

Sample Excerpt:
Excerpts from 117-Question TOEFL Practice Test

Listening Section - Two-Part Dialogue

Female A: Hi Mark. How was the concert last night?

Male B: Our car broke down on the way. I wish we could get a refund.

Narrator: What did Mark think of the concert?

- A) Mark didn't see the concert because of car trouble.
- B) Mark thought the concert was terrible and wanted his money back.
- C) The concert was great, but he wished he hadn't had trouble with his car.
- D) The concert was okay, but Mark wants a refund because he needs money to fix his car.

Correct Answer Explanation:

- A) Mark didn't see the concert because car trouble prevented him from attending. He wishes he could get his money back, because he didn't get to experience the show.

Incorrect Answer Explanations:

- B) Mark's car breaks down on the way to the show, this, and the fact that he mentions wanting a refund, strongly implies that he never made it to the concert at all.
- C) Mark gives no opinion on the quality of the show. He mentions a refund, and car trouble on the way to the show, not on the way home. This implies he never arrived.
- D) Mark does not mention what he would do with the refund money, nor does he express distress at being unable to pay for his car repairs. Also "the concert was okay" implies he was able to see the show, when the dialogue strongly suggests otherwise.

Listening Section - Part A - Three-Part Dialogue (7 questions)

Female A: I gave my brother Tommy the keys to my apartment so he can feed the cat and water the plants while I'm away.

Male B: Jill, are you sure?

Female: Yeah, he's been much more responsible lately.

Narrator: What can be said of Tommy?

- A) Tommy has not been very responsible in the past, but recently has behaved well and earned her trust again.
- B) Tommy cannot be trusted no matter what.

- C) Tommy lives too far away to watch his sister's apartment.
- D) Tommy doesn't respond well to animals.

Correct Answer Explanation

- A) Jill states that her brother is more responsible lately, which implies he previously had not been as responsible and might not have been the best person to trust with caring for her apartment. The fact that she does trust him with the task further reinforces his new, more responsible behavior.

Incorrect Answer Explanations

- B) Jill defends her brother and clearly implies that her brother is able to be trusted now, if not in the past.
- C) No information is given about the proximity of Tommy's residence to Jill's apartment.
- D) Only his responsibility, and not his skills with animals, has been questioned in this dialogue.

Listening Section – Third Extended Dialogue

Female A: Hi Joe. You missed a great time today. We went to the museum of Natural History. We saw the skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex!

Male B: Hey, Serena. A T-Rex, huh? Isn't that from, like a million years ago?

Female A: Try anywhere from 65 to 85 million years ago!

Male B: No kidding. Wow. They were really vicious, weren't they?

Female: Yeah. They called the T-Rex the "Tyrant Lizard King". It was a carnivore, which means it hunted prey and lived on meat. The T-Rex had huge, powerful jaws with teeth that would break off or fall out from constant use, and keep growing back every single time. It also had sharp bird-like claws on its feet.

Male B: Scary. That skeleton must have been huge. Weren't they the largest of all creatures ever?

Female A: At one time, it was thought the T-Rex was the largest carnivore that ever lived, but it has hardly been the largest animal. The Blue Whale, I think is the largest. Almost three times the size of a T-Rex. And the Brontosaurus was bigger as well, more than ten feet taller, but they were herbivores. They only ate vegetation.

Male B: But the T-Rex was the largest hunter though, right?

Female A: Actually, no. Recently some related species have been discovered. The

bones of the Gigantosaurus, whose name means “Giant Southern Reptile”, were located recently in Argentina. Where the T-Rex was roughly 40 feet long and weighed five tons, the Giganotosaurus was 46 feet high and weighed around eight tons!

Male B: That seems so hard to believe. That size! I mean, an elephant has to be only, what, ten feet tall?

Female: I know. The Giganotosaurus’ skull alone was six-feet long. That’s taller than me!

Male B: Did these two fight at all? Where they rivals that competed for food or territory? That would have been awesome to witness. I bet every creature around would run for the hills!

Female A: Sorry, no. No mega-fights. Actually these two species never even met. The Giganotosaurus existed millions of years before the T-Rex.

14 Male B: So the Giganotosaurus went extinct before the T-Rex ever lived? How does a species just die out, anyway?

Female A: Well, it’s strange. They say that extinction is a natural part of their evolution of life. Birth rates drop below death rates as the species fails to adapt to a changing environment. Then there are mass extinctions, like the extinction of all the dinosaurs.

Male B: Wasn’t that from a comet or something?

Female A: That’s the theory. Statistically, a comet is supposed to strike the earth every several million years or so, changing the living environment so quickly and drastically that many species die off every quickly.

Male B: Sounds like an incredible trip. I’m sorry I missed it.

Female A: It sure was fascinating. Maybe we can go again sometime when you can make it?

Male B: That’d be great!

- 1 – What was the T-Rex once thought to be?
- A) The largest carnivorous animal that ever lived.
 - B) The largest land animal that ever lived.
 - C) The most vicious fighter that ever lived.
 - D) The last dinosaur to exist before extinction.

Correct Answer Explained

- A) The T-Rex was once believed to be the largest carnivore ever to roam the earth, however recent evidence has discovered a larger carnivore in the Southern Hemisphere – Giganotosaurus

Incorrect Answers Explained

- B) Serena mentions the Brontosaurus, a land animal larger than the T-Rex, but an herbivore and not a carnivore.
- C) Although acknowledged as a great hunter, no information is given on the strength of T-Rex's fighting skills over other animals.
- D) No information is given on the last species of dinosaur to survive the mass extinction of all dinosaurs.

2 – What most likely caused the extinction of all the dinosaurs?

- A) A comet hit the earth and changed the environment so quickly the dinosaurs could not adapt quickly enough to survive.
- B) Man began to change the environment and hunt the dinosaurs. As the number of humans on the planet grew, the dinosaurs slowly became extinct.
- C) They grew so large they couldn't support their bodies on land. Large animals only survived in the sea.
- D) The Ice Age hit and all dinosaurs died due to freezing temperatures and lack of food.

Correct Answer Explained

- A) The most viable theory is that a comet struck the earth and caused the environment to become inhospitable to the dinosaurs.

Incorrect Answers Explained

- B) The history of man is not mentioned in the conversation and, in fact, man did not appear until long after the extinction of the dinosaurs.
- C) Although the dinosaurs in this conversation were exceptionally large, no information is given to indicate their size brought about their deaths.
- D) The Ice Age is not mentioned in this conversation and in fact occurred after the extinction of the dinosaurs.

3 – What did Serena see at the museum?

- A) A skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex.
- B) A documentary on the T-Rex.
- C) An exhibit models recreating the T-Rex and Giganotosaurus.
- D) Charts and diagrams outlining the birth and extinction of many dinosaurs.

Correct Answer Explained

A) Serena saw a life-size skeleton made of real T-Rex bones.

Incorrect Answers Explained

- B) Serena does not mention a documentary.
- C) Serena does not mention an exhibit with re-created models of dinosaurs.
- D) Serena does not mention and diagrams seen in the museum.

Structure Section – Fill In The Blank

1. The short story writer and essayist Ambrose Bierce _____ in Ohio in 1842.
- A) was born
 - B) had been born
 - C) borned
 - D) is born

Correct Answer Explained:

A) The sentence in its reduced form would read “Ambrose Bierce was born in 1842.” It is past tense and singular.

Incorrect Answers Explained:

B) The sentence in its reduced form would read “Ambrose Bierce had been born in 1841.” “Had been” is the past perfect progressive tense; it describes an action that was ongoing, and then ended. A birth, however, is a single action. It would have been correct in a sentence such as: “He had been sleeping for so long, he woke with a stiff back.”

C) The sentence in its reduced form would read “Ambrose Bierce borned in 1842.” The word “borned” is not a correct English word. The past tense of born is “was born”.

D) The sentence in its reduced form would read “Ambrose Bierce is born in 1842.” The date clearly requires the use of past, not present tense in this case.

2. An area’s climate is determined _____ the combination of weather conditions over a period of at least thirty years.
- A) by evaluating
 - B) as evaluated
 - C) evaluate
 - D) in evaluation

Correct Answer Explained:

A) A reduced form of this sentence would read “An area’s climate is determined by evaluating the combination of weather conditions.”

for the crime. Black civil rights activists had **long been searching** for a case they could confidently try in court. They needed a solid, upstanding, and irreproachable citizen to make their case without fear of being personally attacked. This would have clouded the issue and hurt the cause and ultimate goal, which was the abolishment of a **segregated** transport system in Alabama.

In Rosa Parks, the quiet, hardworking mother of four, the NAACP found what it had long been seeking. The day Rosa was arrested the “Montgomery Improvement Association” was formed, headed by a charismatic activist at the very beginning of his infamous career: Dr. Martin Luther King. Preceding Rosa’s trial, King’s organization circulated 35, 000 handbills that were distributed throughout the black community urging for a citywide **boycott** on the buses. Although their section of seats was the smallest in each bus, black citizens constituted over two-thirds of bus passengers at the time. On the day of the trial, blacks found alternate ways to work and school. They walked, found rides, or took a taxi. In support of the movement, black cab drivers lowered their fares and offered rides for the same ten-cents that the bus would charge.

As expected, Rosa’s trial ended quickly and she was sentenced. She paid the fine, was released, and then the real fight began. The NAACP challenged the constitutionality of the segregation laws in court. The boycott on buses held for the entire fight. Within one year, the state of Alabama **repealed** the segregation laws and integrated the transit system on Dec 21, 1956. Although following this time Rosa was forced to move her family to stay with relatives in Michigan in order to avoid continued harassment from angry whites, her legacy has only grown stronger throughout the years. In 1999 she was granted the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor by President Clinton. In many history books she is known as Rosa Parks: a woman who changed a nation. A favorite photo is often included. It is Rosa sitting on bus, glancing quietly out the window while a white man, unconcerned, sits behind her.

Based on the information in the preceding passage, answer the following questions.

1. The word “**oppressed**” in bold in the passage is closest in meaning to which of the following definitions?
- A) To be acted upon by unjust authority.
 - B) To be ignored.
 - C) To be separated.
 - D) To be laughed at.

Correct Answer:

- A) The word “oppressed” in means to have been kept down, or acted upon unjustly by force and authority.

Incorrect Answers:

- B) Although the rights of black citizens were ignored, the word “oppress” means to be kept down, or acted upon unjustly by force and authority.
- C) Although the article deals with forced separation of blacks from whites, the word “oppress: means to be kept down, or acted upon unjustly by force and authority.

D) This passage does not describe the ridicule that must have also occurred in the atmosphere of Alabama at the time. The word “oppress” mean to be kept down, or acted upon unjustly by force and authority.

2. The word “**relinquish**” in bold in this passage is closest in meaning to which of the following?
- A) To give up or release control of.
 - B) To switch one for another.
 - C) To retain control of.
 - D) To present, as a gift.

Correct Answer:

A) The word “relinquish” means to give up. In this case, black riders were required to give up their seat.

Incorrect Answers:

- B) Although the black passengers were made to switch one seat for another further to the back, or switch sitting for standing, the word “relinquish” means to give up.
- C) Relinquish actually means the opposite; it means to give up, or pass control to another.
- D) Although the black passengers were made to give their seats to white passengers, the word "relinquish" specifically means to give up.

3. The phrase “**long been searching**” in bold in this passage is closest in meaning to which of the following?

- A) Had searched for a long amount of time.
- B) Had searched over a far amount of territory.
- C) Had searched for answers that were long and complex.
- D) Had been searching with no results.

Correct Answer:

A) The phrase “long been” always refers to the amount of time something has taken place, in this case “searching”. It is usually used with an active, ongoing verb such as in “long been trying”, or “long been wondering”.

Incorrect Answers:

- B) The phrase “long been” always refers to the amount of time something has taken place, not how far over which something has occurred.
- C) The phrase “long been” always refers to the amount of time something has taken place, not the complexity of what is sought.
- D) The phrase “long been” always refers to the amount of time something has taken place, not the effectiveness of the activity.

4. The word “**repealed**” in bold in this passage is OPPOSITE in meaning to which of the following?

- A) Instituted
- B) Reversed
- C) Taken back
- D) Revokes

Correct Answer:

- A) To institute something is to establish or introduce it into being. In this case, the laws were taken back, not introduced.

Incorrect Answers:

- B) The word “repeal” means to revoke, or take back. The laws were reversed, an act that was once illegal, is now legal.
- C) The word “repeal” means to revoke, or take back.
- D) The word “repeal” means to revoke, or take back.

5. Why was Rosa Parks arrested?

- A) She refused to give up her seat to a white man.
- B) She would not move from the white section of the bus.
- C) She would not leave the white bus and take the bus that was for blacks.
- D) She refused to pay a fare to the white bus driver.

Correct Answer:

- A) Rosa Parks was seated in the black section when the white section was full. She was required to give her seat to a white man. She refused.

Incorrect Answers:

- B) She sat in the black section, when the white section is full, a black passenger is expected to relinquish his or her seat so a white passenger doesn't have to stand or sit further back.
- C) There was one bus for both white and blacks. They were segregated into sections of the same bus, whites in the front and blacks in the back.
- D) Rosa paid her fare like all the passengers. She refused to give up her seat to a white man.

6. Why was Rosa made a figurehead for the de-segregation of Alabama and the civil right movement in general?

- A) She was an upstanding citizen and was chosen by the NAACP to fight in court for the elimination of the segregation laws.
- B) She was the very first woman brave enough to refuse to give up her seat.

- C) She was the first to insist on fighting in court to repeal the segregation laws.
- D) She brought Dr. Martin Luther King to the cause.

Correct Answer:

- A) Although others had refused to give up their seat and were arrested for the crime, Rosa was chosen to lead the fight by the NAACP because of her outstanding character.

Incorrect Answers:

- B) The author expressly states that “Rosa Parks was not the first black citizen to defy Alabama law in this way.” She was simply the most upstanding citizen to do so and in the best position to fight the law.
- C) The author expressly states that “Rosa Parks was not the first black citizen to defy Alabama law in this way.” The NAACP had long held the idea of fighting the laws in court.
- D) Although Dr. King lead the group that sprung up from her case, the passage give no information that Rosa herself, or this case in particular, introduced Dr. King to the movement itself.

7. Why were the hand bills important?

- A) They circulated the news of the boycott to the black community.
- B) They circulated news of the boycott to the white community.
- C) They announced Rosa’s fight to all who would listen.
- D) The announced Dr. King’s inauguration as head of the “Montgomery Improvement Project.”

Correct Answer:

- A) The passage explicitly states that the handbills “were distributed throughout the black community urging for a citywide boycott on the buses.”

Incorrect Answers:

- B) The passage explicitly states that the handbills “were distributed throughout the black community urging for a citywide boycott on the buses.” The white community learned of the boycott simply by observing the suddenly near-empty buses.
- C) The passage explicitly states that the handbills “were distributed throughout the black community urging for a citywide boycott on the buses.” Although it is implied that the handbills addressed the reason for the boycott, Rosa’s fight, A is still the best answer because it is explicit in the passage.
- D) The passage explicitly states that the handbills “were distributed throughout the black community urging for a citywide boycott on the buses.” According to this passage, the bills do not address Dr. King specifically.

8. In the years following her victory, why did Rosa move to Michigan?

- A) She was harassed and threatened by whites bitter about the changes in the law.
- B) She wanted to be closer to her family.
- C) She was given medals and award money that allowed her to travel.
- D) She wanted to next change the segregation laws of Michigan.

Correct Answer:

- A) The passage explicitly states that Rosa “was forced to move her family to...Michigan in order to avoid continued harassment from angry whites.”

Incorrect Answers:

- B) Although the passage mentions that she will stay with family in Michigan, it also clearly states that she was forced to move because of harassment.
- C) Although decades later Rosa received medals and acknowledgement of her bravery, this did not occur at the time she was forced to move to Michigan.
- D) The passage mentions nothing about Michigan having any segregation laws. Rosa was forced to move to avoid harassment by whites in Alabama.