

TOEFL Speaking Section (example #1)

*****Unfortunately, audio files are currently not available. Scripts of the listening passages have been included. I apologize for the inconvenience.**

Speaking Tasks #1 and #2

Directions: You will be expected to provide an opinion to the following question. First, you will be given 15 seconds to prepare your response. After that, you will record yourself speaking for 45 seconds.

1. If you could change one thing about your hometown, what would you change and why? Give specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

NOTES (15 Seconds)

SPEAK

Directions: You will be expected to provide an opinion to the following question. First, you will be given 15 seconds to prepare your response. After that, you will record yourself speaking for 45 seconds.

2. You have been asked to volunteer at the school library. Would you rather:

- a. stack books
- b. read to children
- c. help students with Internet searches

Provide specific reasons and examples to support your response.

NOTES (15 Seconds)

SPEAK

Speaking Task #3

Directions: Read the following text and the conversation that follows it. Then, answer the question. You have 45 seconds to read the following text.

A Message from the Administration

Security is the top priority for the entire faculty and staff at our prestigious university. In an educational environment, it's paramount for students to feel safe and comfortable. In the wake of a couple of unfortunate incidents, the school administration has decided to adjust our current visitor policy. No visitor will be permitted entrance into any dormitory after 10pm. Only students who are residents and carry the proper identification will be permitted into their respective building unit. This policy will be enforced in all dorms located on campus. If you have any questions or concerns, please address them to your resident administrator. Thank you for your understanding.

Your Notes

Listening transcript on the next page



Task #3 Conversation

Example #1

Directions: Now, listen to a conversation between two students.

Man: This is ridiculous!

Woman: What? You mean the new rule about visitors?

Man: Yeah, I mean, we're adults, we should be treated like adults. If I wanted to live at a place with a bunch of rules, I wouldn't have moved away to a university; I would've stayed with my parents.

Woman: But it's not like they're trying to take away your freedom or anything like that. The new rule is just for your safety.

Man: But why now?

Woman: Well, my neighbor next door had her purse stolen while she was out last week. And I know another girl who walked into her room at like, 1am or something, and someone was in there going through her stuff! Luckily, the guy just ran out but she said that he definitely didn't look like a student.

Man: Wow, really? That's scary.

Woman: Yeah, I mean, what if it happened to me or you? To be honest, for the last week or so, I've had trouble studying. I keep imagining what if someone comes through my door? What if someone steals my stuff? I've been studying in the library for the past week because I don't feel comfortable in the dorm.

Man: Oh. I didn't know any of that stuff.

Woman: Yeah, well, I'm really happy with the change. Maybe now I can finally stop thinking about 'what if' and instead focus on my studies.

Directions: Give yourself 30 seconds to prepare your response to the following question. Then record yourself speaking for 60 seconds.

Question: The woman expresses her opinion of the school administration's recent change in visitor policy. State her opinion and the reasons she gives for holding that opinion.

Your Notes

Speaking Task #4

Directions: Read the following passage about *compassionate consumerism* from a business textbook. You have 45 seconds to read the following text. Begin reading now.

Compassionate Consumerism

Compassionate consumerism is a relatively new trend in the American retail market. In this type of consumerism, when individuals make a purchase, a portion of the money they paid is allocated to a charitable cause. In other words, when you buy a product, some of that money is donated. Nowadays, individuals look for ways to contribute to the betterment of humanity, but don't have the monetary means to do so. Compassionate consumerism appears to be a good middle ground. While critics feel that it's only a marketing ploy aimed at appealing to millennials — individuals in their 20s and 30s — others applaud the effort. In compassionate consumerism, companies are willing to sacrifice profits in order to help those in need.

Your Notes

Listening transcript on the next page



Task #4 Lecture Script

Example #4

Directions: Now, listen to part of a lecture from a business class.

I just want to start by saying that companies sacrifice nothing in order to give to charities. Sorry, I usually try to keep my personal opinion out of the material, but I disagree with the usage of the word 'sacrifice' in the reading. Why? Well, because companies make a lot of additional profits from this kind of compassionate marketing. Some companies even thrive off of it.

Take TOMS shoes for example. They're kind of like the pioneer of this type of consumerism. You know the shoes, right? Those flat, simple, slip-on shoes, which are based on a type of Argentinian shoe called a *alpargata*. Anyway, TOMS exploded on the market about seven years ago now with their 'one-for-one' business model. Basically, if you buy a pair of TOMS shoes, they donate another pair of shoes to an impoverished individual. While TOMS has, quote on quote 'sacrificed' profits, they've also made so much profit that they've expanded to include not only shoes, but also eyewear and coffee.

Now, TOMS was the pioneer, and like any pioneer they had copycats. BOBS is a division of the Sketchers shoe company. The acronym BOBS stands for Benefiting Others By Shoes. The shoes themselves look exactly the same as TOMS shoes. So what's the difference? Well, pretty much nothing, except the fact that Sketchers didn't try to hide their ulterior motive behind this new marketing scheme. This was an act of desperation from Sketchers. They had lost so much profit after the financial crisis of 2008 that the people at Sketchers were willing to do anything to encourage people to spend what little money they had left.

Directions: Give yourself 30 seconds to prepare your response to the following question. Then record yourself speaking for 60 seconds.

Question: Using the examples of TOMS and BOBS from the lecture, explain what *compassionate consumerism* is and how it works.

Your Notes

Speaking Task #5

WAIT

Remember for speaking tasks five and six there's no reading passage, only listening. On the first page of each task I leave a space for you to write notes. If you can, find someone who can read the passage aloud for you. Take down notes, give yourself 20 seconds to prepare and then record yourself speaking for 60 seconds. Keep practicing each task until you perfect it.

READY?

Example #1 Notes

Speaking Task #5 Conversation

Example #1

Directions: Now, listen to a conversation between two students.

Man: Hey Sheila, what's up?

Woman: Ah, don't ask.

Man: Is it professor Evans' class again?

Woman: Yeah, it is. 40% of the grade is attendance and I've missed two classes all ready. If I miss another one, she'll start to deduct points from my grade.

Man: Well, why have you missed so many classes?

Woman: Unlike most people here, my parents can't afford for me to go to college. I have to work to pay for school.

Man: Did you try to talk to professor Evans? Maybe she'll make an exception for you because your schedule's so busy.

Woman: I don't know, she's so scary. And I talked to a few other people who had her last semester and they all said the same thing, she doesn't make exceptions for anyone, ever. Everyone has to be in class all the time.

Man: Well, if you can't do anything about the class, then maybe you should do something about what you do outside of class?

Woman: What, like quit my job?

Man: No, not exactly, I mean let's think about it for a second, you can't quit your job but, your job's conflicting with your class so, to me, it looks like you're going to have to do one or the other, either drop the class or quit your job.

Woman: What'd you mean, drop the class?

Man: Well, it's still only the fourth week of the semester. As long as you make a request to drop the class before the sixth week, you'll get a *W* for the class.

Woman: A *W*?

Man: Yeah, it stands for withdrawal. If you withdraw from a class it doesn't negatively effect your overall GPA. Last semester I dropped my Microeconomics class because I was all ready overloaded with work from my other courses.

Woman: I'm not sure. If I drop this class then I'll have to take more classes next semester to make up for those credits.

Man: Well, either way, you're going to have to make a tough decision.

Directions: Give yourself 20 seconds to prepare your response to the following question. Then record yourself speaking for 60 seconds.

Question: The speakers discuss two possible solutions to the woman's problem. Briefly summarize the problem. Then state which solution you recommend and explain why.

Speaking Task #6

WAIT

Remember for speaking tasks five and six there's no reading passage, only listening. On the first page of each task I leave a space for you to write notes. If you can, find someone who can read the passage aloud for you. Take down notes, give yourself 20 seconds to prepare and then record yourself speaking for 60 seconds. Keep practicing each task until you perfect it.

READY?

Example #1 Notes

Speaking Task #6 Lecture Script

Example #1

Directions: Now, listen to part of a lecture in a linguistics class.

Language acquisition and how it comes about has sparked the interest of curious minds since ancient Greece. Even Sanskrit grammarians would debate on language and how it worked. At the base of the argument was a fundamental difference in opinion: is language something God given and known before birth, or is it learned through the environment and examples shown to us from our parents and elders around us? To put it more simply, is language in a human beings nature, or is it nurtured into us? The debate has waged on through the ages and reached an interesting climax in the mid-20th century.

B.F. Skinner is probably best known as a champion for Behaviorist theory. What is Behaviorism? You all probably know Pavlov's dog, right? That's the guy who would ring a bell and offer food to a dog and after a while the sound of the bell alone would make the dog salivate. From this simple experiment came an academic movement that strongly believed that all our behaviors are based on a series of rewards and punishments from the past. If we were rewarded positively, we'd continue an action and if we were punished for an action we'd stop doing it; that's Behaviorist theory in a nutshell. Skinner extended the Behaviorist theory to language acquisition. To Skinner, children acquire language based on rewards and punishment. If a child utters the word *food* and is eventually fed, the child learns how to speak and say *food* because they're rewarded positively for the utterance.

Skinner's theory of language acquisition was strongly criticized by Noam Chomsky. In 1959, the young Chomsky attacked Skinner's Behaviorist Theory of language acquisition based on certain inconsistencies in language acquisition. For example, a child might learn that the past tense of *give* is *gave* but will continually say *gived*, even after repeated correction. Now, Chomsky was a serious academic, he didn't propose that God naturally endows humans with language before their born, like the ancient thinkers of the nature or nurture debate. Instead, Chomsky proposed that since grammar, vocabulary and all the other elements of language are so complex, human beings must be sort of hardwired for language. In other words, language is in our biological makeup and we have evolved in a way to prepare us for the language we'll eventually have to learn.

But this age old debate still lingers today and, I wonder, if we'll ever fully understand how language acquisition works.

Directions: Give yourself 20 seconds to prepare your response to the following question. Then record yourself speaking for 60 seconds.

Question: Using the points and examples from the lecture, explain the two theories of language acquisition described by the professor.