

How to
Master Skills for the

TOEFL

iBT

新托福考试专项进阶
——初级阅读

Reading

Basic

Timothy Hall | Arthur H. Milch | Denise McCormack | E2K

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Contents

Introduction

How to Use This Book

PART 1 Basic Comprehension

Unit 1	Vocabulary	3
	Animals / Sports / Weather / Technology	
Unit 2	Reference	25
	Science / Music / History / Economics	
Unit 3	Factual Information	47
	Social Issues / Space / Art / Geography	
Unit 4	Negative Factual Information	67
	Culture / Astronomy / Films / Physics	
Unit 5	Sentence Simplification	87
	Biology / Weather / Environment / Law	

PART 2 Making Inferences

Unit 6	Rhetorical Purpose	113
	Science / Sociology / Geography / Psychology	
Unit 7	Inference	137
	Journalism / Health Science / Government / Culture	
Unit 8	Insert Text	161
	Biography / Social Issues / Literature / Sports	

PART 3 Reading to Learn

Unit 9	Prose Summary	183
	Law / Agriculture / Health Science / Economics	
Unit 10	Fill in a Table	207
	Astronomy / History / Biology / Geology	

Vocabulary Wrap-up	227
---------------------------	-----

Actual Test	239
--------------------	-----

Contents (Answer Book)

Unit 1	Vocabulary	255
Unit 2	Reference	258
Unit 3	Factual Information	262
Unit 4	Negative Factual Information	265
Unit 5	Sentence Simplification	268
Unit 6	Rhetorical Purpose	271
Unit 7	Inference	275
Unit 8	Insert Text	278
Unit 9	Prose Summary	282
Unit 10	Fill in a Table	285
	Actual Test	288

PART

1

Basic Comprehension

In this part, the reading comprehension questions include: vocabulary, reference, factual information, negative factual information, and sentence simplification. The learning objectives of these reading comprehension questions are to identify individual words, referential relations between the words in the passage, factual information, and essential sentences.

- **Unit 1 Vocabulary**

Animals / Sports / Weather / Technology

- **Unit 2 Reference**

Science / Music / History / Economics

- **Unit 3 Factual Information**

Social Issues / Space / Art / Geography

- **Unit 4 Negative Factual Information**

Culture / Astronomy / Films / Physics

- **Unit 5 Sentence Simplification**

Biology / Weather / Environment / Law

Unit

1

Vocabulary

1 Vocabulary

Overview

■ Introduction

Vocabulary questions ask you to understand the meanings of words in the reading passage, and you then choose an identical or similar word from the list of words. A word may have more than one meaning, but you should find the word which has the closest meaning to the word in the reading passage. Each article has three to five vocabulary questions. Therefore, students should attempt to increase their vocabulary.

■ Useful Tips

- Keep in mind that the question is asking for the meaning as the word is used in the passage.
- Make the most of contextual clues, such as definition, synonym, antonym, example, and experience clues.
- Confirm that the word or phrase you have chosen still makes sense in the passage.

■ Question Types

1. The word _____ in the passage is closest in meaning to
2. The phrase _____ in the passage is closest in meaning to
3. In stating that _____, the author means that
4. Based on the information in paragraph X, which of the following best explains the term _____?

Sample iBT Question

The word **enormous** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) huge
- (B) cowardly
- (C) scary
- (D) skillful

Dinosaurs were ancient species of reptiles. They lived on Earth for 160 million years. Some dinosaurs were as small as rabbits; others were enormous. Some ate meat, and others ate plants. They disappeared about 65 million years ago. Scientists believe that they starved to death. They think the climate changed quickly and caused many plants to die.

Correct Answer

Enormous means 'extremely large in size.' In this example, there is an antonym clue, *small*, in the previous clause. So the best answer for the above question is (A), which also means 'extremely large in size.'

Skill & Drill

Definition Clues

Definition clues describe or explain a word's meaning right after the word is used. They give a definition or a restatement of the unknown word. Definition clues usually follow signal words or phrases such as *or*, *means*, *refers to*, *is*, *is called*, *is defined as*, or *which is*.

Example

A player hitting a homer, **which is to hit a home run**, is something that fans look forward to at every baseball game. It is a source of excitement when the bat swings and the ball goes sailing through the air. Sometimes the ball lands in the field. Sometimes the ball flies into the seats.

The word **homer** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) ball
- (B) bat
- (C) home run
- (D) fence

Camouflage is hiding oneself from one's enemies. Some animals do this to protect themselves from their enemies. They do it to catch food. Frogs, butterflies, and snakes are examples of such animals. They change their colors or shapes to match their surroundings. With camouflage, they look like grass, leaves, or stones. This improves their chances of survival in the wild.

1. The word **camouflage** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) disguise
- (B) challenge
- (C) disappearance
- (D) resistance

Some wild animals **hibernate**, which is to sleep through winter. They enter their dens in late fall and do not come out until spring. Before hibernating, animals eat to gain fat. This fat sustains them through winter. When they come out in spring, the animals are very thin. They are also very hungry. Hibernation enables many wild animals to survive during the cold winter when there is no food to eat.

2. The word **hibernate** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) store
- (B) sleep
- (C) migrate
- (D) awake

Synonym & Antonym Clues

To help show the meaning of an unknown word, writers sometimes use a familiar word with a similar meaning (a synonym) or a word with an opposite meaning (an antonym). A synonym clue can be found in the same sentence as the unknown word, but sometimes it may appear in another sentence. An antonym clue can usually be found in sentences that contrast each other. These sentences sometimes include signal words or phrases like *but*, *however*, *instead*, *in contrast*, *on the other hand*, *though*, *whereas*, and *some...; others...*

Example

Every business seeks **innovation**. **Now even health clubs have new ways to run their businesses.** They make use of MP3 players and downloading. Fitness enthusiasts can download workouts for a small fee. They do this instead of paying an instructor \$50 per hour. The health club can also reach more customers this way.

The word **innovation** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) introduction
- (B) rapid change
- (C) new method
- (D) technology

The inspectors went to the zoo last week. They wanted to see how the monkeys were kept. Some monkeys in the zoo were **obese**. Others were as skinny as toothpicks. The inspectors wanted to know why there was a difference. Perhaps some monkeys were stealing food from the others.

1. The word **obese** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) fat
- (B) ugly
- (C) angry
- (D) tricky

Most TV sets come with remote controls. They use infrared technology. Infrared is **imperceptible**, whereas the light from the TV screen is visible. The remote uses infrared light to send commands to the TV. The TV must have a special receiver that can read these flashes of light. Viewers can change channels and look at menus.

2. The word **imperceptible** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) touchable
- (B) treatable
- (C) believable
- (D) invisible

Example Clues

Example clues provide examples of the unknown word. The unknown word and its examples have a part-whole relationship, so the unknown word is usually a more general word which can represent its examples. The clue may be introduced, but not always, by signal words such as *include*, *for example*, *for instance*, *such as*, and *like*. The clues are not always in the same sentence.

In spring, many people suffer from **coughing, itching, sneezing, runny noses, and watery eyes**. People may think these are indications of a cold. If these **symptoms** last for a long time, they should see a doctor. It could be an allergy caused by dust, mold, or pollen. These can cause a lot of irritation.

The word **symptoms** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☒ A signs
- ☐ B symbols
- ☐ C patterns
- ☐ D phenomena

The northeast part of the United States gets the most forms of **precipitation**. The region is subject to rain, snow, and sleet. Some years, there is so much that it may damage crops. This causes many farmers to borrow money from the bank to pay for their expenses. It can also cause damage to buildings.

1. The word **precipitation** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ A changes in temperature
- ☐ B water from the sky
- ☐ C dust in the air
- ☐ D clouds above mountains

The wolverine is a **hardy** animal. It is strong, and it can live in cold temperatures. It is able to catch large animals. It lives in the forests of Canada and the United States. The wolverine is able to walk up to 100 miles per day while hunting for food. It is strong and aggressive enough even to steal food from bears.

2. The word **hardy** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ A horrible
- ☐ B angry
- ☐ C tough
- ☐ D greedy

Experience Clues

Experience clues rely on your own knowledge or experience to understand an unknown word. Many times, the text will mention something you know about, but it will not directly tell you what the word means. So you need to use your logic and reasoning skills based on your experience and common knowledge.

Digital dictionaries are very **effective** learning tools. They check spelling and word meanings. They also give synonyms. Even better, they show the words in a sentence. This helps students learn about the grammar of the word. Students can learn to use words with fewer mistakes. They become better writers this way.

The word **effective** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ (A) impressive
- ☐ (B) handy
- ☒ (C) useful
- ☐ (D) valid

Soccer has been slow to **catch on** in the U.S. This is because most people prefer to watch baseball, basketball, and football. These are American inventions. Many of them think that soccer is a sport for Europeans or South Americans. It is not a part of the USA's identity. They also do not like how the games have low scores.

1. The phrase **catch on** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ (A) get popular
- ☐ (B) be entertained
- ☐ (C) get rooted
- ☐ (D) be confusing

Clouds form when air near the ground is heated by the sun. The hot air rises in the atmosphere because it is less **dense** than the air around it. Eventually, the rising air cools. The water, at first in vapor form, condenses. It forms visible droplets. At this point, you can see the cloud.

2. The word **dense** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ (A) thick
- ☐ (B) hot
- ☐ (C) cold
- ☐ (D) light

Practice with Short Passages

- A** Read the following passage, and answer the questions.

Mollusks

Time Limit: 30 sec.

Mollusks are an important part of marine life. They have provided humans with **sustenance** for thousands of years. Mollusks include shelled creatures like clams, mussels, oysters, and snails. They all have gills that take oxygen from the water. They often live where fresh river water mixes with saltwater from the ocean. This water is **abundant** in food. These animals feed by opening their shells with a muscle called a “foot” and by passing water through their bodies. They eat nutritious plant matter and the tiny animals that live in the water around them. Other types of mollusks include squid and octopuses. These can only live in saltwater. Their “foot” has evolved into arms, called tentacles, which are used to grab large prey.



General Comprehension

1. According to the passage, where do mussels live?

(A) Where saltwater is cold
(B) Where rivers meet large seas
(C) Where freshwater is warm
(D) Where trees hang over lakes

2. According to the passage, what do gills do?

(A) Get oxygen for the mollusk
(B) Measure liquids
(C) Open the shell
(D) Feed the clam

- **sustenance (n)**
food for nourishment
- **muscle (n)**
tissue in a body that can shrink or expand
- **nutritious (a)**
efficient as food
- **matter (n)**
physical substance; stuff
- **prey (n)**
an animal that is hunted for food

On the TOEFL Test

3. The word **sustenance** in the passage is closest in meaning to

(A) cold
(B) sand
(C) food
(D) salt

4. The word **abundant** in the passage is closest in meaning to

(A) rich
(B) empty
(C) mixed
(D) polluted

- B** Read the following passage, and answer the questions.

Extreme Sports

Time Limit: 30 sec.

"Extreme sports" are new kinds of sports. They include bungee jumping, certain kinds of bicycle riding, and skateboarding. Young adults often **pursue** these sports to test their physical ability, fear, and safety. These sports often feature high speeds or dangerous stunts. They can create a "mental rush." This is the feeling the person has when the brain feels stress. Many people like this feeling. **Extreme** sports are now an important part of youth culture. Companies have begun to market products such as drinks and clothing at these sporting events because of their power to attract a young audience.



General Comprehension

1. According to the passage, why do young adults participate in extreme sports?

(A) They want to test their abilities.
 (B) They want to be physical.
 (C) They want to have fun.
 (D) They want to be safe.

2. Who else do extreme sports attract?

(A) Markets
 (B) News broadcasters
 (C) Stuntmen
 (D) Firms

- **include (v)**
to contain; to involve
- **physical (a)**
of or related to the body; bodily
- **culture (n)**
the activities and interests of people
- **market (v)**
to advertise or sell goods and services
- **audience (n)**
a group of listeners or viewers

On the TOEFL Test

3. The word **pursue** in the passage is closest in meaning to

(A) do
 (B) make
 (C) like
 (D) study

4. The word **extreme** in the passage is closest in meaning to

(A) tame
 (B) sober
 (C) intense
 (D) boring