



ORTA DOĐU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

METU-SFL
English Proficiency Examination
A Guide for Test-takers

Sample Items and Practice Material

School of Foreign Languages
METU
November 2022

This is the November 2022 edition of the METU-SFL English Proficiency Examination booklet, which specifies the details of the exams that will be administered as of December 2022. This booklet has been prepared to familiarize the candidates with the types of tasks in the exam and provide practice material.

THE PURPOSE OF THE EXAM

Middle East Technical University, School of Foreign Languages, English Proficiency Examination (METU-SFL EPE) aims to assess the English language proficiency level of the candidates who wish to study at an undergraduate or graduate level degree program at Middle East Technical University (METU). The purpose of this examination is to determine whether the test takers' proficiency level in English is sufficient to perform communicative tasks in English, i.e., to fulfill the requirements of the courses at academic programs with relative ease. Thus, the examination is designed to assess test-takers' ability to understand and respond to written and oral academic texts, comprehend interactions in the classroom and campus settings, and produce written texts.

REGULATIONS

When you are in the exam hall,

- you must turn off your mobile phones and any other electronic devices;
- you must not communicate with, copy from, or disrupt another test taker in any way;
- you must abide by the rules and regulations printed on the exam booklet and orally announced by the proctor before and during the exam.

In the event of a violation of these regulations, your test score will be canceled and legal action may be taken.

ON THE EXAM DAY

As you prepare to come to the exam hall, make sure that

- you have an official ID with a recent photo (ID card, driver's license, or passport), and
- you bring a pencil and an eraser with you.

EXAM ADMINISTRATION AND CONTENT

The examination will be administered in one session. The exam will last approximately 165 minutes and include the **Listening Comprehension, Careful Reading, Note-taking and Writing,** and **Independent Writing** parts. The points allocated to each part and the time allowed are given in Table 1.

Table 1 *METU-SFL EPE content*

Part	Questions	Points	Time
Listening Comprehension	20	30	~40 minutes
Careful Reading	24	36	70 minutes
Vocabulary items	8	4	
Note-taking and Writing	1 Task	10	~25 minutes
Independent Writing	1 Task	20	30 minutes
Total		100	~165 minutes

SCORING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The Listening Comprehension and Careful Reading parts comprise multiple-choice type questions, which are machine scored. There is no wrong answer penalty in these parts.

The Note-taking and Writing and Independent Writing parts comprise one essay-type question each. The responses to these questions are scored by a group of experienced raters in accordance with a rating scale. The raters go through standardization sessions before grading the test-takers' papers. Each paper is graded by two raters, and by a third rater if there need be.

Announcing METU-SFL EPE Scores

The scores will be announced on the following web page: <https://epe.metu.edu.tr>

Those who would like to receive an Exam Score Report may apply to the Registrar's Office after the exam results are officially announced.

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

The listening section of the examination tests your ability to understand slightly to moderately complex, neutral-to-formal communication, and ideas spoken at a slow-to-normal speech rate.

In this section of the examination, you are expected to demonstrate your ability to

- understand spoken language on both familiar and unfamiliar topics from social, academic or vocational life,
- understand main ideas, supporting details, and implied meanings in texts on both concrete and abstract topics, spoken in standard English,
- understand extended speech and complex lines of argument clearly signposted by discourse markers,
- identify attitude, mood, tone, or viewpoints,
- understand paraphrasing, and
- understand meaning based on rhythm, intonation, and stress.

Listening Summary: 8-9 Talks; 20 Questions			
Types of talks	Duration	Number of Questions	Points
Brief Talks	~1 minute each	4	30
Conversation(s)	~4 minutes	4	
Lectures	~5 minutes each	12	

Brief Talks

Task	Brief talk is an audio recording. You will listen to a monologue and answer a question.
Purpose	To assess the test taker's ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ understand the topic / the main idea of a talk▪ understand the purpose of a talk▪ predict the content of a talk
Length of each episode	~1 minute
Number of episodes	4
Number of questions in each episode	1
Question type	Multiple choice with three options
Weighting	1.5 points for each correct response

Brief Talk

Sample script 1:

We've seen it all in documentaries and dramas. The Viking Age begins as groups of Vikings leap ashore from their long-ships, in a lightening raid against defenseless people. And they leave the foreign lands as quickly as they arrive, loaded up with slaves and booty, whatever valuables they could find in the small settlements on the shores of the British Isles. These hit-and-run attacks continued for decades. But at one point in history, those visitors from Scandinavia began to trade and negotiate on English soil. They even founded settlements there. Viking attacks were violent for sure. But stories about their contact with English towns seem oversimplified. Contemporary evidence shows that Viking involvement in social life on these islands was more significant than that depicted on the screen.

Sample question 1:

What is the topic of the talk?

- a) Vikings' motivation to attack the British Isles
- b) The relations between the Vikings and the British
- c) Britain's reaction to violent attacks by the Vikings

Answer:

- a) The text mentions the outcomes of the attacks –slaves and booty– which may be taken as sources of motivation. However, as one listens, the story evolves and it becomes clear that there is more in the text than just the attacks. (X)
- b) The text starts with descriptions of Viking attacks, then talks about how Vikings become involved in social life in England. This option gives a general statement which is the topic of the talk. (✓)
- c) There is no mention of how Britain reacted to Viking attacks in the text. (X)

Brief Talk

Sample script 2:

Asteroids are our oldest and most numerous cosmic neighbors. Teams of scientists across the globe are searching for these objects, discovering new ones every day, steadily mapping near-Earth space. And the paths of some asteroids can now be predicted with incredible precision. Now, it has only been within my lifetime that asteroids have been considered a credible threat to our planet. And since then, there's been a focused effort underway to discover and catalogue these objects. In 2010, a historic milestone was reached. Astronomers discovered over 90 percent of asteroids bigger than one kilometre across — objects capable of massive destruction to Earth. But the job's not done yet. An object of 140 meters or bigger could decimate a medium-sized country. So far, we've only found 25 percent of those. So we must keep searching the sky for near-Earth asteroids. If we found a hazardous asteroid with significant early warning, we could nudge it out of the way. Unlike earthquakes, hurricanes, or volcanic eruptions, an asteroid impact can be precisely predicted and prevented. What we need to do now is map near-Earth space. We must keep searching the sky.

Sample question 2:

What is the purpose of the talk?

- a) To warn against the danger of an approaching asteroid
- b) To explain the recent advances in predicting the paths of asteroids
- c) To highlight the need to track and divert hazardous asteroids

Answer:

- a) The text mentions asteroids in general, it does not concentrate on one asteroid only. Moreover, there is more information in the text than just informing about a danger. (X)
- b) The text merely states that the paths of the asteroids can be predicted; it does not explain how. (X)
- c) The text makes warnings about the possible effect of a collision of an asteroid with the Earth and that we should act to prevent such a collision. (✓)

Conversations

Task	<p>Conversation is an audio recording. You will listen to a dialogue between two people and answer questions.</p>		
Purpose	<p>To assess the test taker's ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ follow lines of argument ▪ understand why someone says something ▪ understand a speaker's attitude / point of view ▪ understand meaning that is not explicitly stated ▪ understand the main reasons for and against an idea ▪ understand advice and instructions ▪ understand problem-solution and cause-effect relationships ▪ recognize emphasis through intonation and stress ▪ distinguish between fact and opinion ▪ identify bias 		
Length of each episode	~4 minutes	or	~2 minutes
Number of episodes	1		2
Number of questions in each episode	4		2
Question type	Multiple choice with three options		
Weighting	1.5 points for each correct response		

Conversation

Sample script 3:

1 **Jason:** Hey Karen.
2 **Karen:** Hey Jason... You look upset. What happened?
3 **Jason:** Oh, Professor Higgs announced the grades yesterday.
4 **Karen:** And?
5 **Jason:** I got a C minus.
6 **Karen:** Um. Sorry to hear that. But C minus isn't so bad, is it?
7 **Jason:** I guess. But you know, I think I deserved a better grade. I studied really hard
8 and fulfilled every course requirement as he wanted. You know ... I did all the
9 weekly readings and wrote my reflections. My mid-term grades were off-the-charts.
10 I got over 80 on both exams. We completed the final group project, and it was
11 terrific. We prepared this amazing report on the geological features of the Lycian
12 canyon. I even did the stupid bonus mini-project. It is completely unfair; you know...
13 **Karen:** Umm. What are you going to do about this?
14 **Jason:** I am planning to call him and make an appointment. Do you think that will
15 work?
16 **Karen:** Umm, but Professor Higgs prefers to receive queries via email. He made a
17 specific note about this on the course syllabus and it says "all questions and
18 requests via email!"
19 **Jason:** Email? What if I have questions that I cannot ask in an email?
20 **Karen:** Then, we need to go to his assistant's office. But I think this can only be
21 solved by Professor Higgs himself.
22 **Jason:** Yeah. I guess you're right.
23 **Karen:** I think you should stick to the suggestion given on the course syllabus.
24 **Jason:** Yeah that would be the best way.

Conversation

Sample questions 3-4:

3. Why does Jason mention the course requirements?

- a) To complain that he could barely fulfill them
- b) To show that his performance was very good
- c) To tell that the workload was doable

4. What advice does Karen give to Jason?

- a) To e-mail the professor
- b) To call the professor
- c) To go to his assistant's office

Answers:

3.

- a) Starting from line 7, Jason states that he studied hard and managed to fulfill the course requirements. (X)
- b) Starting from line 9, Jason tells Karen how successful his studies were. (✓)
- c) There is nothing in Jason's speech that implies the work was either easy or difficult. (X)

4.

- a) In line 16, Karen mentions the professor's note about contact preference on the syllabus, which is e-mail. In line 23, she recommends Jason to follow what is written in the course syllabus. (✓)
- b) In line 16, Karen mentions the professor's note about contact preference on the syllabus, which is e-mail. (X)
- c) Starting from line 20, Karen says that Jason's problem can only be solved by the professor himself, which again takes us back to contact by e-mail. (X)

Lectures

Task	<p>Lecture is an audio recording. You will listen to a monologue and answer questions.</p>
Purpose	<p>To assess the test taker's ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ follow topic development ▪ understand the main points / details of a talk ▪ distinguish between main and specific ideas in a talk ▪ understand why someone says something ▪ understand a speaker's attitude / point of view ▪ understand meaning that is not explicitly stated ▪ understand main reasons for and against an idea ▪ recognize emphasis through intonation and stress ▪ recognize that a speaker is clarifying points, paraphrasing, summarizing, or repeating ideas ▪ recognize generalizations and their supporting ideas
Length of each episode	~5 minutes
Number of episodes	3
Number of questions in each episode	4
Question type	Multiple choice with three options
Weighting	1.5 points for each correct response

Lecture

Sample script 4

1 In 1845, Ireland's vast potato fields were struck by an invasive fungal disease that rapidly
2 infested this staple crop. The effect was devastating. One million people died of famine,
3 and over a million more were forced to leave Ireland. Nowadays, we avoid such
4 agricultural catastrophes with the help of pesticides. These are a range of manmade
5 chemicals that control insects, unwanted weeds, funguses, rodents, and bacteria that
6 may threaten our food supply. They've become an essential part of our food system.

7 As populations have grown, monoculture, I mean, single crop farming, has helped us feed
8 people very efficiently. But it has also left our food vulnerable to extensive attack by
9 pests. In turn, we've become more dependent on pesticides. Today, we annually shower
10 over 5 billion pounds of pesticides across the Earth to control these unwanted visitors.
11 The battle against pests, especially insects, has marked agriculture's long history.

12 Records from thousands of years ago suggest that humans actively burned some of their
13 crops after harvest to rid them of pests. There's even evidence from ancient times that
14 we recruited other insects to help. In 300 A.D., Chinese farmers specially bred ferocious
15 predatory ants in orange orchards to protect the trees from other bugs. Later, as large-
16 scale farming spread, we began sprinkling arsenic, lead, and copper treatments on crops.
17 But these were incredibly toxic to humans as well.

18 As our demand for more, safer produce increased, so did the need for effective chemicals
19 that could control pests on a grander scale. This ushered in the era of chemical pesticides.
20 In 1948, a Swiss chemist named Paul Hermann Müller was awarded a Nobel Prize for his
21 discovery of dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, also known as DDT. This new molecule had
22 unparalleled power to control many insect species until the 1950s, when insects became
23 resistant to it. Worse, the chemical actually drove dramatic declines in bird populations,
24 poisoned water sources, and was eventually found to cause long-term health problems in
25 humans.

26 By 1972, DDT had been banned in the United States, and yet traces still linger in the
27 environment today. Since then, chemists have been searching for alternatives. With each
28 new wave of inventions, they've encountered the same obstacle - rapid species evolution.

29 As pesticides destroy the pest populations, they leave behind only the most resistant
30 individuals. These then pass on their pesticide-resisting genes to the next generation.
31 That's led to the rise of super bugs, such as the Colorado potato beetle, which is resistant
32 to over 50 different insecticides. Another downside is that other bugs get caught in the
33 crossfire. Some of these are helpful predators of plant pests or vital pollinators, so erasing
34 them from agriculture wipes out their benefits, too.

Lecture

Sample questions 5-8:

5. What led to the loss of the main food source in Ireland in 1845?

- a) A harsh winter
- b) A disease
- c) An increase in pest population

6. Which of the methods was used in the battle against pests after large scale farming began?

- a) Breeding predatory ants
- b) Burning wide areas of croplands
- c) Sprinkling arsenic on crops

7. What was Paul Müller awarded the Nobel Prize for?

- a) His classification of harmful insect species
- b) His description of rapid species evolution
- c) His discovery of a very effective pesticide

8. Why does the speaker mention the Colorado Potato Beetle?

- a) To exemplify a species unaffected by a wide range of insecticides
- b) To explain how a certain species population decreased over time
- c) To name one of the 50 different superbugs

Answers:

5. b (lines 1-2)

6. c (lines 15-16)

7. c (lines 20-21)

8. a (lines 32-33)

LISTENING PRACTICE

To access the audio file, click on this link:

<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/listening-practice-audio.mp3>

Brief Talks

For items 1-3, you will listen to three one-minute talks and a question related to each. As you listen, mark the alternative that answers the question or completes the statement. Before you listen to each talk, you will be given 15 seconds to look at the three alternatives.

1. What is the main point of the talk?

- a) English will continue to be a global language.
- b) We cannot know definitely which language we will speak in the future.
- c) Fluency in Latin used to be a common standard long ago but not now.

2. What is the purpose of the talk?

- a) To compare graphene with other materials
- b) To give instructions on how to make graphene
- c) To explain the general features of graphene

3. What is the main point of the talk?

- a) Chimpanzees are not social learners.
- b) Chimpanzees imitate others' behaviors.
- c) Chimpanzees cannot use advanced instruments.

Conversation

For items 4-7, you will listen to a conversation between two students. As you listen, mark the alternatives that answer the questions or complete the statements. Now, you have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

4. How are Tom and Janet going to reserve a time slot at the lab?

- a) By using the department website
- b) By talking to the lab assistants face to face
- c) By filling in the time table at the lab door

5. How do they decide to manage the background reading materials?

- a) They share the workload equally.
- b) Tom reads one book; Janet reads the rest.
- c) Each one reads all materials.

6. Why does Janet mention Kimberly?

- a) To emphasize that they should not copy and paste from original texts
- b) To criticize Kimberly for not properly paraphrasing the texts
- c) To remind Tom that anyone may fail the course whatever they do

7. What is Tom's attitude towards the project?

- a) Cautious
- b) Sarcastic
- c) Unenthusiastic

Lecture

For items 8-11, you will listen to part of a lecture on externalities, a concept in economics. As you listen, mark the alternatives that answer the questions or complete the statements. Now, you have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

8. The factory example shows that negative externalities occur when _____.

- a) production has adverse effects on the whole society
- b) consumers have to bear the extra cost of production
- c) environmental laws lead to a decrease in production

9. As a solution to the negative externality in the example, the speaker proposes _____.

- a) decreasing the prices of products by 20%
- b) lowering the taxes on factory products
- c) making the manufacturers pay the extra cost

10. As a positive externality generated by education, the speaker mentions _____.

- a) better decision-making in voting
- b) higher living standards in the society
- c) higher productivity in manufacturing

11. The speaker talks about 'the neighbor's dog' in order to _____.

- a) suggest a new perspective to define the concept of externality
- b) show how an externality changes based on the situation
- c) evaluate the positive effects of an externality

Listening Practice Answers

1.	B
2.	C
3.	A
4.	B
5.	C
6.	A
7.	C
8.	A
9.	C
10.	A
11.	B

CAREFUL READING

The reading section of the examination tests your ability to understand written texts that are commonly encountered in academic contexts.

In this section of the examination, you are expected to demonstrate your ability to

- read with a large degree of independence, adapting your style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes,
- scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details,
- quickly identify the relevance of information in texts on a wide range of topics, deciding whether a close study is worthwhile,
- understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints, and
- understand a wide range of vocabulary.

Careful Reading	
Reading passages	4 long passages
Purposes of reading	Careful Reading
Number of questions	24 comprehension questions (1.5 points each) 8 vocabulary questions (0.5 points each)
Total points	40

Careful Reading

Task	The reading texts are taken from journals, books, magazines, and newspapers usually dealing with academic/semi-academic topics, written for a non-specialist audience. You will read 4 long texts and answer 6 questions for each text. There will be a total of 8 vocabulary questions (2 questions in each text).	
Reading skills & strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding main/specific ideas in a text ▪ Understanding text organization ▪ Recognizing significant points and arguments ▪ Understanding problem and solution relationships ▪ Understanding cause and effect relationships ▪ Understanding differences and similarities between different points of view ▪ Recognizing emphasis ▪ Understanding the writer's reasons for saying something ▪ Recognizing repetition, paraphrasing, and parallelism between ideas ▪ Understanding inferred meaning ▪ Recognizing the writer's point of view 	
Length of texts	800 - 1100 words	
Number of texts	4	
Number of questions in each text	Comprehension Questions 6 items	Vocabulary Questions 2 items
Total number of questions	24 items	8 items
Question types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main / Specific idea questions ▪ Text organization questions ▪ Text function questions ▪ Critical reading questions ▪ Writer's tone/attitude questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Choosing the correct definition or synonym for the given word
Question formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multiple Choice ▪ Matching ▪ Multiple Matching ▪ Text Insertion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multiple Choice
Weighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1.5 points for each correct response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0.5 points for each correct response

Note that the samples given here are parts of larger texts.

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample 1:

Science has learned a good deal in recent years about the habits and requirements of introverts. It has even learned, by means of brain scans, that introverts process information differently from other people. If you are behind the curve on this important matter, be reassured that you are not alone. Introverts may be common, but they are also among the most misunderstood and aggrieved groups possibly all around the world...I know. My name is Jonathan, and I am an introvert.

Sample question:

Choose the statement that best summarizes the paragraph.

- a) Their brain scans show us that introverts handle information in a manner peculiar to themselves.
- b) Although there is plenty of scientific data about introverts, the misconceptions about them make them suffer.
- c) Being an introvert is so common that introverts do not need to feel alone and should be able to fit into their social environments.

Answer:

- a) The idea given in this option is correct, but it is not the summary of the paragraph. The following lines in the paragraph provide more crucial information. (X)
- b) This option provides the most important information in a brief manner. (✓)
- c) That introverts are common is mentioned in the text, but the second part of the sentence is not correct according to the paragraph. (X)

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample 2:

Mass migration has produced a giant worldwide economy all its own, which has accelerated so fast during the past few years that the figures have astounded the experts. This year, remittances – the cash that migrants send home – through banks is set to exceed \$232 billion, nearly 60% higher than the number just four years ago. Of that, about \$166.9 billion goes to poor countries. In many of those countries, the money from migrants has now overshoot exports, and exceeds direct foreign aid from other governments since there are many people sending 40% of their income in remittances. Indeed, many experts believe that the true figure for remittances this year is probably closer to \$350 billion, since migrants are estimated to send one-third of their money using unofficial methods, including taking it home by hand. That money is never reported to tax officials, and appears on no records.

Sample question:

Choose the most suitable heading for the paragraph.

- a) The negative effects of remittances on the receiving countries
- b) The reason for the difficulty in estimating the true figures of remittances
- c) Ways of making the most of remittances for receiving countries

Answer:

- a) There is no mention of any effect of the money sent home. (X)
- b) The whole paragraph is about the amount of money sent home, and the last two sentences make it clear why it is difficult to estimate the correct amount of remittances. (✓)
- c) Making the most of remittances refers to how that money is spent in receiving countries. There is no mention of that in the text. (X)

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample 3:

What is introversion? In its modern sense, the concept goes back to the 1920s and the psychologist Carl Jung. Today it is a mainstay of personality tests. Introverts are not necessarily shy. Shy people are anxious or frightened or self-criticizing in social settings; introverts generally are not. Rather, introverts are people who find other people tiring. Extroverts, on the other hand, are energized by people, and they often seem bored by themselves, in both senses of the expression. Leave an extrovert alone for two minutes and he will reach for his cell phone. In contrast, after an hour or two of being socially "on," we introverts need to turn off and recharge. It isn't a sign of depression. For introverts, to be left with our thoughts is as restorative as sleeping, as nourishing as eating. Our motto is "I'm okay, you're okay—in small doses."

Sample question:

From the passage we understand that after socializing for some time, introverts ____.

- a) feel depressed and need sleep
- b) feel that they make people tired
- c) want to remain by themselves

Answer:

- a) Towards the end of the passage, the writer says "it isn't a sign of depression". (X)
- b) In the fourth line, the writer says that introverts find other people tiring. (X)
- c) Towards the end of the passage, the writer says that introverts need some time alone to refresh themselves. (✓)

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample 4:

Folkert Haanstra, an arts-education professor who was among the advisors of the Dutch study, says the impact of digitalization is clearest outside of the classroom, where children are spending more time with technology than with drawing, and therefore have less practice. “Moreover,” he said via email, “the quality of the digital images they can make on electronic devices is probably more satisfying, and the drawings look more professional than the drawings they can make by hand.”

Prioritizing technology usage as a vehicle for learning in general has also diminished an emphasis on handmade art. According to researcher Elisabeth Soep, “when school budgets shrink and employment opportunities demand knowledge of technology and related skills, the arts slip easily into optional or eliminated subjects of study.” Brice Heath, a linguistic anthropologist, and Soep, an expert on youth discourse and digital-media culture, argue that the arts discipline is even more vulnerable than other non-academic programs. “All artists – especially the young – must be willing to make a leap of commitment,” the two wrote in 1998. “This step involves risks of greater variety than those required to go out for basketball or work on a neighborhood teen board – tasks that few citizens would question or devalue.”

As the priority placed on the arts in public schools diminishes and digital engagement overwhelms students’ experiences with hand-drawing, there could be more at stake than it appears. As W. G. Whitford wrote in his 1923 article, *A Brief History of Art Education in the United States*, “Without art there is an incompleteness that nothing can overcome. Through correlation and efficient cooperation, artwork becomes ‘a helping hand’, a kind of connecting link that binds all subjects to it and makes every study at school more interesting and valuable.”

Sample questions:

Match each scientist with the statement (a-d) that shows their beliefs.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| F. Haanstra: ____ | a) The idea that a great amount of time is needed to improve kids’ drawing is an exaggeration. |
| W. G. Whitford: ____ | b) Being involved in art requires great commitment. |
| | c) The way technology facilitates drawing makes electronic devices more attractive to kids. |
| | d) Art helps kids work out the relations between distinct subjects. |

Answers:

F. Haanstra: c (paragraph 1, lines 4-6)

W. G. Whitford: d (paragraph 3, lines 4-6)

Text Organization

Sample 5:

The Renaissance was an important time for artists. They developed new techniques and skills. Soon people began to admire their artistry as well as the subject of the artwork. _____. A master artist could become a highly respected member of the community. He could dictate his own terms in his work and enjoy a much higher social status than a mere craftsman. And superstar artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo became famous throughout Europe, helping create the modern image of the artist as an independent creative genius.

Sample question:

Which of the below fits best into the blank in the paragraph?

- a) Much of the art produced during the Renaissance was commissioned by wealthy families
- b) Art historians still wonder whether the Renaissance was a cultural 'advance' from the Middle Ages
- c) By the late Renaissance, artists were no longer thought of as tradesmen

Answer:

- a) The previous sentence is about the Renaissance artists (*their artistry*) and *their* artwork. In this option, the focus point is wealthy families; therefore, it does not fit the context. (X)
- b) The content preceding and following the blank is definitely about artists and art; therefore, this option does not fit the context. (X)
- c) The sentences preceding the blank express that there was a change in people's attitudes towards artists and their art. (✓)

Text Function

Sample 6:

- A In 2015, Doreetha Daniels received her associate degree in social sciences from College of the Canyon in Santa Clarita, California. But Daniels was not a typical student: She was 99 years old. In the COC press release about her graduation, Daniels indicated that she wanted to get her degree simply to better herself; her six years of school during that pursuit were a testament to her will, determination, and commitment to learning.
- B Few people pursue college degrees at such an old age, or even as mid-career professionals (though statistics indicate that increasing numbers of people are pursuing college degrees at advanced ages). Some people never really liked school in the first place, sitting still at a desk for hours on end or suffering through what seemed to be impractical courses. And almost all of us have limits on our time and finances – due to kids, social organizations, work, and more – that make additional formal education impractical or impossible.

Sample question:

How does paragraph B relate to paragraph A?

- a) It questions the motives behind Daniels' accomplishment.
- b) It justifies why people like Daniels pursue education at an advanced age.
- c) It explains why Daniels' case is hardly a mainstream practice.

Answer:

- a) Rather than questioning Daniels' motives, paragraph B gives reasons why people do not pursue degrees at an advanced age. (X)
- b) There is no justification offered in paragraph B as to why people at an advanced age do pursue education. (X)
- c) Paragraph B explains the reasons why most people, unlike Daniels, do not pursue education later in life. (✓)

Text organization

Sample 7:

One challenge in developing drugs to fight brain tumors is that agents must be able to cross the blood-brain barrier, a filtering mechanism that only allows certain types of substances to enter the brain. (I) It is not yet clear whether coibamide A would be able to cross the blood-brain barrier, an aspect the team plans to investigate in the future. (II) Marine bacteria have a potential to provide therapeutic leads with their unique chemical structures and biological activities, as illustrated by compounds such as coibamide A. (III) Ishmael said even if coibamide A itself cannot enter the brain or turns out to have adverse side effects, knowing its structure and mechanism of action can help researchers develop new drugs that mimic coibamide A's effects.

Sample question:

Which underlined sentence does not fit in the paragraph?

- a) (I)
- b) (II)
- c) (III)

Answer:

- a) This sentence follows up on the previous one, explaining how the research team plan to proceed. (X)
- b) Although the sentence includes a reference to Coibamide A at the end, the subject of the sentence is off-topic (marine bacteria). (✓)
- c) This sentence carried on the topic of crossing the blood-brain barrier and further explains how the researchers will proceed in case things gosideways. (X)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample 8:

Persuasion highlights the irrationality of human thinking. We may be living in a data-driven world, but that does not make people more logical. This is why the same people may regard an idea as absurd one day, and amazing the next. As Arthur Schopenhauer noted: "All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."

Sample question:

Which of the following does the writer support by referring to Arthur Schopenhauer in the passage?

- a) Persuasion has become easier in the data-driven world we live in.
- b) The inconsistency of human reasoning reveals itself in persuasion.
- c) What underlies persuasion is the tendency to think logically.

Answer:

- a) There is reference to the data-driven world only to explain that it doesn't help to make people more rational. (X)
- b) The stages given in Schopenhauer's words reveal the inconsistency of human thinking. (✓)
- c) Just the contrary, the author says persuasion is irrational. (X)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample 9:

Dale Carnegie once noted that the only way to get someone to do something is to get that person to want to do something. Thus, all persuasion is ultimately self-persuasion. Even if I put a gun to your head, you are still free to decide what to do, albeit admittedly somewhat constrained. Scientific studies show that we are more likely to be persuaded when requests are consistent with our values, self-image, and future goals. In other words, people are easily persuaded of that which they wanted to do in the first place. As the French philosopher Blaise Pascal noted: "People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others."

Sample question:

Which statement is true according to the passage?

- a) Outside influences play the most significant role in persuasion.
- b) People are easier to persuade if the offer is in line with their ideas.
- c) It is risky to try to persuade people to do things they avoid doing.

Answer:

- a) This option conflicts with the ideas given in the first two lines of the passage. (X)
- b) The writer states in the second half of the passage that people have a tendency to accept an idea if it is line with their own values. (√)
- c) The statement might be true but there is no information about it in the passage. (X)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample 10:

Are introverts oppressed? I would have to say so. For one thing, extroverts are over-represented in politics, a profession in which only the garrulous are really comfortable. Look at George W. Bush. Look at Bill Clinton. They seem to come fully to life only around other people. With the possible exception of Ronald Reagan, whose fabled aloofness and privateness were probably signs of a deep introverted streak, introverts are not considered "naturals" in politics. Extroverts therefore dominate public life. This is a pity. If we introverts ran the world, it would no doubt be a calmer, saner, more peaceful sort of place. As one introvert is supposed to have said, "Don't you know that four fifths of all our troubles in this life would disappear if we would just sit down and keep still?" And, "If you don't say anything, you won't be called on to repeat it." The only thing a true introvert dislikes more than talking about himself is repeating himself.

With their endless appetite for talk and attention, extroverts also dominate social life, so they tend to set expectations. In our extrovertist society, being outgoing is considered normal and therefore desirable, a mark of happiness, confidence, leadership. Extroverts are seen as bighearted, warm and empathic. "People person" is a compliment whereas introverts are described with words like "guarded," "loner," "reserved," "self-contained," or "private"—narrow, ungenerous words, words that suggest emotional parsimony and smallness of personality. Female introverts, I suspect, must suffer especially. In certain circles, a man can still sometimes get away with being what they used to call a strong and silent type; introverted women, lacking that alternative, are even more likely than men to be perceived as timid, withdrawn or egotistical.

Sample question:

It can be inferred from the passage that introverts_____ .

- a) are more likely to be seen among females with an egotistical personality
- b) may improve their social status despite others' opinions of them
- c) keep facing hardships due to the attitudes of the extroverts

Answer:

- a) In the second half of the second paragraph, there is reference to female introverts only to claim that female introverts suffer more than male introverts. (X)
- b) On the contrary, the text says, for example in politics, extroverts are overrepresented (lines 1-2). (X)
- c) In both paragraphs, there is reference to this idea, but mostly in paragraph 1, lines 6-7, paragraph 2, lines 1-6. (✓)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample 11:

No creature has a reputation more fearsome than the great white shark. Despite all we have learned about them, including how they really do not have much interest at all in eating us, movies and documentaries still show them as “machines” that do little more than “swim, attack and eat.” And that’s not to mention the various video games where your goal as a great white is to bite everything in sight in as little time as possible.

But what do great white sharks really do all day? It is easy for the mythology of these predators to overshadow their real biology because it is difficult to spend an extended amount of time following and observing animals that live beneath the waves and can cross entire oceans. We mostly see these sharks when they’re near the surface, and, while ingenious, strategies like fitting cameras on the animals have literally been limited in scope and what can be recorded.

Thanks to some documentaries, Guadalupe Island off the coast of Mexico has become known as a great white shark hotspot. Yet, despite the abundance of sharks and observers – including cage divers – in the area, no one has seen how these sharks go about getting their meals. We have seen in these documentaries that the great white sharks of Guadalupe Island feed on the fur seals, elephant seals, and sea lions that loll about in the shallow waters there. Sharks have been seen feasting on the mammals at the surface. But we have never seen their initial strikes. Given that the waters around Guadalupe Island rapidly drop off from the shoreline, researcher Gregory Skomal and his colleagues think that the sharks are attacking their prey at depth and follow the carcass up the water column as it bobs to the surface.

Sample question:

It can be inferred from the passage that our knowledge of the great white sharks’ behavior is limited because of _____.

- a) the insufficient number of sharks
- b) our inability to fit cameras onto them
- c) the nature of their habitat

Answer:

- a) From the third paragraph, line 2, we understand that there are quite a number of sharks around Guadeloupe island. (X)
- b) From the second paragraph, lines 5 and 6, we understand that it is possible to fit cameras onto the sharks, though limited in number. (X)
- c) From the second paragraph, lines 2 and 3, and third paragraph, lines 6 and 7, we understand that it is hard to observe sharks when they are in deep sea. (✓)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample 12:

The desire to be perfect is something most of us have felt at some point in our lives. Often, having high standards can drive success, but for some people, diligence and motivation can shift into perfectionism, a sorely misunderstood personality trait that can have dangerous consequences. There is no fixed way of diagnosing perfectionism. However, many studies measure it using the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS). The scale also distinguishes among three different kinds of perfectionism. “Self-oriented” perfectionists set themselves high goals in their work and relationships. They can often experience anxiety from losing to a competitor, failing at a test, or not getting a bonus at work. “Other-oriented” perfectionists hold those around them to exceptionally high standards. They are very critical and judgmental of others and risk social rejection and relationship problems. Finally, there are “socially prescribed” perfectionists, who feel immense pressure from others to be perfect, while also needing their approval. As a consequence, their self-esteem takes a hit on a daily basis. Being a socially prescribed perfectionist puts one in a real battle involving lots of negative emotions, like guilt and shame.

Sample question:

Based on the information in the text, who can be described as an “other-oriented” perfectionist?

- a) Sam, who feels extreme pressure to be the best player on the school’s football team and worries that other people might reject him if he is unable to score a goal
- b) Mary, who expects her eight-year-old son to be the best student in his class and gets very angry when he doesn’t get the top grade in any of the exams
- c) Nate, who works day and night on an architectural project, and gets depressed when another person’s project is better than his own

Answer:

- a) Sam fits the description of a “socially prescribed” perfectionist. (X)
- b) Mary fits the description of an “other-oriented” perfectionist because she holds others to high standards (her son) and gets critical when they fail. (✓)
- c) Nate fits the description of a “self-oriented” perfectionist. (X)

Vocabulary Questions

These items test your ability to recognize words that are commonly used in texts for a general audience and entry-level academic texts. Each question requires you to select the best alternative that is closest in meaning to, or provides the correct definition of the given word. There are 8 vocabulary items (2 items in each reading text), worth a total of 4 points (0.5 points for each item).

These items are bold and underlined in the texts so you can easily spot them. You cannot usually guess these words from context. Therefore, the best strategy to be ready for this type of question is to build your vocabulary.

How to prepare for the Vocabulary Section

What Vocabulary?

In academic studies, for adequate comprehension of texts, you need to understand between 95% and 98% of the words in the text (Laufer, 1989¹; Nation, 2006²; Schmitt et al., 2011³). This would require knowledge of 8,000 – 9,000 word families (Nation, 2006²). The knowledge of the 2,800 Core General English Words listed in the *New General Service List* (NGSL) and 960 Academic Words listed in the *New Academic Word List* (NAWL), both of which are available online, helps you understand about 92% of the texts. This implies that the more you expand your vocabulary knowledge, the more easily you will be able to understand written and spoken texts used in academic studies.

How to Study?

A language user should bear in mind that vocabulary learning is incremental, i.e., it happens gradually and in time. Also, it is well-established that learning words requires several exposures, that is, words “need to be met many times in order to be learned” (Schmitt, 2010: 20-21⁴). Paying special attention to the unknown words in the texts you read or listen to and keeping a record of those words could help improve your vocabulary knowledge.

Moreover, knowledge of derivations of words could help expand your vocabulary knowledge. To illustrate, when you learn the word *nation*, you can note down its derivations (*national, nationally, nationalism, international* etc.). Knowledge of polysemous words (words with more than one meaning) could also help improve your vocabulary knowledge. To illustrate, when you learn the word *chip*, you can note down that it could mean a *chip* of wood, a computer *chip* or a potato *chip* (Schmitt, 2010⁴).

¹ Laufer, B. (1989). What percentage of text-lexis is essential for comprehension? In C. Lauren & M. Nordman (Eds.), *Special language: From humans to thinking machines* (pp. 316–323). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

² Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63, 59–82.

³ Schmitt, N. Jiang, X. & Grabe, W. (2011). The percentage of words known in a text and reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95, 26-43.

⁴ Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

You can refer to the following lists¹ to improve your word knowledge:

K1 – first thousand words (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/k1.pdf>)

K2 – second thousand words (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/k2.pdf>)

K3 – third thousand words (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/k3.pdf>)

K4 – fourth thousand words (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/k4.pdf>)

K5 – fifth thousand words (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/k5.pdf>)

K6 – sixth thousand words (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/k6.pdf>)

New Academic Word List (<https://epe.metu.edu.tr/docs/new-academic-word-list.pdf>).

¹ Nation, I.S.P. (2017). The BNC/COCA word family lists. Retrieved from <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/lals/resources/vocabulary-lists>

Browne, C., Culligan, B. & Phillips, J. (2013). The New Academic Word List. Retrieved from <http://www.newgeneralservicelist.org/nawl-new-academic-word-list>

Vocabulary Questions

Sample 13:

Part of the difficulty in pinpointing perfectionism is that the line between having high standards and being a perfectionist is very blurred. The difference between someone who sets high goals and someone who is a perfectionist comes at the time of success or failure. For instance, **diligent** people will appreciate any success, and will adapt their goals when they fail. They understand that mistakes may occur, but this does not discourage them. People with high standards will be able to put in just enough effort for a strategic benefit. A perfectionist, on the other hand, will take much less pleasure from success. Even a perfect score will be met with a sense of pressure that they need to keep up this level of success or that the goalposts need to be placed further away.

A massive study published earlier this year leaves no doubt that perfectionist tendencies are on the rise. Curran and Hill analyzed data from 41,000 students and discovered increases in all dimensions of perfectionism. So what has caused this upward trend? Perfectionism does have a genetic aspect. When Carmen Iranzo at La Fe University Hospital analyzed the DNA of 258 pairs of twins, she was able to calculate that genes accounted for between 11 and 56 per cent of the variability in perfectionism among people. The team also found that a person's environment influences whether perfectionism will **emerge**. It is these environmental factors that have changed in recent decades. "There are new pressures today that young people in the past were not exposed to," says Curran.

Sample questions:

The word "**diligent**" in the passage is closest in meaning to ____.

- a) having or showing creativity
- b) being able to see things as they really are
- c) working hard with care and effort

The word "**emerge**" in the passage is closest in meaning to ____.

- a) deepen
- b) appear
- c) decline

Answers:

diligent: c (working hard with care and effort)

emerge: b (appear)

READING PRACTICE: Careful Reading

Mark the alternative that best answers the questions or completes the statements about the text.

- A** Cast your eyes over a Japanese newspaper, fashion magazine or manga story and you may find a new kind of ‘superhero’. They are smiling and handsome as they play swordfight over breakfast or take a bike ride together in the park. The father and child may even be dressed in stylish matching outfits. They are sympathetic and understanding, and they will happily do the cooking and housework. These are the ikumen: a combination of the word ikuji (childcare) and ikemen (a strong man) – a stark contrast to the older stereotypes of the **remote**, workaholic father. The term was first devised in the 2000s, and in 2010 the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare launched the national Ikumen Project to promulgate the idea as a way of encouraging greater paternal involvement in family life. The idea soon caught on, and today ikumen can be seen throughout Japanese popular culture. But does this trend really represent significant progress in gender equality? Or do the glossy photo-shoots simply add a sparkle and sheen to a superficial change in attitudes, while women still shoulder most of the family responsibilities?
- B** In years gone by, the Japanese father’s primary role was considered to be that of the bread winner. These ‘salarymen’ were devoted to their company, working long hours to climb the corporate ladder and provide financial security to the family. “Utter commitment to one’s work represented the apotheosis of manliness”, writes Hannah Vassallo, who recently published an anthropological study of Japanese fathers for a book, *Cool Japanese Men*. Japan, of course, was not alone in these views. But even in the 1980s the average man spent fewer than 40 minutes interacting with their children on the average workday – and that was often during a family meal. According to one observational study, some men could not even make tea or locate their own clothes without their wife’s assistance. When the father did interact with his children, he often commanded respect, even fear – a fact reflected in the common saying “jishin, kaminari, kaji, oyaji” – “earthquake, thunder, fire and father”.
- C** _____. They made it much harder for women to maintain a career after childbirth, for instance, leading many to become increasingly disenchanted with the concept of marriage. The result was that they started marrying later, or not at all – contributing to the now infamous dip in Japan’s birth rate. The 1980s also saw a rise in cases of severe childhood depression, which some linked to the lack of paternal support. Even so, change was slow. In 2002, for instance, just 0.33% of eligible men took paternity leave after the birth of a child. One survey, from 2008, reported that a third of men would have preferred to spend more time with their children – but they worried that their bosses would disapprove of the time taken off work.
- D** The government’s Ikumen Project was meant to **remedy** this situation, generating “a societal movement whereby men are able to become proactively involved in childcare”. It provided symposia and workshops, and fathers were also given the ‘Work-life Balance Handbook’ to help them juggle the competing demands of the office and the home. Unlike previous campaigns to increase paternal engagement, the Ikumen Project painted the father as a heroic figure, emphasizing his masculinity and sexual allure; one of its posters depicted one man tearing off his suit and shirt, Superman-like, to reveal the project’s logo on a t-shirt underneath, with the slogan “Ikumen strength for society”. The implication was that these ‘heroes’ were not just protecting their family; by nurturing the next generation of workers, they were helping to save the country. Thanks to its connotations with the ikemen strongmen, the term was generally well received. “Everyone in Japan would be familiar with the word ikemen,” says Vassallo. “And I think that’s how ikumen was born and gained any traction – it sounds a lot better than the previous words for a caring father that existed in Japanese before that point.”

- E** You can now find magazines like *Father's Quarterly Japan* advertising father-child matching outfits and family photoshoots alongside its celebrity interviews; it even held a Mr. Ikumen pageant. Emotionally sensitive ikumen are the romantic leads in TV comedies and there is even a manga series – *Ikumen!* – that explores the trials and tribulations of 21-year-old Midorikawa Hiroya, a househusband raising his daughter while his wife works. In a stark contrast to the old-fashioned salaryman, Hiroya's sense of fulfilment and self-worth stems from his relationship with his daughter – and his ikumen status helps protect him from the typical stigma attached to unemployed men. In some strips, the women near to Hiroya and his friends blush with desire as they see the ikumen fathers playing with their children.
- F** As a marketing campaign, the Ikumen Project has therefore been a great success, sparking some important discussions about the ways that fathers are portrayed. That said, the Project should not mask the issues that can hold back gender equality. Many women, for example, feel resentful that men are being treated as heroes for taking a fair share of very routine jobs. So although they may repeat the phrase “ikumen over ikemen” – and express admiration for the caring fathers they encounter – they also wonder why their own efforts are not being recognized to the same degree. On a different but related note, Brigitte Steger from Cambridge University points out that Japanese law still does not recognize the equal standing of each parent in cases of divorce. Overall, Japan still remains very low on the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development's rankings of gender equality.

1. In paragraph A, what does the writer convey about the Ikumen Project in Japan?

- a) The 'superhero' character it promotes is unrealistic.
- b) It is arguable whether it can resolve the issue of traditional gender roles.
- c) The government's support is inadequate to ensure its societal acceptance.

2. In paragraph B, which one is mentioned as a feature of a traditional Japanese father?

- a) Exhibiting an intimidating attitude toward his children
- b) Persistently following age-old practices within the family
- c) Expecting his spouse to be the primary caregiver for the children

3. Which one fits in paragraph C as the first sentence?

- a) Historically, these Japanese men were unwilling to be restrained by marriage.
- b) Needless to say, these attitudes had some serious consequences.
- c) The state efforts to change these gender roles were regarded inadequate by women.

4. According to paragraph D, which one is FALSE about the Ikumen Project?

- a) It differs from previous projects in its portrayal of men as patriots and caregivers.
- b) It provides various means to help men manage the challenges of work and family.
- c) It criticizes masculine traits to ensure men's engagement in childcare.

5. According to paragraph E, what effect does the manga character Hiroya have?

- a) Promoting the features identified with the ikumen in the society
- b) Strengthening the prejudice against unemployed men in the community
- c) Improving the image of the salaryman in the eyes of the public

6. What can be concluded from paragraph F?

- a) Gender equality rankings are considered important by the Japanese society.
- b) It is still early to call the Ikumen Project a success in creating gender equality.
- c) Women support the Ikumen Project as an admirable attempt toward gender equality.

7. The word "remote" in the text is closest in meaning to ____.

- a) anxious
- b) harsh
- c) distant

8. The word "remedy" in the text is closest in meaning to ____.

- a) solve a problem
- b) examine in depth
- c) turn something upside down

Reading Practice Answers:

1. B

2. A

3. B

4. C

5. A

6. B

7. C

8. A

NOTE-TAKING AND WRITING

In this section, you are expected to listen to a short lecture of about five minutes, take detailed notes, and then produce a written text of about 150 words responding to a prompt in 20 minutes. The production must reflect the content of the lecture and must not include personal views.

The objectives of this section are to assess your ability to

- take notes on a lecture,
- reformulate the notes into a written text,
- present the information from the lecture without distorting the logical relationship between ideas, and
- use accurate language so that the information presented is precise and accurate.

How to proceed with the task

Read and analyze the note-taking task sheet with note-taking prompts. Take careful and detailed notes, which may include definitions, explanations, examples, statistics, and figures. The lecture does not require specialist knowledge. Make sure you pay attention to signposts and repeated information in the lecture.

The genre of the lecture may be any of the following or a combination of them:

- historical development/chronological order
- process analysis
- definition/description with features/characteristics of concrete and abstract phenomena
- classification into types/areas/groups
- comparison/similarities between phenomena
- contrast/differences between phenomena
- causes/effects of an event/phenomena
- advantages/disadvantages of something
- problems/solutions
- argumentation for/against an idea

Expected response format and features

There are no strict rules as to the layout of your response, except that it should be a connected text; i.e. either in a paragraph or essay format. The expected length is about 150 words.

- Be sure to include the main points and details from the lecture.
- Use accurate language.
- Do not list the ideas one after the other in the form of bullet points.
- Do not include your own views.

Rating

The weighting of the task is 10 points. The following criteria are used in rating.

In their response, the test taker

- explains all three key points successfully as presented in the lecture,
- maintains the logical relationship between ideas, and
- uses correct language.

For a sample task and sample student responses please visit the following link:

<https://epe.metu.edu.tr>

INDEPENDENT WRITING TASK

In this section, you are expected to write a text of about 200 words based on a given situation. The objectives of this section are to assess your ability to

- write a coherent and well-organized text appropriate in style and content to the given situation,
- use a variety of sentence structures correctly,
- use an expanded range of vocabulary that relates to the given topic, and
- use correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

How to proceed with the writing task

Read the given situation or the prompt, and note the keywords. Think what you know about the topic given. The instructions will include some ideas that you can use in your response. You are free to use the ideas provided for you or your own ideas.

- **Do not list** the ideas one after the other.
- You should **expand and build on** the main ideas, using **correct and varied sentence structures**, and **appropriate and varied vocabulary**.

Expected response format and features

The instructions for the writing task provide information on the format of your response. In general, there are no strict rules as to the layout of your response, except that it should be a connected text; i.e. either in a paragraph or essay format. The expected length is about 200 words.

Rating

The weighting of the task is 20 points. The following criteria are used in rating.

Rhetoric

In their response, the test taker

- addresses all requirements of the task appropriately (rhetorical structure, word limit, number of points, register),
- fully develops the topic (expands on the topic, presents ideas logically and without digression), and
- organizes and presents ideas in a coherent manner.

Language Use

In their response, the test taker

- displays accurate use of a wide range of sentence structures,
- displays appropriacy and variety in word choice, and
- has good control of the mechanics of language (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling).

A response that does not address the requirements of the task deserves zero points for Writing.

INDEPENDENT WRITING TASK

PRACTICE 1

Write a response to the given situation in about 200 words. You have 30 minutes to complete the task. The assessment criteria for this task include:

- the development of ideas
- the organization and presentation of ideas
- the accurate and appropriate use of language
- the range of sentence structures and vocabulary

SHARE YOUR IDEAS WITH US!

Dear Students

The university administration has decided to make improvements to the student cafeteria, and you are invited to suggest which specific aspects of the cafeteria you think need improvement. Your suggestions will appear on the cafeteria webpage.

Thank you!

Cafeteria Administration

Now, respond to the announcement above, explaining which **two areas** should be improved to better serve the students. Support your ideas with specific reasons and/or relevant examples.

You are free to use the ideas listed below and/or your own ideas.

- meals (price, variety, etc.)
- services (service hours, etc.)
- physical conditions (hygiene, etc.)

Sample response - 1

I can make two suggestions to improve the student cafeteria: one is about the meals and the second is about the dining area. First, the variety of the meals can be improved. We are often offered the same menu for twice or three times a week, which makes eating at the cafeteria unappealing for the students. I would like to see more variety on the menus, and also that fresh ingredients be used in cooking rather than frozen vegetables or frozen meat. In addition, vegetarian, vegan, or gluten intolerant students' needs can also be catered for and more vegetable courses and gluten-free options can be added. Second, the dining area needs to be improved. As it is, it looks dull due to the worn-out furniture and fluorescent lights. Moreover, the number of tables is not enough. The tables and chairs need to be renovated and their number needs to be increased. In addition, modern lighting can be installed and maybe some mellow music can be played in the background to make this area more attractive. I believe, these improvements will uplift employees' morale as well as the students'.

(188 words)

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

- appropriately addresses the task
- sufficiently develops both ideas (in a balanced manner)
- has a slightly irrelevant concluding sentence (inclusion of the employees)
- has an appropriate register (semi-formal for posting on a website)

Language Use

- uses a range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures correctly
- uses a range of vocabulary correctly
- contains two spelling mistakes (**dinning** instead of **dining** and **fluoresent** instead of **fluorescent**)

Grading: This paper is an example of a **very good** response, and it deserves a total grade of 20 points.

Sample response - 2

Student cafeteria should improve in mainly two ways to serve better to students in the university.

Firstly, the serving time periods are insufficient. For lunch, it serves meals between 12:00 – 13:30. Most courses at the university end at 12:40, and many students don't have enough time to have lunch. For supper the cafeteria serves between 17:00 – 18:30 and this is also far less than the needed time needed for students to have their meals. 18:00 is also a very early time for supper. Many students don't get hungry at that time. Therefore, serving time period must be longer than that in order to provide food for this many students in METU campus.

Secondly, the physical conditions of the cafeteria should be improved it is a small building and in winter it doesn't provide enough protection for its users. The line always floodes outside to solve this problem an arrangement should be done to the line. Or another cafeteria must be built.

In conclusion, the administration must work on the cafeteria to make the students well-fed, comfortable and happy.

(178 words)

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

- appropriately addresses the task
- displays limited idea development (the second point)
- has an appropriate register (semi-formal for posting on a website)

Language Use

- uses a limited range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures correctly
- contains problems in sentence formation (e.g. **cafeteria should improve**) and mostly simple sentences
- contains a few instances of wrong word choice (**needed** repeated in one sentence, **users, floodes**)
- has some punctuation mistakes

Grading: This paper is an example of an **average** response, and it deserves a total grade of 12.

Sample response - 3

School cafeteria is good and cheap for students but it can be better with improvements in two areas. Firstly, meals aren't tasty and various. They should be cooked well in particularly meats and chickens. Moreover, there aren't various meals for vegan students. Because of this, they find hard to eat at the student cafeteria. Secondly service of the student cafeteria is not good. Due to lack of enough employees, there are long lines at the cafeteria in everyday. Furthermore service hours are too short for one student to get your meal in that long lines. Therefore students either arrive the cafeteria too early or they eat their meals in another place. Finally, the university administration can improve the physical conditions. The hygiene of cutlery is not reassuring. In conclusion, these problems should be fixed because students are bored of these problems.

(141 words)

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

- addresses the task
- has an appropriate register (semi-formal for posting on a website)
- displays limited idea development (includes three points instead of two, and the points need some more elaboration)
- is partly incoherent
- has a partly inappropriate concluding sentence

Language Use

- uses a limited range of simple and compound sentences
- lacks complex sentences
- has problems in word choice/use (*particularly, various, reassuring*)
- has some punctuation mistakes

Grading: This paper is an example of a **poor** response, and it deserves a total grade of 8.

INDEPENDENT WRITING TASK

PRACTICE 2

Write a response to the given situation in about 200 words. You have 30 minutes to complete the task. The assessment criteria for this task include:

- the development of ideas
- the organization and presentation of ideas
- the accurate and appropriate use of language
- the range of sentence structures and vocabulary

A professor has asked you to write about **two features of a healthy city**. You can use the following points and/or your own ideas:

- healthy physical environment
- sufficient educational opportunities
- easy access to health services

Support your ideas with explanations and/or relevant examples.

Sample response - 1

There are two features that make a city 'healthy city'. The first feature is a healthy physical environment; that is, having green areas for recreation and good infrastructure. The residents of a city need green areas for a healthy life. It is a known fact that the more time people spend in the nature, the healthier and happier they will be. The green areas, i.e. parks, lakes, etc, provide opportunities for people to do sports, get clean air, get rid of stress and socialize. A good infrastructure, i.e. good roads, and strong buildings, are also important in offering a healthy way of life. There will be less accidents and health problems due to the construction of houses, or offices.

The second important feature is having educational opportunities. In every neighborhood, there should be schools for all levels. In such a case, students will not need to travel to far away parts of the city to get to their schools. If they will easily access their schools on foot or by bikes, they will not waste time commuting, they will not risk being in the traffic, and they will not be tired before they start their lessons. I believe that this is very important for achieving a high standard in education. In conclusion, the physical environment as well as educational opportunities are important features that make a city healthy.

(228 words)

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

- addresses the requirements of the task
- uses simple and compound sentence structures correctly
- has an appropriate register (formal)
- displays coherence problems (e.g. the last sentence explaining the second feature contains an irrelevant idea)

Language Use

- displays a good range of vocabulary use (**infrastructure, socialize, residents, commuting**)
- contains a few language errors: e.g. error in if-clause (**If they will easily access...**); a S-V agreement problem (**A good infrastructure ... are..**)

Grading: This paper is an example of a **very good** response, and it deserves a total grade of 18.

Sample response - 2

A healthy city can be defined as a place where healthy people live. For a healthy city there are two important features. First one is a healthy physical environment. There will be recreational areas where people could have calm rest, ride their bikes, read books or walk their pets. This areas are green with trees, and grasses. Having green in the city is essential for planning architecture of the city. So it becomes an artistic and organized city. Secondly, sufficient educational opportunities is important because education effects our lifes directly. Being educated is very important because when the people are educated, for example, your neighbor, your grocer, everyone's life will be higher quality. There will be few problems and arguments with other people, and everyone around you will be healthy and happy. To sum up, we should have a healthy physical environment and sufficient educational opportunities for everyone to have a healthy city.

(153 words)

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

- addresses the task
- displays limited topic development (insufficient explanations and weak connection between ideas)
- displays jumpiness and irrelevance in the organization of ideas

Language Use

- displays control in forming simple sentences
- contains a faulty complex sentence (***There will be recreational areas ...***)
- displays a S-V agreement problem (***sufficient educational opportunities is ...***)
- contains spelling mistakes (***lifes, effects***)

Grading: This paper is an example of an average response, and it deserves a total grade of 10.

LISTENING PRACTICE TAPE SCRIPTS

Brief Talks Scripts

For items 1-3, you will listen to three one-minute talks and a question related to each. As you listen, mark the alternative that answers the question or completes the statement. Before you listen to each talk, you will be given 15 seconds to look at the three alternatives.

Brief Talk 1

Who would have predicted a thousand years ago that Latin would no longer be used in a thousand years' time? By hardly anybody. You know, I mean obviously Latin is still used in certain circumstances but it would not be the normal education to be fluent in Latin. If you'd said that a thousand years ago people would have said you are mad. So, in a thousand years' time, will English still be a global language? We could all be speaking Martian by then if they land and take over. You know who knows what's going to happen? To ask about the future of language is to really ask about the future of society and futurologists are just as unclear about what will happen eventually as I am about language.

Brief Talk 2

Graphene is the strongest material in the world. It is a better conductor of electrical current than silicon, and its thermal conductivity is better than copper. Graphene is transparent because it's just one atom thick. It absorbs a little light, but basically you can look through it. It's also extremely flexible. That means you can bend it like rubber, but if you try to pull it, it's like a diamond. So it's very hard. Graphene could be used to make much faster and more powerful computer chips. A layer of graphene can transmit 10 times as much data as regular silicon. So, graphene chips could send huge volumes of data around the globe at blinding speed. Graphene is also very easy to make, at least in small amounts. Just pull off a thin layer of graphite with sticky tape and repeat the procedure again and again until you're left with a layer just one atom thick.

Brief Talk 3

Now these chimpanzees are using tools, and we take that as a sign of their intelligence. But if they really were intelligent, why would they use a stick to extract termites from the ground rather than a shovel? And if they really were intelligent, why would they crack open nuts with a rock? Why wouldn't they just go to a shop and buy a bag of nuts that somebody else had already cracked open for them? Why not? I mean, that's what we do. Now the reason the chimpanzees don't do that is that they lack what psychologists and anthropologists call social learning. They seem to lack the ability to learn from others by copying or imitating or simply watching. As a result, they can't improve on others' ideas or learn from others' mistakes -- benefit from others' wisdom. And so they just do the same thing over and over and over again.

Conversation Script

For items 4-7, you will listen to a conversation between two students. As you listen, mark the alternatives that answer the questions or complete the statements. Now, you have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

Janet: Hey Tom. Good morning.

Tom: Good morning Janet.

Janet: Well, I wanted to talk to you about the project assignment. Do you have time?

Tom: Sure.

Janet: You see; I don't have a partner for the project. Do you want to work with me?

Tom: Yeah, why not.

Janet: Let's grab a cup of coffee and discuss what to do. Shall we?

Tom: Ok.

Janet: Ok. Let's look at the syllabus and check everything one by one. Now first, it says work in pairs.

Tom: Check!

Janet: This is going to be a lab experiment and a report on it. So, we need to reserve the lab. We should go to the lab at once, actually, to find a slot to reserve for our experiment. The schedules fill in quite quickly.

Tom: How do we do that?

Janet: We write our names on the timetable at the door.

Tom: Why don't we do this online?

Janet: We can try... Let's check the department website. ... Let's see... There it is: Tuesday morning is free from 10 am to 12 am. What do you think?

Tom: Uhm. I have a class then. How about Thursday morning?

Janet: I am not free on Thursday: lots of classes.

Tom: I see. Well, Friday? In the afternoon? I have time, then.

Janet: Perfect! I am free Friday afternoon. ... Oh no! The lab is full Friday afternoon. It's too late today but tomorrow let's find the lab assistants in their office and arrange a time with them. There may be free time after work hours.

Tom: Alright.

Janet: The other thing we need to settle is background reading. There are lots of articles and books to read. The professor has already given the reading list. Do you have it with you?

Tom: I think soThere it is. So many books! One, two, three, four.

Janet: Yeah, but we don't need to read each cover to cover.

Tom: Oh yeah?

Janet: It would be enough to just check the content page and read the parts related to our experiment.

Tom: Ok then, I already have this first book in my library. I can go over it and you can read the rest. Is that too much reading for you?

Janet: It is indeed. But that's not the point: the point is we both need to learn about the experiment before we go to the lab and do it. How on earth are we going to know what to do if we both don't read the materials?

Tom: Well, ok. When do you think we should finish reading?

Janet: Shall we say next week?

Tom: I'll do my best.

Janet: Don't forget to take notes while reading. So we can use them when we write the report later.

Tom: Oh, we can copy and paste bits and pieces from the texts.

Janet: No, Tom. We cannot do that. Remember what happened to Kimberly last year. She was the only person who failed the course because she used some text from the book without quoting and got an F. I wouldn't want that. We need to write everything in our own words.

Tom: But then, it is going to take ages to finish it!

Janet: Well, maybe. And about the report: We need to write a three-page report on the experiment and a reflection paper.

Tom: And how long does this reflection have to be?

Janet: It says one-page essay here in the syllabus.

Tom: Alright. If we have to ...

Janet: OK then. Maybe we should stop by and inform the professor that we'll be working together.

Tom: What? Today? Why don't we do it some other time?

Janet: Why not? The sooner the better.

Tom: Ok, well. Do you mind going on your own?

Janet: Really? Tom we are supposed to cooperate!

Lecture Script

For items 8-11, you will listen to part of a lecture on externalities, a concept in economics. As you listen, mark the alternatives that answer the questions or complete the statements. Now, you have one minute to look at the questions and the alternatives.

PAUSE 1 minute

What do pollution, education, and your neighbor's dog have in common? No, that's not a trick question. All three are actually examples of economic transactions that include externalities. When markets are functioning well, all the costs and benefits of a transaction for a good or service are absorbed by the buyer and seller. However, sometimes, costs or benefits may *spill* over to a third party not directly involved in the transaction. These spillover costs and benefits are called externalities.

OK, let's start with negative externalities. Imagine there's a factory in your town that produces widgets, a good that benefits consumers all over the world. The smokestacks at the factory, however, belch out pollution 24/7. From an economic perspective, the firm is shifting some of its cost of production to society. How? Well, in its production process the firm uses clean air – a resource it does *not* pay for – and returns polluted air to the atmosphere, which creates a potential health risk to anyone who breathes it. If the firm were paying the full cost of production, it would return clean air to the atmosphere. Instead, if society wants clean air, society must pay to clean it. So, in this case, pollution represents the shifting of some of the cost of production to society, a negative externality.

Now, the question is what can be done to correct negative externalities. Governments can play a role in reducing negative externalities by taxing goods when their production generates spillover costs. This taxation effectively increases the cost of producing such goods. The higher cost, then, better reflects the true cost of production because it includes the spillover costs of, say, pollution. So, such taxation attempts to make the producer pay for the *full* cost of production. The use of such a tax is called internalizing the externality. For example, let's assume the cost of producing the widgets noted earlier is two dollars per unit, but an additional 20 cents per unit has been shifted to society as a negative externality in the form of dirty air. The government could place a 20-cent tax on each widget produced to ensure that the firm pays the actual cost of production – which is now two dollars and twenty cents, including the cost of the negative externality. As a result of the higher cost of production, the firm will reduce its production of widgets, thus reducing the level of pollution.

Let's now turn our attention to positive externalities. When you complete high school, you'll reap the benefits of your education in the form of better job opportunities, higher productivity, and higher income. A technical degree or college education will further enhance those benefits. Although you might think you are the only one who benefits from your education, that isn't the case. The many benefits of *your* education spill over to society in general. In other words, you can generate positive externalities. For example, a well-educated society is more likely to make good decisions when electing leaders. Also, regions with a better-educated population tend to have lower crime rates.

How can we encourage positive externalities? Governments can play a role in encouraging positive externalities by providing subsidies for goods or services that generate spillover benefits. Such subsidies provide an incentive for firms to increase the production of goods that provide positive externalities. Regarding education, because the government subsidizes public education, a greater quantity of education is produced and consumed and society reaps the spillover benefits.

All in all, we can say that an externality is determined to be positive or negative based on whether costs or benefits spill over. Imagine this scenario: Your neighbor buys a dog, feeds the dog, and pays all of the expenses to care for the dog. In other words, your neighbor is bearing the explicit costs of dog ownership. Your neighbor also receives benefits from the dog, such as companionship and home security. But, what if the dog spends most of the night barking outside your bedroom window, depriving you of valuable sleep? In this case, you would be bearing some of the costs of your neighbor's dog ownership – and that would be a negative externality for you. On the other hand, let's assume your neighbor's dog doesn't keep you awake at night. Instead, Fido is perfectly quiet and only barks when suspicious looking strangers come near your homes. Now the dog is providing you with the benefit of home security without you having to share in the cost of the dog – you receive a positive externality.

To summarize, the costs and benefits of transactions for goods and services are often shared only between the producers and consumers, but sometimes costs and benefits spill over to third parties.
...(fade)

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