31/42 into a number between 200 and 300 yourself. No fair formula exists outside ETS.
- Use raw counts for two jobs: to see **progress** (31 this week, 34 next month), and to find your **weak question types**.
- Memory hook: a raw score is your thermometer; the scaled score is the doctor's report.

## A study plan that covers everything

Short, regular practice beats one long session. Cover all three Standard sections every week, plus Speaking and Writing if your school gives them.

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Listening set | Language Form and Meaning | Reading passage | Picture Narration | Mistake log review | E-mail + opinion | Rest; read for fun |
| 20 min | 15 min | 25 min | 10 min | 10 min | 25 min | |

*One week of practice: every section, about 20 minutes a day*

- Keep a **mistake log** : question type, why you chose the wrong answer, and the rule you missed.
- Start with the free official ETS sample questions, then use the original practice on this site.
- Every two weeks, look at your log. The type with the most entries is next week's focus.

## Test day

- For the paper Standard test: several sharpened No. 2 or HB pencils, a good eraser, the **consent form** signed by a parent, and any ID your school asks for.
- Fill each circle on the **answer sheet** completely. If you skip a question, leave that line empty too, so later answers stay on the right lines.
- Bring two erasers. One will roll under the desk. It always does.



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## Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Spending too long on grammar.** Many students are strong at grammar and spend a minute on each Language Form and Meaning box. At 35 seconds per question, the last ten questions disappear. Read, decide, move.
- △ **Translating every word in Reading.** Read in phrases and look for the answer line; full translation uses Reading's 50 minutes too fast.
- △ **Studying only the Standard test.** If your school gives Speaking and Writing, practise them weekly. Speaking especially needs your voice, not only your eyes.

## Try it

Cover the answers first.

1. A report shows Listening 270, Language Form and Meaning 255, Reading 240. What is the total, and which overall level is it?
2. In the same report, what CEFR level is each section?
3. Which section should this student work on first, and why?
4. A student gets 30/42 on a practice Reading set. Her friend says, "That's about 271." Is the friend right?
5. You have 25 minutes for 42 Language Form and Meaning questions. After 15 minutes you have answered 20. What should you do?
6. Your Speaking score is 12. Which CEFR level is that?

**Answers.** 1 **765**, level 3 (Expanding, 730–780). 2 Listening 270 = **B1**; Language Form and Meaning 255 = **B1**; Reading 240 = **A2** (B1 starts at 245). 3 **Reading**: it is the only A2 section, and it is only 5 points under B1. 4 **No.** ETS equates each form; a raw count cannot be converted. Use it to track progress. 5 Speed up: 22 questions are left for 10 minutes, about 27 seconds each. Answer every question, guessing on the hardest. 6 **B1** (11–13).

## Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. How many questions and minutes in the Standard test? – **126 questions, 1 hour 55 minutes**: 42 + 42 + 42; 40 + 25 + 50.
2. What range is a section score? – **200 to 300**, in steps of 5. The total is 600–900.
3. Where does B1 start in Listening and Reading? – **245**. In Language Form and Meaning it starts at 250.
4. Can you convert a practice raw count to a scaled score? – **No.** ETS equates each form for difficulty.
5. Should you leave a hard question blank? – **Never.** A blank earns nothing; a guess may be right.

Vocabulary card meanings

score report: The paper or page that shows a student's official test results. scaled score: A test score adjusted to a fixed scale, such as 200 to 300. CEFR: The Common European Framework of Reference, a set of language levels from A1 to C2. overall score level: One of five levels from Emerging to Superior, given by the total Standard score. Lexile measure: A number that suggests how difficult a book a reader can understand. raw score: The number of questions answered correctly, before any adjustment. equating: Adjusting the scores of different test forms so that they mean the same. mistake log: A notebook where a student records each mistake, its reason and the rule. consent form: A form a parent signs to agree that a child can take part. answer sheet: The paper where test takers mark their answers.



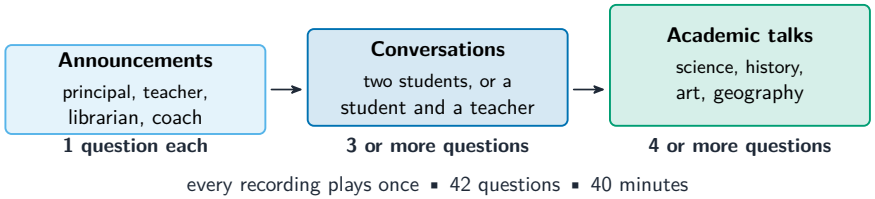
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# Listening Comprehension

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## What this topic covers

Listening Comprehension is the first Standard section: **42 questions in 40 minutes**. You hear every recording **once**, then answer questions with four options. The talks come from three parts of school life that ETS calls domains : social and interpersonal, school navigational, and academic.




*Three kinds of talk, from short to long*

- **Announcements**: a principal, teacher, librarian or coach speaks to students. One question each.
- **Conversations**: two students, or a student and a teacher, talk about school life. Three or more questions each.
- **Academic talks**: a short lesson in science, history, art or geography. Four or more questions each.
- A narrator introduces each recording: *"Listen to a teacher talking to her class."* That one line already tells you who, where and why.
- Memory hook: **news, chat, lesson**. Each needs a slightly different kind of listening.

## Announcements: purpose first, then the new plan

The first sentence usually tells you the purpose : *"I have some news about…"*, *"Before you go, a quick reminder…"*. The question is often *What is the announcement mainly about?* or *What should students do?*

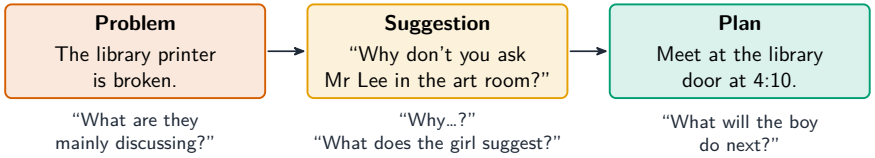
- Listen for instructions: *please, remember, bring, don't.*
- Listen for change words: *instead, not … but …, from now on, was going to … but.* When a plan changes, the answer is almost always the **new** plan.
- The correct option rarely uses the speaker's exact words. It is a paraphrase : *"bring your projects to the cafeteria"* becomes *"take their work to a different room"*.

**Example.** "The science fair was going to be in the gym, but the floor is being repaired, so it will be in the cafeteria instead. Please bring your projects before eight thirty on Wednesday." *What should students do?* → Take their projects to the cafeteria before 8:30 on Wednesday. The gym is the old plan.

## Conversations: gist, problem, plan and feelings

The first question is often *What are the speakers mainly discussing?* That asks for the gist , which is usually clear in the first two or three lines.

Most school conversations follow one shape:

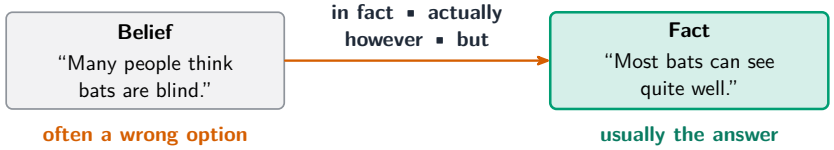



*Problem → suggestion → plan: Why? questions point at the middle, Next? questions at the end*

- *Why…?* questions: listen for *because, so* and suggestions such as *Why don't you…?*
- *What will the boy do next?*: the plan is near the end.
- Feeling questions: speakers rarely say *I'm annoyed.* You infer from tone and small words: *"Again? That's the third time."* → annoyed. *"Perfect!"* → pleased. *"Great, another test,"* said with a sigh → not happy at all.
- Keep the two speakers apart. A wrong option often gives one speaker's plan to the other.

## Academic talks: belief, then fact

Teachers often start with a popular belief and then correct it. The fact after the contrast word is what the question asks about.




*After a contrast signal comes the idea to remember*

- The topic comes early: *"Today let's look at…", "We've talked before about…".* The main-topic answer must cover the **whole** talk, not one example.



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- Process talks use order words: *first, second, then, finally.* Cause-and-effect talks use *because, so, that's why.*
- Questions also ask **why** the teacher mentions something: to give an example, to compare, or to correct a belief.

## Notes and signal words

You may write notes in the test book while you listen. Short notes keep the plan of a long talk.

| **Topic: emperor penguins survive winter (3 ways)** | |
|---|---|
| main points | details |
| 1 feathers + fat | several layers, tightly packed |
| 2 huddle | outside → middle, all take turns |
| 3 save energy | move little; dads 2 months, no food |

*Two columns: main points on the left, one detail each on the right*

| Signal | Job | Example |
|---|---|---|
| *first, second, finally* | Next point in a list | *Second, they huddle.* |
| *for example, such as* | Example | *for example, the Gobi Desert* |
| *but, however, in fact, actually* | Contrast or correction | *In fact, they sleep in the water.* |
| *so, that's why, as a result* | Result | *That's why the forest gets drier.* |
| *here's the clever part, surprisingly* | Key idea coming | *Here's the clever part: they change places.* |

- Use arrows (→ causes), numbers instead of words, and the first letters of long words.
- △ Never write full sentences. While you write one, the speaker says the next point.

## The four trap shapes

Question: Why do emperor penguins huddle?

**Correct**
*same meaning, new words*
"They take turns in the warm middle."

**Echo**
*same words, changed meaning*
"The middle penguins stay outside."

**True but not asked**
*in the talk, answers another question*
"Their feathers are tightly packed."

**Too big**
*always, all, every: more than was said*
"All penguins huddle all year."

*Match the meaning of the question, not the words of the talk*

- **Echo**: repeats words you heard but changes the meaning. *"The fathers keep their feet warm with eggs."*
- **True but not asked**: a real fact from the talk that answers a different question.
- **Too big**: adds *always, all, every* when the speaker said *often* or *some*.
- **Old plan**: in announcements, the plan the speaker changed.

## Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Waiting to hear a word you know.** If you translate in your head word by word, you fall behind. Listen for the plan of the talk: topic, points, result.
- △ **Choosing the option with the most familiar words.** That is the echo trap. Prefer the option that **means** what you heard.
- △ **Missing weak forms.** In fast speech *can* sounds like *kn*, *to* like *tə*, *and* like *n*. Practise with recordings, not only with transcripts.
- △ **Going back.** You cannot replay. If you miss an answer, guess, mark it and listen to the next recording. A missed point costs one question; worrying costs three.

## Try it

Read each transcript once, as if you heard it, then answer without looking back. Cover the answers first.

**Announcement.** *"Hi everyone, this is Coach Ruiz. Basketball practice is usually on Tuesday, but this week the gym is being used for exams. So we'll practise outside on the field on Thursday instead. Bring water and a cap, because it'll be sunny."*

1. What is the announcement mainly about? A) New exam dates B) A change to basketball practice C) Rules for the gym D) How to stay safe in the sun
2. Where will practice be this week? A) In the gym B) In a classroom C) On the field D) At another school

**Conversation.** *Girl: "Did you finish the history poster?" Boy: "Not yet. I can't find a picture of the old bridge. The library computers are all booked." Girl: "My uncle took photos of the bridge last year. I can ask him tonight." Boy: "That would be great! Then I can finish it tomorrow morning."*

1. What is the boy's problem? A) He lost the poster B) He cannot find a picture he needs C) He doesn't like history D) The library is closed
2. What will the girl do tonight? A) Finish the poster B) Book a library computer C) Ask her uncle for photos D) Visit the bridge

**Academic talk.** *"Many people think camels store water in their humps. Actually, a camel's hump is mostly fat. When food is hard to find, the camel's body uses the fat for energy. So how do camels go without water for days? Their bodies lose very little water: they hardly sweat, and their kidneys save water."*

1. What does the teacher correct? A) Camels live in deserts B) Camels store water in their humps C) Camels need energy D) Camels sweat a lot
2. Why can camels go without water for days, according to the talk? A) They drink a lot at once B) Their humps hold water C) Their bodies lose very little water D) They eat wet plants

**Answers.** 1 **B**: the change from Tuesday in the gym to Thursday on the field. 2 **C**: *outside on the field … instead*; the gym is the old plan. 3 **B**: *I can't find a picture of the old bridge.* D is an echo: the library is open, but the computers are booked. 4 **C**. 5 **B**: the belief before *Actually.* 6 **C**. B is the belief the teacher corrected.

## Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. How many times do you hear each recording? – **Once.** Answer, then get ready for the next one.
2. A speaker changes a plan. Which plan is usually the answer? – **The new one**, after *instead* or *but*.
3. A teacher says, "Many people think…, but in fact…". Which part is tested? – **The part after "in fact"**: the correction.
4. An option uses three words you heard. Is it right? – **Check the meaning.** It may be the echo trap.
5. How should your notes look? – **Short**: a topic line, one line per main point, arrows and numbers.

Vocabulary card meanings

domains: Areas of life or study that a test takes its topics from. narrator: The voice that introduces a recording and says who is speaking. purpose: The reason why someone says or does something. paraphrase: Saying the same idea again in different words. gist: The main idea of a text or talk, without the details. infer: To work something out from clues when it is not said directly.





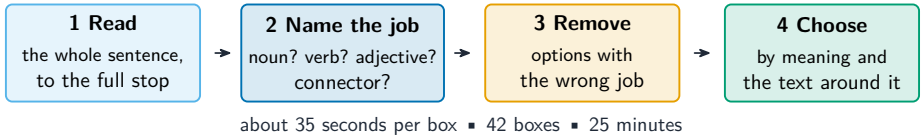
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# Language Form and Meaning

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## What this topic covers

Language Form and Meaning is the second Standard section: **42 questions in 25 minutes**, about 35 seconds each. You read short texts such as e-mails, notices and articles. Inside them are boxes with four choices. You choose the one that makes the sentence correct **and** fits the text. ETS says this section tests the enabling skills behind listening and reading: grammar and vocabulary in context.

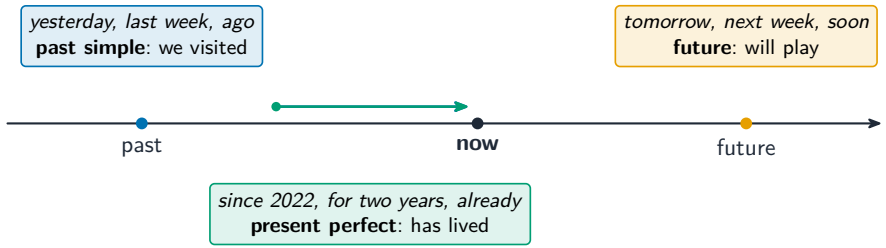



*The 30-second routine: the job of the box removes most options before meaning decides*

- Most boxes test one of six things: **verb tense**, **agreement**, **verb patterns**, **word forms**, **connectors and relative words**, or **word choice**.
- The clue may come **after** the box. Always read to the full stop.
- Memory hook: **job first, meaning second**.

## Verbs: time words decide the tense

Look for a time word in the sentence, or in the sentence before it.




*Time words point to the tense*



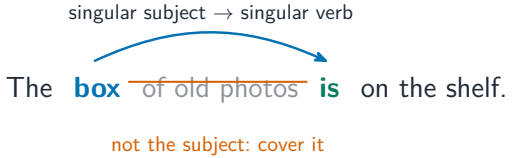
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| Time words | Tense | Example |
|---|---|---|
| *yesterday, last week, in 2019, ago* | past simple | *We **visited** the museum last week.* |
| *since, for, already, yet, ever* | present perfect | *My cousin **has lived** in Canada since 2022.* |
| *now, at the moment, look!* | present continuous | *Look, it **is raining**.* |
| *every day, usually, always* | present simple | *The library **opens** at eight every day.* |
| *tomorrow, next week, soon* | future | *The band **will play** tomorrow.* |
| *when …, while … (a past story)* | past continuous + past simple | *We **were eating** when the bell **rang**.* |

- △ In an article about a past event, the boxes are usually past too, even when the box's own sentence has no time word.

## Agreement: find the real subject

The verb agrees with its subject , not with the nearest noun.




*Jump over the words in the middle: box … is*

- Phrases such as *of the students*, *with his friends*, *that I bought* sit between subject and verb. Cover them, then choose.
- *Each, every, everyone, nobody, either* take a singular verb: *Everyone in both classes **gets** a ticket.*
- Two subjects joined by *and* are plural: *Mia and her brother **are** late.*
- *There is / There are* agrees with the noun after it: *There **are** three new books on the desk.*

## Verb patterns and word forms

**Verb patterns.** Some verbs take *to* + verb, some take *-ing*, and a few take the base form.

| Pattern | Verbs | Example |
|---|---|---|
| *to* + verb | want, decide, hope, plan, agree, need | *We decided **to visit** the museum.* |
| *-ing* | enjoy, finish, avoid, mind, keep, practise | *She enjoys **building** models.* |
| base form | make, let, help (+ person) | *The coach made us **run** again.* |
| after a preposition: *-ing* | interested in, good at, before, after | *Are you interested in **joining**?* |

**Word forms.** Name the job of the box, then use the ending: *-tion, -ment, -ness* (noun); *-ful, -ous, -ive, -al* (adjective); *-ly* (adverb); *-ify, -ise* (verb).

- Before a noun → adjective: *a **careful** plan.* After a verb → adverb: *worked **carefully**.*
- After *the, a, his* and before *of* → noun: *the **building** of the hall.*
- △ *Friendly, lovely, lonely* end in *-ly* but are adjectives. *-ed* describes a feeling (*interested*); *-ing* describes the cause (*an interesting talk*).

## Connectors, relative words and pronouns

A connector shows how two ideas link. All four options are often real words; only one has the right meaning.

| Result | Reason | Contrast | Condition | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| so, therefore, as a result | because, since | but, although, however | if, unless | when, while, after, before |
| *It rained, so we stayed in.* | *We stayed in because it rained.* | *It rained, but we went out.* | *Unless it rains, we'll go out.* | *When it stopped, we went out.* |

*Name the link first, then choose the connector*

- **Relative words**: *who* (people), *which* (things), *whose* (belonging), *where* (places), *when* (times). *The park **where** we had our picnic.*
- **Pronouns** point back to one clear noun: *the students → they, the school → it. Its* (belongs to it) ≠ *it's* (it is); *their* ≠ *there* ≠ *they're.*



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- **Comparison**: two things → *taller than, more useful than*; three or more → *the tallest, the most useful*; equal → *as tall as.* Irregular: *good, better, best*; *bad, worse, worst.*

## Passive, conditionals and word choice

- **Passive** = *be* + past participle: *The invitations **were sent** last week.* A *by* phrase is a strong clue: *The poem **was written** by a student.*
- **Conditionals**: fact → *If you heat ice, it **melts**.* Real future → *If it **rains**, we **will stay** inside.* Imagined → *If I **had** wings, I **would fly**.* △ Never *will* in the *if* part.
- **Word choice**: when all four options are grammatical, choose by meaning and collocation : *make a mistake, do homework, take a photo, pay attention, raise money.*
- **Articles**: *a* or *an* for the first mention, *the* when the reader knows which one, no article for general plurals: ***Elephants** can live for sixty years.*

## Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Missing -s.** Chinese verbs do not change, so *he go* and *three book* look normal. In the test, check every singular subject for *-s* on a present verb, and every plural noun.
- △ **Articles.** Chinese has no *a* or *the*. A singular countable noun almost always needs one: *We visited **a** beautiful garden.*
- △ **Tense after time words.** *Since* and *for* need the present perfect, not the past: *I **have studied** here for two years*, not *I study here for two years.*
- △ **Spending too long.** At 35 seconds per box, a minute on one question costs another question later. Decide, mark, move on, and never leave a blank.

## Try it

Choose the best option for each box. Cover the answers first.

*Dear Ms Park,*

*Thank you for (1) [ A organise B organising C organised D to organising ] the science trip last Friday. Everyone in our class (2) [ A have B are C has D were ] talked about it all week. The museum guide, (3) [ A who B which C where D whose ] knew so much about dinosaurs, made the visit very (4) [ A interest B interested C interesting D interestingly ]. (5) [ A Because B Although C So D Unless ] the bus was late, we still saw every room. Next year, if the school (6) [ A will plan B plans C planned D planning ] another trip, I hope we can visit the space centre. The photos (7) [ A took B were taken C taking D have took ] by Mr Lee are now on the class website. Our class (8) [ A raised B rose C grew D lifted ] 500 yuan for the museum's children's room.*

*Best wishes, Lin*

**Answers.** 1 **B**: after the preposition *for* → *-ing*. 2 **C**: *everyone* is singular, and *has talked* is present perfect with *all week*. 3 **A**: the guide is a person. 4 **C**: *the visit* causes the interest → *-ing* adjective. 5 **B**: late bus but still saw everything = contrast. 6 **B**: *if* + present for a real future. 7 **B**: the photos receive the action; *by Mr Lee* is the clue. 8 **A**: the collocation is *raise money*.

## Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. What do you check before meaning? – **The job of the box**: noun, verb, adjective, adverb or connector.
2. *The list of winners* _____ *on the wall.* is or are? – **is**: the subject is *list*.
3. *Since 2022* needs which tense? – **The present perfect**: *has lived*.
4. *If it* _____ *tomorrow, we will stay in.* – **rains**: no *will* in the *if* part.
5. All four options are grammatical. What decides? – **Meaning and collocation**, and the sentences around the box.

Vocabulary card meanings

enabling skills: The basic grammar and vocabulary skills that listening and reading depend on. agrees: Has the matching form, for example a singular verb with a singular subject. subject: The person or thing that does the action of the verb. connector: A word that joins two ideas and shows how they are related. passive: A sentence form in which the subject receives the action, made with be + past participle. collocation: Words that are often used together, such as make a mistake.



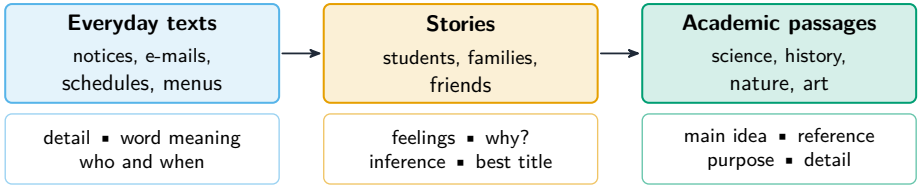
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# Reading Comprehension

TOEFL Junior

## What this topic covers

Reading Comprehension is the last Standard section: **42 questions in 50 minutes**, about 70 seconds per question including reading time. The texts move from everyday material (notices, e-mails, schedules, menus) to stories and then academic passages about science, history and nature.




*Three kinds of text, and the questions each one likes*

- Every question has four options and one answer, and you can look back at the text as often as you like.
- The question types repeat: **main idea**, **detail**, **vocabulary in context**, **reference**, **inference** , **purpose** and **NOT / EXCEPT**.
- Memory hook: **question first, then the text**. Know what you are looking for before you read closely.

## Everyday texts: scan for the key word

Read the question, pick its key word (a time, a name, a place, a price), then scan the text for that word and read the lines **around** it.

- In a schedule, read across the row **and** down the column, and check every footnote marked with *.
- Everyday texts hold several people and times. A wrong option often takes a real detail and gives it to the wrong person or day.
- Watch for limiting words: *except, only, not, unless.*

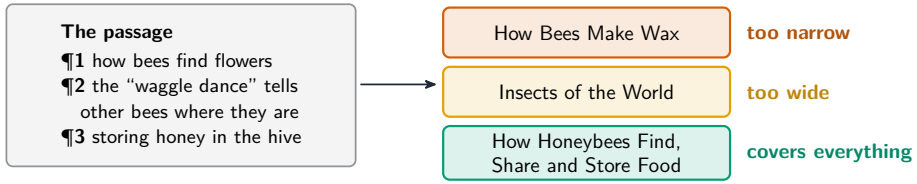
  **Example.** *"The book sale opens at 10 a.m. Teachers may enter at 9:30 to choose books early." When can students enter?* → **10 a.m.** The 9:30 time is for teachers.

| Club | Day | Room |
|---|---|---|
| Chess | Monday | 12 |
| Drama | Wednesday | Hall* |
| Robotics | Friday | Lab 2 |

** Drama meets in Room 12 when the hall is used for exams.* Where does Drama meet in exam week? → **Room 12**, from the footnote.

## Academic passages: main idea and details

The first paragraph usually introduces the topic; each later paragraph has one main point.




*A main idea covers the whole passage: not one part, not more than the passage*

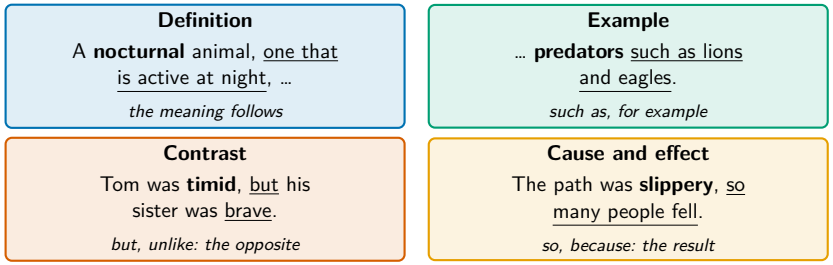
- **Main idea and best title**: choose the option that covers every paragraph. One example is too narrow; *All about animals* is too wide.
- **Detail** (*According to the passage…*): find the line, then match the meaning. Wrong options change a number, a cause or a result.
- **Purpose** (*Why does the author mention…?*): decide whether it is an example (*for example, such as*), a comparison (*like, unlike*), a reason (*because*) or a result (*so, as a result*).

## Vocabulary and reference questions

You do not need to know the word already. The sentences around it, the context , tell you.



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*Four kinds of clue; the sentence almost always explains the word*

- Cover the word, think of your own word, then choose the closest option. Test it in the sentence.
- △ The trap is often the word's **most common** meaning: *the bank of a river* is not a place for money.
- **Reference**: *it, they, this, these, which* point back, usually to a noun in the same or previous sentence. Put the noun in place of the pronoun : if the sentence still makes sense, you found it.

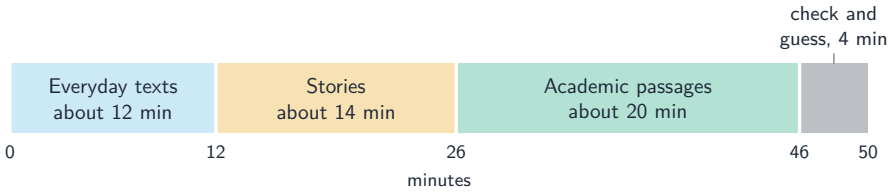
  *"Bees visit thousands of flowers a day. **They** carry pollen from one to the next."* They = **bees**. Flowers do not carry pollen.

## Stories: feelings, reasons and inference

Stories show feelings through actions and words; they rarely name them.

- *She checked her bag for the third time and looked at the clock again* → nervous. *He pushed his lunch away and stared at the empty seat* → sad or lonely.
- *Why…?* answers sit a few lines before or after the action. Read both sides.
- An inference must come from clues in the text, never from your own life.
- **NOT / EXCEPT**: three options are true. Find each in the text and cross it out; the one left is the answer.
- **Best title for a story**: the main event or problem, not one small scene.

## Plan your 50 minutes




*Everyday texts are quick; give the saved minutes to the long passages*

- Vocabulary and reference questions take about 40 seconds. Main idea and inference take longer because they need the whole text.
- If a question takes more than 90 seconds, choose your best answer, mark it and move on. Come back if time is left.
- △ Never leave a blank in the last minute. A guess may be right; a blank never is.

## Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Translating every sentence.** Full translation is slow and loses the main idea. Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph first, then read closely only where the question sends you.
- △ **Answering from your own knowledge.** If the passage says something you think is wrong, the passage still wins.
- △ **Choosing the option with the same words.** Correct options paraphrase the text; traps copy its words.
- △ **Look-alike words.** *relied / replied*, *raise / rise*, *quiet / quite*. Read each letter of the option.

## Try it

Read the passage, then answer. Cover the answers first.

**The Library Cat**

For eight years, a cat named Pepper has lived in the public library of a small town in Scotland. She arrived one winter night, wet and hungry, and a librarian gave her a bowl of milk. The next morning, she was asleep on the history shelf. Nobody had the heart to send her away.

Today Pepper is the library's most famous member. Children come after school to read to her, and teachers say this helps shy readers, because a cat never laughs at a mistake. Pepper even has her own library card, which hangs on the front desk.

Not everyone was happy at first. Some visitors worried about allergies, so the library made one reading room cat-free. Since then, the number of visitors has almost doubled.



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1. What is the passage mainly about? A) How to care for a cat B) A cat that became an important part of a library C) Why libraries need more visitors D) Allergies to animals
2. The phrase "nobody had the heart to" in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to A) nobody was brave enough to B) nobody felt it was kind to C) nobody had time to D) nobody remembered to
3. In paragraph 2, "which" refers to A) the library B) the front desk C) Pepper's library card D) a mistake
4. Why do teachers think reading to Pepper helps shy readers? A) Pepper likes stories B) A cat does not laugh at mistakes C) The library is quiet D) Children get a card
5. What did the library do about the allergy worries? A) Asked Pepper to leave B) Made one room free of the cat C) Closed for a week D) Sold library cards
6. What can be inferred about Pepper's effect on the library? A) It lost many visitors B) It probably helped bring in more visitors C) It made the librarians unhappy D) It had no effect

**Answers.** 1 **B**: every paragraph is about Pepper's place in the library. A and D are too narrow or off-topic. 2 **B**: they could not send away a wet, hungry cat; it did not feel kind. 3 **C**: the card hangs on the desk. 4 **B**. 5 **B**. 6 **B**: visitors almost doubled after she became famous. The text does not say she was the only reason, so "probably" is right.

## Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. What do you read first: the question or the text? – **The question**, then find its key word in the text.
2. A title covers only paragraph 2. Is it the best title? – **No.** It is too narrow.
3. How do you check a reference answer? – **Replace the pronoun** with the noun and read the sentence.
4. The option uses the word's most common meaning. Careful? – **Yes.** Test the meaning in this sentence.
5. In an EXCEPT question, which option do you choose? – **The one that is not true** in the text.

Vocabulary card meanings

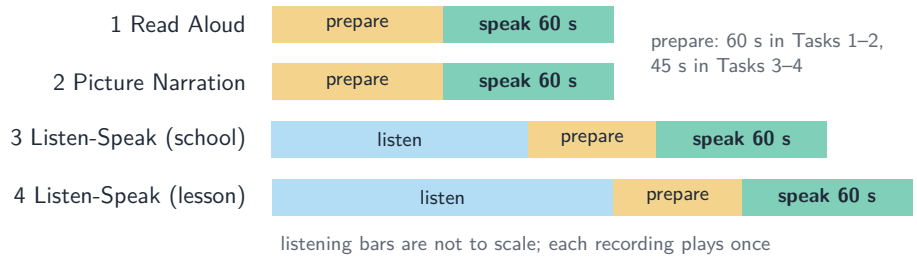
inference: A conclusion you reach from clues in a text when it is not said directly. scan: To read quickly to find one particular word or fact. main idea: The most important point of a whole text. context: The words and sentences around a word that help to show its meaning. pronoun: A word such as it, they or this that stands for a noun.

# Speaking

TOEFL Junior

## What this topic covers

The TOEFL Junior Speaking test has **four tasks** in about **18 minutes**. You speak into a microphone on a computer, and ETS-trained raters score the recordings. The total is 0–16: B1 starts at 11 and B2 at 14.




*Every task ends with one minute of speaking*

- **Task 1 Read Aloud**: read a short passage aloud.
- **Task 2 Picture Narration**: tell the story in six pictures.
- **Task 3 Non-academic Listen-Speak**: retell a talk about school life.
- **Task 4 Academic Listen-Speak**: retell a short lesson.
- Memory hook: **read, tell, retell, retell**.

## What the raters listen for

The handbook describes each score range. These are the key words for the B1 and B2 ranges:

| Score | CEFR | A typical student... |
|---|---|---|
| 14–16 | B2 | almost always speaks fluently and uses intonation well; speech is always understandable; vocabulary and grammar are accurate and varied; tells a complete story with detail; conveys all main ideas and details of a lecture |
| 11–13 | B1 | usually speaks fluently, with some stops; speech is usually understandable; some errors; the story is mostly complete; conveys the main ideas of a lecture, with some details missing |

- Three things run through every row: **delivery** (clear, steady speech), **language** (accurate grammar and words) and **content** (complete and detailed).



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- A native accent is not on the list. Clear speech is.

## Task 1: Read Aloud

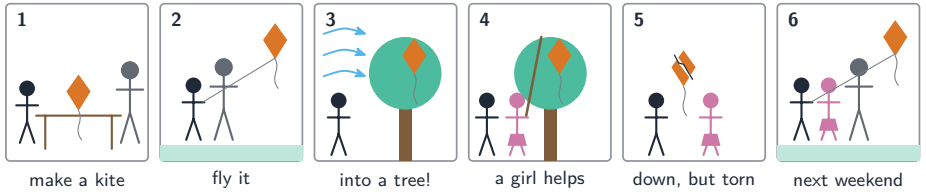
You get one minute to read the passage silently and one minute to read it aloud.

- In the silent minute, find hard words and say them quietly, mark pauses at commas and full stops, and choose the words to stress: numbers, names, days, key nouns.
- Read at a calm, steady speed. Speed is not a score; clarity is.
- △ Say every ending: *-ed*, *-s*, *-ing*. In fast reading they vanish, and *walked* sounds like *walk*.

  *"The library is open from eight in the morning | until five in the afternoon, || Monday to Friday. || Students may borrow up to **four** books at a time."*
  Single bar = short pause; double bar = longer pause; bold = stress.

## Task 2: Picture Narration

Six pictures tell a story with a beginning, a problem and an ending. You get one minute to prepare and one minute to speak.



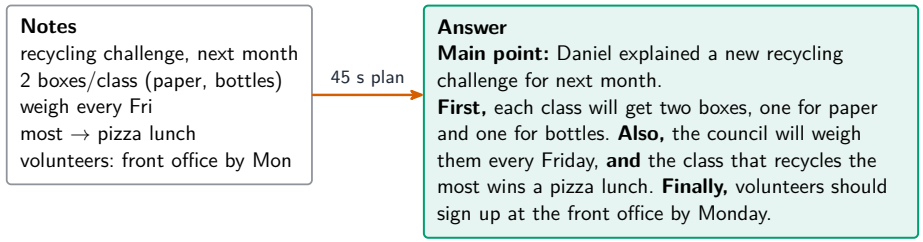

*The kite story: picture 3 is the problem, picture 6 is the ending*

- **Prepare**: one or two keywords per picture, then decide the problem and the ending.
- **Tell**: past simple for events (*made, flew, blew*); past continuous for background (*while they were flying it*); time links between pictures (*one Saturday, suddenly, a few minutes later, in the end*); reason links inside them (*so, because, but*).
- Give each person a name and a feeling (*upset, relieved, proud*) and add one small detail per picture.
- About eight to twelve sentences fill the minute. △ If time runs short, say the ending: a story needs one.

  **Model start.** *"One Saturday, Leo and his grandfather made a red kite with a long tail. They were very proud of it, so they took it to the park. While they were flying it, the wind suddenly got much stronger and blew the kite into a tall tree…"*

## Tasks 3 and 4: Listen-Speak

You hear a talk, take notes, get 45 seconds to prepare and one minute to speak. Task 3 is about school life (an event, a rule, a plan); Task 4 is a short lesson (a process, a cause or a comparison).

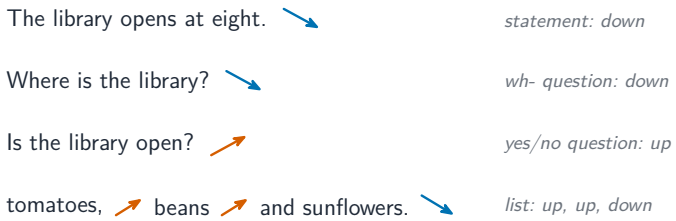



*Your notes are already the plan: main point first, then the details in order*

- **Notes**: key points in order, short words, numbers and arrows. Names, days, numbers, steps and reasons are worth writing.
- **45 seconds**: choose your first sentence (the main point) and number your details.
- **One minute**: report the speaker (*He said that… / The teacher explained that…*), then the details with *first, also, because, so, finally.*
- △ Do not add your opinion or facts you already know. The task is to retell what you heard.

## Delivery: stress, pauses and intonation

- **Word stress**: one strong syllable per word: *PHO-to-graph, pho-TO-gra-pher.*
- **Sentence stress**: stress content words (nouns, main verbs, adjectives, numbers); say *a, the, to, of* quickly.
- **Pauses** go between word groups, never inside one: *every Tuesday | after lunch*, not *every | Tuesday after | lunch.*
- **Linking**: join a final consonant to a next vowel: *pick‿up, sign‿up, an‿apple.*




*Down for statements and wh- questions, up for yes/no questions, up-up-down for lists*



## Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Extra vowels after final consonants**: *bookə, bigə.* Keep the ending short and clean.
- △ **Flat stress**: giving every syllable the same weight sounds robotic. Lean on the stressed syllable.
- △ **Tense in stories**: Chinese does not mark tense on verbs, so *he go, then he see* is common. Plan your past forms in the preparation minute.
- △ **Silence**: a long silence wastes the minute. If you lose your place, say the next detail from your notes, or add a feeling to the story.

## Try it

Prepare and record each task. Use a timer and listen back.

1. **Read Aloud.** Mark pauses and stress, then read aloud in one minute: *"Our school garden is open to all students. Every Tuesday and Thursday, after lunch, volunteers water the plants and pick up litter. This year, we have planted tomatoes, beans and sunflowers. If you would like to help, please sign up at the office."*
2. **Picture Narration.** Tell the kite story above in one minute after one minute of preparation.
3. **Listen-Speak (non-academic).** Read this talk once, take notes, cover it, then retell it in one minute: *"Hi everyone, I'm Daniel from the student council. Next month we're starting a recycling challenge. Each class will get two boxes, one for paper and one for plastic bottles. Every Friday, the council will weigh the boxes. The class that recycles the most wins a pizza lunch. If you want to help weigh the boxes, sign up at the front office by Monday."*
4. **Listen-Speak (academic).** Same method: *"A large rainforest helps to make its own rain. First, the trees take up water through their roots. Second, the leaves release the water into the air as vapour. Third, the warm, wet air rises and cools, and the vapour forms clouds. Finally, rain falls back onto the forest. That's why cutting down many trees can make the remaining forest drier."*

**Check your recordings.** 1 Pauses after *students*, *Thursday*, *lunch*; stress on *Tuesday, Thursday, tomatoes, beans, sunflowers*; up-up-down on the list. 2 All six pictures, past tense, a feeling, an ending. 3 Main point (a recycling challenge next month), then boxes, weighing, prize, volunteers. 4 Main point (the forest makes its own rain), then four steps in order, then the result of cutting trees.



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## Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. How long do you speak in each task? – **One minute.**
2. How long do you prepare in Listen-Speak? – **45 seconds.** One minute in Tasks 1 and 2.
3. What tense tells a picture story? – **Past simple** for events, **past continuous** for background.
4. Should you give your opinion in Listen-Speak? – **No.** Report what the speaker said.
5. Where does your voice go at the end of a yes/no question? – **Up.**

Vocabulary card meanings

retell: To tell something again in your own words. fluently: Smoothly and easily, without many stops. intonation: The rise and fall of the voice when speaking. relieved: Happy because a worry or problem has gone away.



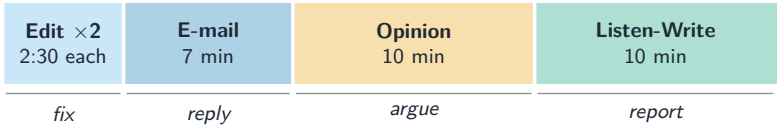
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# Writing

TOEFL Junior

## What this topic covers

The TOEFL Junior Writing test has **four task types and five questions** in about **40 minutes**. You type your answers, and an automated scoring engine trained on human ratings scores them. The total is 0–16: B1 starts at 10 and B2 at 13.




task times only; the whole test with directions takes about 40 minutes

*Five questions, four task types, about 40 minutes*

- **Edit** (two sets): choose the correct options in an academic paragraph.
- **E-mail**: reply to a school e-mail and answer its questions.
- **Opinion**: one paragraph of about 100–150 words on a school topic.
- **Listen-Write**: hear a short academic talk with pictures, then write about it.
- Memory hook: **fix, reply, argue, report**.

## What the score descriptors ask for

| Score | CEFR | A typical student... |
|---|---|---|
| 13–16 | B2 | completes sentences correctly nearly all of the time; writes simple and complex sentences accurately; answers informal questions clearly, completely and appropriately; gives an opinion with substantial detail and development; conveys all main ideas and details of a lecture |
| 10–12 | B1 | completes sentences correctly most of the time; writes some complex sentences with occasional errors; usually answers clearly and appropriately; gives an opinion with some development; conveys the main ideas of a lecture |

- Each task has its own key word: Edit → **correct**, E-mail → **complete**, Opinion → **developed** , Listen-Write → **accurate**.

## Task 1: Edit

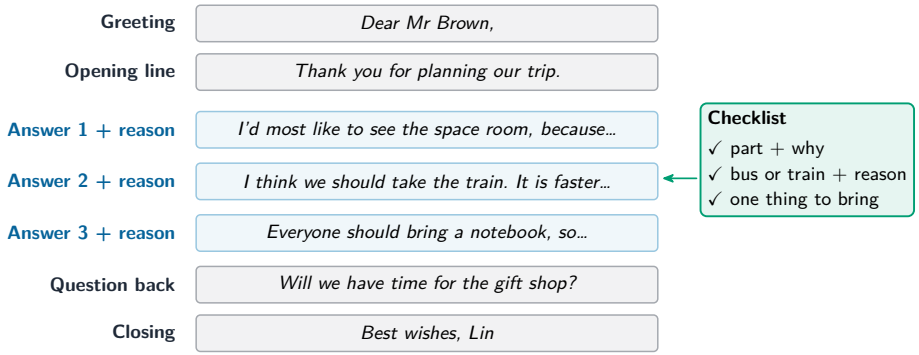
You read a paragraph about an academic topic with choices inside it. You choose the correct option for each sentence. Each of the two sets has **2 minutes 30 seconds**.

- Use the Language Form and Meaning routine from Topic 3: read the whole sentence, name the job, remove wrong jobs, choose by meaning.
- Common points: subject–verb agreement, tense with time words, connectors, word forms, the passive.

  *"Honeybees [ lives / **live** / living / to live ] in large groups called colonies. Each colony [ have / are having / **has** / having ] one queen."* Plural subject → *live*; *each colony* is singular → *has*.

## Task 2: E-mail

You read a school e-mail that asks some questions, then write a reply in **seven minutes**.



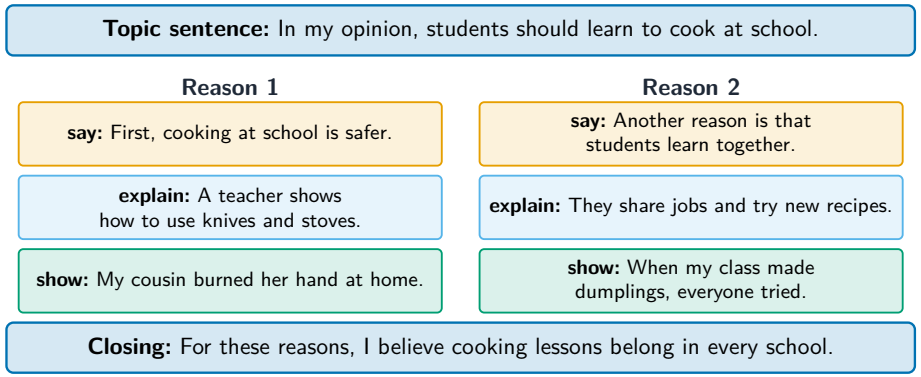

*Five parts, and a checklist so every question gets an answer*

- **Checklist first**: underline every question. *"Which part would you like to visit, and why?"* is two parts.
- **Blocks**: 1 minute read and checklist, 5 minutes write, 1 minute check.
- Add a reason or detail to every answer with *because, so, for example.*
- Tone for a teacher: friendly and polite (*I'd like to…, Could we…?*). No text-message style, no very formal phrases.
- △ The most common lost point is a missing answer, not a grammar error.



## Task 3: Opinion

You read a question about a school topic and write **one paragraph** of about **100–150 words** in **10 minutes**.




*Say, explain, show: that is what development means*

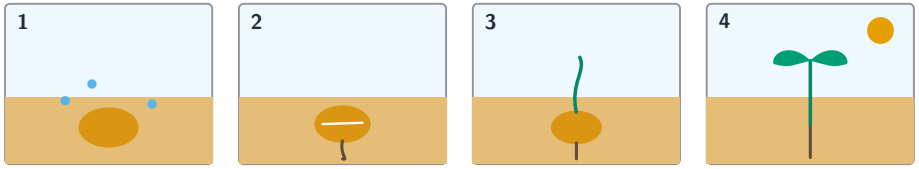
- **Plan (2 minutes)**: choose the side you can **explain** best and note two reasons with one example each.
- **Develop each reason**: say it (*First, cooking at school is safer.*), explain it (*A teacher can show how to use knives and stoves.*), show it with a specific example (*My cousin burned her hand at home because nobody showed her the oven.*).
- Link with *In my opinion, First, For example, Another reason is, For these reasons.*
- △ Two reasons with examples beat four reasons without them.

## Task 4: Listen-Write

You hear a short academic talk while you see one or more pictures, then write about it in **10 minutes**. You may take notes.



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*The teacher explained how a bean seed starts to grow. First, the seed takes in water and swells. Then the seed coat splits and a root grows down, so the plant can take in more water. After that, a shoot pushes up. Finally, the leaves open and the plant makes its own food.*

*The pictures are memory hooks: one picture, one step in your report*

- Write the main point first: *The teacher explained how a bean seed starts to grow.*
- Then the steps or causes in the speaker's order, with *first, then, after that, finally.*
- Report, don't add: no facts you already knew, no opinion.
- Check that the teacher's main point and every picture appear in your text.

## Proofread in the last minute

- Every question answered? Every reason with an example?
- Verbs: *-s* on a singular present verb, past forms in a past story, *will* not in an *if* part.
- Every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.
- △ Don't copy long parts of the e-mail or question. Copied words show no writing skill.

## Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Run-on sentences.** A comma cannot join two full sentences: *I like the train, it is fast* × → *I like the train* ***because*** *it is fast.*
- △ **Missing articles and plurals**: *I want to visit space room* × → *the space room*; *two box* × → *two boxes.*
- △ **"Very" everywhere.** *Very good, very important, very interesting* says little. Give the reason or example instead.
- △ **Both sides.** *Both school and home are good* does not choose. The task asks for **your** opinion.



## Try it

1. **Edit.** Choose: *"The Great Wall [ build / was built / building / has build ] over many centuries. It [ stretch / stretching / stretches / to stretch ] across northern China, [ but / so / because / unless ] much of it has now fallen down."*
2. **E-mail.** Your teacher writes: *"Our class will plant a garden. Which plants should we grow, and why? Which day can you help? What tools should we buy?"* Write your reply in seven minutes.
3. **Opinion.** *"Should students have homework every day? Use reasons and examples."* Ten minutes.
4. **Listen-Write.** Read this talk once, take notes, cover it, then write: *"A seed needs water, air and the right temperature to start growing, but not light, because it carries its own food. First, the seed takes in water and swells. Second, the seed coat splits and a root grows down. The root grows first, so the plant can take in more water. Third, a shoot pushes up. Finally, the first leaves open in the light, and the plant starts making its own food."*

**Answers and checks.** 1 **was built** (the wall receives the action), **stretches** (singular *it*, present fact), **but** (contrast). 2 Three answers (plants + why, a day, tools), each with a reason; greeting, opening line, polite closing. 3 A clear side, two reasons each explained and shown, a closing sentence in new words, about 100–150 words. 4 Main point; needs (water, air, temperature, not light) with the reason; four steps in order; why the root comes first.

## Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. How many questions are in the Writing test? – **Five**: two Edit sets, E-mail, Opinion, Listen-Write.
2. What is the first thing to do in the E-mail task? – **Make a checklist** of every question part.
3. How long should the Opinion paragraph be? – **About 100–150 words**, one paragraph.
4. What does "development" mean? – **Say, explain and show** each reason with a specific example.
5. Should you add your own knowledge in Listen-Write? – **No.** Report what the speaker said.

Vocabulary card meanings
developed: Explained fully, with reasons and examples. specific: Exact and detailed, about one real thing.



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