TOEFL Listening Practice05

To Listen to the audio, please visit

→ https://english-revolution.com/toefl-audio/

NOTE: DO NOT look at the questions on the next page until after you listen. Get a pen and a piece of paper and get ready to take notes.

Questions

Part 1

1. Why does the student want to meet with the advisor?

A. She needs a job or she will lose her scholarship

B. She wants to pay off her student loans

C. She wants to sign up for the work-study program

D. She needs money in case she loses her scholarship

2. Listen again to part of the conversation. Why does Mr. Sanders say this?

A. Since the student is smart she will have no problem finding a job

B. The work-study program is only for advanced students

C. The student is making a good decision by thinking about her future

D. The student will easily be able to find a job on campus because she has good grades

3. Why does the student want to work twenty hours a week?

A. She has enough free time to work this long

B. So that she does not go into debt

C. She has to work twenty hours a week if she is in the work-study program

D. So she can make more money to pay back her loans

4. Why does Mr. Sanders mention the student's current scholarship?

A. To remind the student that it is important to maintain good grades

B. To distinguish between a scholarship and a loan

C. To remind the student that she will not have a scholarship next year

D. To emphasize that the student should work as many hours as possible

5. What does Mr. Sanders decide to do to help the student?

A. He is going to let the student work ten hours a week

B. He tells the student to discuss the job further with the job center

C. He will give the student permission to work twenty hours a week

D. He will give the job center the student's work-study form

Part 2

1. What is the lecture mainly about?

A. The importance of the discovery of Neptune

B. The geocentric versus heliocentric view of Earth

C. How ancient astronomers viewed our solar system

D. What happened after Neptune was discovered

2. Why was Copernicus' heliocentric idea not accepted until hundreds of years later?

A. Copernicus could not explain why the planets revolved around the Sun

B. Copernicus's original research was inaccurate

C. Because there was more scientific evidence to support the geocentric theory

D. Because the geocentric view of Earth just made more sense

3. Why was the discovery of Neptune so important?

A. Because it confirmed that planets revolve around the Sun

B. Because it added further evidence to support gravitational theory

C. Because it confirmed that Uranus does revolve around the Sun

D. Because it led to major scientific advances in the field of astronomy

4. How does the professor organize the lecture?

A. She changes the subject halfway through to start talking about Neptune

B. She introduces the topic then provides two examples

C. She compares and contrasts two types of theories

D. She introduces a problem then provides a solution

5. What is the geocentric view of Earth?

A. Earth and other planets revolve around the Sun

B. Earth is the only habitable planet in the solar system

C. Earth is the center of the solar system and other planets revolve around it

D. The planets move around each other in circular orbits

6. What is the professor's opinion on the discovery of Neptune?

A. It was an extremely important discovery for the field of astronomy

B. It was inevitable that an astronomer would eventually find it

C. It was only helpful to a certain extent because later discoveries were more important

D. It was helpful because it answered some questions but it also created more problems for researchers

Part 3

1. What does the student want to talk to the TA about?

A. She wants to take Professor Stanton's Shakespeare class next semester

B. She wants to switch her major to literature

C. She wants to drop Professor Stanton's literature class

D. She wants to know more about the assignment due next class

2. Why does the TA think the student is a freshman?

A. Professor Stanton's literature class is for freshman

B. He has not seen the student before today

C. The student looks and acts like a freshman

D. The student just decided to switch her major

3. Why is the student concerned about taking Professor Stanton's Shakespeare class?

A. She needs to sign up for more classes but is not sure which ones to take

B. She is worried it will be too much work

C. She loves Shakespeare but does not want to take a freshman class next semester

D. She has to take another class at the same time

4. What does the TA suggest the student do? Select two.

A. Wait to see how well she performs Professor Stanton's literature class first

B. Sign up for the Shakespeare class and drop out if it is overwhelming

C. Take the Shakespeare class another year when the student will have more time in her schedule

D. Consider other options because the Shakespeare class is a lot of work

5. What does the student decide to do at the end of the conversation?

A. She is going to sign up for the class

B. She is going to wait another year to sign up

C. She wants to research other options before deciding

D. She will talk with the professor about the class

Part 4

1. What is the lecture mainly about?

A. Sources of historical information on ancient Greece

B. Literary pieces that describe the daily activities of ancient Greeks

C. What life was like for the ancient Greeks

D. How to conduct historical research on an ancient society

2. How does the professor organize the lecture?

A. He discusses the pros and cons of literary sources of ancient Greek history

B. He introduces the topic then provides examples of each concept

C. He compares and contrasts sources of historical information

D. He lists several reasons why ancient Greek history is important

3. Why are Homer's Iliad and Odyssey not ideal sources for learning about ancient Greeks?

A. They are too difficult to interpret

B. They are mostly fictitious

C. They only account for life in a few cities

D. They do not reflect a particular time and place in history

4. What does the professor say are some problems with literary sources of ancient Greek history? Select two.

A. These works are penned by people who think highly of their own culture

B. There are no books that talk about women or slaves

C. They only represent the point of view of wealthy men

D. They have too many elaborate stories that are not historical accounts

5. Why does the professor discuss papyri?

A. To prove that the ancient Greeks were mostly literate

B. To illustrate that not all of ancient Greek history was told orally

C. To provide another example of archeological evidence

D. To describe how organized the ancient Greeks were

6. What is the professor's attitude towards studying ancient history?

A. He finds it to be too complex for students to understand

B. He enjoys pointing out missing gaps and what historians misinterpreted

C. He personally thinks it is confusing and complicated

D. He likes feeling like a detective and trying to figure out what happened

Part 5

1. What is the lecture mainly about?

A. The process of photosynthesis

B. Figuring out how life on Earth began

C. Research currently being done on the origins of life

D. The sequence of steps that led to the creation of life

2. What is the professor's attitude towards the topic?

A. She is excited about the topic and the work being done in this field

B. She is tired with the topic because she has given this lecture many times

C. She finds this topic interesting but slightly outdated

D. She is concerned that the students may not understand the topic because it is complex

3. How does the professor organize the lecture?

A. She presents what is known and not known about the creation of life on Earth

B. She compares and contrasts current research to older findings in the field

C. She lists a series of events that occurred early in Earth's history

D. She introduces the topic from a previous lecture and then provides several supporting examples

4. What had to happen first for life to appear on Earth?

A. Photosynthesis had to occur

B. The ozone layer had to be created

C. Extraterrestrial amino acids and sugars had to come from space

D. The most basic life forms needed an increased level of sunlight

5. Why does the professor say this?

A. To illustrate that photosynthesis was the most valuable discovery by biologists

B. To show that the origin of life is not the most important thing to study in biology

C. To describe the process of photosynthesis

D. To emphasize that the role of photosynthesis was essential to life on Earth

6. What does an astrobiologist do?

A. Study the biology of the stars

B. Try to figure out the building blocks of life on Earth and in space

C. Conduct research in the fields of biology and geology

D. Study extraterrestrial proteins and sugars

Answer

Part 1

1. C (main idea)
2. C (function)
3. D (detail)
4. A (function)
5. A (detail)

Part 2

1. A (main idea)
2. A (detail)
3. B (detail)
4. D (organization)
5. C (detail)
6. A (speaker stance)

Part 3

1. A (main idea)
2. A (function)
3. B (detail)
4. B, C (detail)
5. A (detail)

Part 4

1. A (main idea)
2. B (organization)
3. D (detail)
4. A, C (detail)
5. C (organization)
6. D (speaker stance)

Part 5

1. B (main idea)
2. A (speaker stance)
3. A (organization)
4. C (detail)
5. D (function)
6. B (detail)

Transcript

Part 1

Woman: Hi Mr. Sanders, I know I'm a little early for our meeting, but I figured I'd see if you want to get started anyways.

Man: Sure, come on in.

Woman: Thanks

Man: So tell me, what's going on? You want to apply for a job?

Woman: Yeah well I was thinking that if I don't start working towards paying off my student loans now, I'm going to feel really burdened and strapped for cash after graduation... so I was hoping I would be able to join the work-study program and get a job on campus.

Man: You're a smart student. We can definitely sign you up for the work-study program, no problem. Okay. So, let me get the form really quickly... here...right. Okay, so the jobs offered in the work-study program are only part-time, of course so you can dedicate enough time to your studies... You can either apply for a job that requires ten hours a week or twenty hours a week. I suggest you start with a ten hour a week so you don't overload yourself.

Woman: Well, I think I'd rather work twenty hours a week... I mean... I want to make money faster and pay off as much of my loans as quickly as possible.

Man: It's good that you're thinking ahead, but considering you're a freshman with a full class schedule, it wouldn't be wise to increase your workload so much.

Woman: I'm a really hard worker though, I know I could do it. I'm determined.

Man: Haha, I'm sure you are, but if your grades slip up, you may not qualify again next year for your current scholarship...

Woman: Well, hmm I really wouldn't want that to happen... that would just put me into more debt. Ok, so what exactly do you recommend?

Man: I'm going to give you permission to work ten hours a week in the work-study program. I'll sign this form, and then you will need to take it to the job center and they will help you find a job there. Make sure you let them know it's for a work-study position, since we have jobs reserved for those students. Once you find a job and work for a little bit, see how it goes, then we can discuss giving you more hours.

Woman: Ok! Sounds like a plan. Thanks for your help!

Part 2

Professor: All right, so, just to quickly pick up where we left off, the ancient Greeks and Romans believed there were seven planets, all these were visible to the naked eye, Mars, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mercury, the Sun and the Moon.

Nowadays we don't consider the Sun and the Moon planets, but as of right now we have 8 planets in our solar system, well, 9 if you count Pluto as a planet.

Anyway, so, we have Mars, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mercury, Earth, and of course later Pluto, as I just mentioned, which gives us seven. What two planets are we missing here? Jeff?

Student: Uranus and Neptune, I think.

Professor: Yes, that's right. The discovery of the planet Neptune, was one of the highest points in the development of gravitational theory.

You might remember that most people before this time believed in the geocentric view of the Earth, that is that the Earth was the center of the universe and that the sun and the moon and the rest of the planets revolved around it. And it was Copernicus who first proposed the heliocentric model, that is that the earth and the other planets in our solar system revolve around the Sun.

Still, it took a couple hundred years for scientists and researchers to eventually change their view and admit that the heliocentric model was and is, indeed accurate.

Student: Professor, why did it take so long for people to agree with Copernicus. I mean, didn’t the heliocentric model make more sense? Of course the other planets don't revolve around the Earth.

Professor: Well, I think it is natural for us humans to believe we are the center of the universe, but besides that, Copernicus couldn’t explain the reason why and how the planets revolved around the Sun. The geocentric model had been accepted for over a thousand years. Copernicus couldn’t prove his hypothesis, it was just a theory.

Now, this is where the hero of the story of the heliocentric model, gravity comes into play. The motion of the planets had to be explained through some type of mechanism and that turned out to be gravity. And it’s that gravitational pull that eventually helped astronomers understand how the planets revolve around the Sun. And that leads us to the discovery of Neptune. Okay, so, let’s see who did the reading. Can anyone tell me who discovered Uranus? Kim?

Student: It was William Herschel, in 1781, I think. Well, other people had seen it before, but he was the first to classify it as a planet.

Professor: And you remembered the year too, very nice.

Right, so, in the decade following its discovery, the orbit of Uranus had been calculated, but there was a problem. Uranus did not move in the orbit predicted by the theory of gravitational pull. And by 1840, over 50 years after it was called a planet, it was clear that Uranus did not move in orbit according to the one predicted by gravitational theory.

In 1843, John Couch Adams, a young Englishman, began a detailed mathematical analysis of the motion of Uranus to see whether they might be produced by the pull of an unknown planet. He guessed that there must be a planet more distant from the Sun than Uranus, and then determined the mass and orbit it had to have to account for Uranus' strange orbit.

About a month later, an astronomer in Germany started to look for the planet. He quickly found and identified it. It was less than a degree from the position predicted by Adams. The discovery of the eighth planet, now known as Neptune, was a major triumph for gravitational theory because it dramatically confirmed its laws with a great deal of accuracy.

This discovery was a major step forward in combining gravitational theory with careful observations. Such work continues in our own times with the discovery of planets around other stars.

And that leads me to...

Part 3

Woman: Oh hey, John? You're the TA for Professor Stanton's literature class right?

Man: Yup that's me.

Woman: I'm actually signed up for that class but you didn't see me on the first day because I was sick... my friend is in it though so she filled me in.

Man: I'm sorry to hear about that. Did your friend make sure to tell you about the first assignment?

Woman: Yeah she did, we have to write a paper on the first couple chapters of our book, right?

Man: Yep that's the one.

Woman: Well now that I've run into you, I was actually wondering... you're also the TA for Professor Stanton's Shakespeare class right? I was thinking of taking that next semester and...

Man: Aren't you a freshman? You'll have to wait until next year to sign up for the class.

Woman: No I'm a sophomore actually, but I just switched my major, which is why I'm just taking Professor Stanton's lit class this year.

Man: Oh, ok sorry.

Woman: That's okay, anyways, I was wondering what you think about the class in terms of workload, because I'll be taking extra credits next semester and I don't want to feel overwhelmed, but I also really love Shakespeare...

Man: Well in my opinion, the class is really fun, as I'm sure you've heard, but it's also a lot of work. You need to do a lot of reading or you will quickly fall behind in class.

Woman: Hmm, I mean yeah it sounds like an awesome class, but I'm worried that I wouldn't be able to make the most of it if I'm taking so many other classes...

Man: Well you could always sign up, and see how it goes the first two weeks and if it seems like too much you could drop the class and just take it the next year when you have more time.

Woman: That's a good idea! I didn't even think about that. I forgot we have a couple weeks to make changes to our schedule after the semester starts. If I don't end up taking the Shakespeare class, do you have any other suggestions?

Man: Um I'm not sure. I think you'll just have to research and see what sounds best to you.

Woman: Sure, that's fine... I'll look into it. Well, thanks for the good idea. I'll be sure to sign up for the class next semester.

Man: Cool! I hope you like it.

Woman: Me too. See you in class next week!

Part 4

Professor: It's time for us to move on to the ancient Greeks.

This is one of my favorite cultures from the ancient world because it has such a rich history, but we have to be careful. Before launching into the story of the early Greek world, it's important to consider how historians have gathered all of this information in the first place.

Modern scholars are obsessed with analyzing primary sources and with good reason, especially when studying Greek history. It's kind of like trying to put together a puzzle where most of the pieces are missing. Well, let me explain.

The most common sources for Greek history fall within two categories: literary works -- which include fiction and nonfiction -- and archaeological finds.

Let's start with the literary side of things. Can anyone tell me one of the most famous books from the ancient world? Well, I should say it's more of an epic. Yes, Martha.

Student: Of course there are Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. I remember reading them in high school.

Professor: I'm sure you're not alone on that one. Homer's epics are considered essential reading for most students. From a historian's perspective, however, they are quite a headache to interpret. You see, the stories of the Iliad and the Odyssey were originally oral tales, told through word of mouth rather than written on paper. The events they describe occurred well before they were finally written down by Homer in the 6th century BC. These works most likely do not reflect the society of any particular Greek city-state at any one period, but rather a mixture of places and times. Their value for historians, as a result, rests more on their impact on later Greek culture, rather than on providing information about the time that is actually written about.

Student: Professor, what about Herodotus? I know many consider him the Father of History, but are his works more fiction or nonfiction?

Professor: Good question and it's still the subject of much debate. Herodotus mostly described the history of Athens, and from the way he writes it's clear that he is Athenian and very much concerned with making his culture appear dominant, so it's hard to rely completely on his book Histories, which describes the Persian War.

Besides Homer and Herodotus, we also have the famous philosophies of Plato and Aristotle.

Now, even though all of these texts come from different fields, particularly literature, history and philosophy, we must still be cautious. Besides believing in the superiority of their own culture, the authors of these sources were men and provide very little evidence of the lives and perspectives of women in the Greek world, except as seen through the eyes of men.

Secondly, most of the authors were wealthy individuals; thus, their perspective does not reflect that of most citizens and slaves.

Student: So professor, how can we really trust anything we study about ancient Greece?

Professor: Well, remember, besides literary sources there is also, thankfully, archaeological evidence that we can examine and fill in the gaps, so to speak, from the literature.

Archaeological sources provide us with key information about different aspects of everyday life in different city-states. For example, in one famous Greek city, archaeologists found that each citizen was given an equal piece of land. Imagine, every single person in a city having an equal amount of space? This one simple find shows that the Greeks were interested in city planning and in equality of citizens.

Now, papyri, which is kind of like old paper, include private documents like agreements between families before marriages, divorce documents, loans, and village police reports (cattle theft appears to have been a serious problem in some regions).

So my point is that by combining the literary and archaeological sources, historians can complete much more of the puzzle than would have been possible with just the literature. Still, significant gaps in our knowledge about ancient Greece remains.

But that’s one of the joys of studying ancient history, we get to play the part of a detective, attempting to reconstruct the history of events based on just a few available clues.

Now, let’s start our detective work and take a deeper look at the sources around the Trojan War. So, the Trojan War...

Part 5

Professor: Now, make no mistake about it, studying the origin, evolution, and distribution of life in the universe is no easy task, but this is exactly what astrobiologists do. Astrobiology brings together astronomers, chemists, geologists, and biologists to work on the same problems from their own fields.

One issue that astrobiologists are currently researching are the necessary conditions for life to appear on Earth.

It's a long and complicated theory, to be sure, but it can also be fascinating to bring together information from astronomy, biology, history and geology and use this data to make a fairly accurate prediction of how life on Earth came to be billions of years ago.

Pretty cool, right?

Alright, well, let's think like astrobiologists and take a look out into the solar system to find out just how life started here on Earth.

I mean, if you think about just how big the universe is, it's quite astounding that we're here right now, in human form, having the ability to talk about how we got to be here in the first place.

Sorry, I guess you can tell I get pretty excited about this topic.

Taking a look out into the universe, astronomers have detected the chemical building blocks in a wide range of environments outside of our own planet. Meteorites have been found to contain two kinds of substances whose chemical structures mark them as having an extraterrestrial origin—amino acids and sugars. Amino acids are organic compounds that are the molecular building blocks of proteins. Proteins are key biological molecules that provide the structure and function of the body's tissues and organs and essentially carry out the "work" of the cells in your body. When we examine the gas and dust around the universe, we also find a number of organic molecules—compounds that on Earth are associated with the chemistry of life.

While these materials that help create life may be common in the universe, it still doesn't explain how a living cell could come into creation. Even the simplest molecules are incredibly complex.

Furthermore, even the most basic life requires two special capabilities: a way of extracting energy from its environment, and a means of storing and repeating information in order to make copies of itself. We are still a long way from knowing how the two came together in the first life-forms.

To be honest, we have no solid evidence to explain the scientific causes that led to the origin of life on our planet except for whatever early history may be retained in present life forms like me and you.

We do not understand in any detail the sequence of events that led from molecules to biology, but there is fossil evidence of tiny organisms in 3.5-billion-year-old rocks, which is really such a huge amount of time that it's hard for us to really comprehend just how long that is.

Perhaps the most important innovation in the history of biology, apart from the origin of life itself, is the process of photosynthesis, the complex sequence of chemical reactions through which some living things can use the energy from the Sun to transform carbon dioxide into oxygen, among other things. Previously, life had to survive through sources of chemical energy available on Earth or delivered from space. As plants went through the process of photosynthesis, they produced higher quantities of oxygen. The first traces of large amounts of oxygen on Earth, enough to support species, has been estimated at about 2 billion years ago, which means that these oxygen-producing life forms existed before then.

The interaction of sunlight with oxygen can produce ozone which collects in the Earth's atmosphere. As it does on Earth today, this ozone provided protection from the Sun's damaging radiation, which provides a much better climate for life to grow.

So, just to sum up, first, the Earth had to get some chemicals from space, like amino acids and sugars. And then somehow, these turned into the most basic life forms possible, which later developed into species that could go through the process of photosynthesis. Photosynthesis increased the level of oxygen in Earth's atmosphere. And this allowed life to take over the land of our planet instead of remaining only in the ocean.