

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE

TOEFL WRITING

SECTION



Dr. Hikmet SAHINER

Contents

TITLE

ABOUT THE TOEFL WRITING SECTION

CHAPTER 1 - TASK 1 THE INTEGRATED WRITING TASK

CHAPTER 2 - TASK 1 NOTE-TAKING

CHAPTER 3 - PROGRESS TEST 1

CHAPTER 4 - PROGRESS TEST 2

CHAPTER 5 - PROGRESS TEST 3

CHAPTER 6 - PROGRESS TEST 4

CHAPTER 7 - PROGRESS TEST 5

CHAPTER 8 - PROGRESS TEST 6

CHAPTER 9 - PROGRESS TEST 7

CHAPTER 10 - PROGRESS TEST 8

CHAPTER 11 - PROGRESS TEST 9

CHAPTER 12 - TASK 2 THE INDEPENDENT WRITING TASK

CHAPTER 13 - PRACTICE TEST 1

CHAPTER 14 - PRACTICE TEST 2

CHAPTER 15 - PRACTICE TEST 3

CHAPTER 16 - PRACTICE TEST 4

CHAPTER 17 - PRACTICE TEST 5

CHAPTER 18 - PRACTICE TEST 6

CHAPTER 19 - PRACTICE TEST 7

CHAPTER 20 - PRACTICE TEST 8

AUDIO SCRIPTS & ANSWER KEYS

AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 1

AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 2

AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 3

AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 4

[AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 5](#)

[AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 6](#)

[AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 7](#)

[AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 8](#)

[AS & AK TO PROGRESS TEST 9](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 1](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 2](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 3](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 4](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 5](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 6](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 7](#)

[AS & AK TO PRACTICE TEST 8](#)

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE
TOEFL WRITING
STRATEGIES & PRACTICE

DR. HIKMET SAHINER

This TOEFL test prep ebook comes with mp3 audio attachments, which is downloadable via the link below:

ABOUT THE TOEFL WRITING SECTION

The TOEFL Writing section tests your ability to write coherent academic texts similar to those required in undergraduate college classes.

There are two different writing tasks:

- The Integrated Task: a response based on both a reading passage and a lecture
- The Independent Task: a free response

You will write one essay for each task. The entire section takes about an hour.

TASK 1: THE INTEGRATED TASK

This task combines a reading passage and a listening passage on an academic topic, followed by a question to which you will type a response. Topics include general information from subject areas such as the arts, general sciences (biology, chemistry, geology, etc.), and social sciences (economics, history, international relations, etc.). You do not need any specialized knowledge to understand the reading or the listening.

Note: Each of the tasks will appear with their own clocks that will count down the preparation time and response time.

The Integrated Task is administered as follows:

1. You will have 3 minutes to read the passage; you may take notes while you read.
2. The reading passage will disappear, and then you will listen to an academic lecture on the same topic, but which treats it in a different way – for example, it may contradict or argue against points made in the reading. You may take notes during the lecture.

3. When the lecture is finished, the reading passage will be shown again on the screen, along with a question about how the lecture and reading are related. The screen is split in half, with the reading appearing on the left and space to type your response on the right.

4. You will then have 20 minutes to write and check your response.

When it is time for you to write your response, you will see a tool bar for the Integrated Task:

For the Integrated Task, you will hear the listening only once, but you will be able to see the reading again while you type your response. For this reason, it is more important to take careful notes during the lecture than during the reading.

When you write the response, you should answer the prompt directly. The prompt will ask you to explain how the lecture is related to the reading - therefore, in your writing, you should follow the organization of the lecture (often the lecture and the reading cover points in the same order). Make sure to apply the information in the lecture to the points in the reading.

Do not give your personal opinion about the information; do not mention any outside knowledge or points. Only report on information presented in the lecture and the reading.

The written responses are read and scored by trained ETS staff. Essays that receive a high score for the Integrated Task:

- include all of the main points mentioned in the lecture, in the same order as in the lecture
- clearly relate each main point in the lecture to information in the reading
- include a variety of sentence structures
- are mostly grammatically accurate

- use sophisticated but appropriate vocabulary
- are about 150-225 words long

TASK 2: THE INDEPENDENT TASK

This task requires you to write a personal essay on a given topic, usually by expressing a preference or giving your opinion about a question or issue. You do not need any specialized knowledge to answer the question.

The Independent Task is administered as follows:

1. After you have read the directions for the Independent Task, click on "Next."
2. A prompt (question) will appear on the screen with space for you to type your response.

You will be able to see the prompt while you are writing.

3. You will have 30 minutes to write and check the essay.

Essays that receive a high score for the Independent Task:

- are well organized
- directly address the prompt
- include a variety of sentence structures
- are mostly grammatically accurate
- use sophisticated but appropriate vocabulary
- are about 300 words long

As you type your responses to the tasks, you will be able to see how many words you have typed. It is important to remember that you CANNOT use spellcheck or a grammar checker on the TOEFL Test. You must proofread and edit yourself.

Remember to spend a few minutes planning your responses and to leave a few minutes at the end to check your work.

When the time is finished, your essay will be *saved*, and you will not be able to type any further. There is no "Save" button to press during the essay writing time, but your writing is still being saved.

WRITING SCORING RUBRICS

(I) Integrated Task (Question 1)

Your response to the Integrated Task will be scored according to these criteria:

Score Task Description

5

A response at this level is a well-organized summary of the lecture in connection with the reading. The response includes important points made in the lecture and appropriately explains how they are related to important points made in the reading. It shows appropriate language structure and usage, with only occasional minor errors which do not interfere with conveying information and connections.

4

A response at this level contains most of the important points from the lecture and the reading and is generally good in relating the information from the lecture to that from the reading. But it may omit some points or explain them imprecisely. It may also show noticeable minor language errors or an occasional lack of clarity.

3

A response at this level includes some important information from the lecture and connects it with the relevant information from the reading. But it may omit one key point made in the lecture and shows only limited understanding of the information. Some content or connections between ideas may be incomplete or incorrect; errors in grammar or usage make some sentences unclear.

2

A response at this level does not include sufficient relevant information from the lecture and the reading and is not successful in relating the information from the lecture to that from the reading. It is characterized by language errors or expressions that make it difficult for the reader to understand key ideas or to follow connections among ideas.

1

A response at this level contains little or no important points from the lecture and fails to relate information from the lecture and the reading. It is poorly written and contains so many language errors that it is difficult to understand it.

0

A response at this level only copies sentences from the reading, is not related to the topic, is written in a language other than English, or is blank.

(2) Independent Task (Question 2)

Your essay for the Independent Task will be scored according to these criteria:

Score Task Description

5

An essay at this level effectively responds to the topic and task by clearly stating an opinion and is easy to understand. It is well organized and shows unity, progression, and coherence. It is well developed with clearly appropriate examples, reasons, and/or details, and it displays a good command of language, including a variety of sentence structures and well-suited choices of words and idioms to express ideas.

4

An essay at this level responds to the topic and task well, but some points may not be fully supported. It is generally well organized and shows unity, progression, and coherence with only occasional redundancy or lack of clarity. It is also generally well developed with appropriate examples, reasons, and/or details, and it demonstrates a good use of language, including various sentence structures and range of vocabulary with occasional language errors that do not obscure the meaning.

3

An essay at this level responds to the topic and task on a basic level with somewhat developed examples, reasons, and/or details. It shows unity, progression, and coherence in spite of occasional, unclear connections among ideas. It is also characterized by correct but limited use of grammar and vocabulary, including errors in sentence formation and word choice that may make some sentences unclear or difficult to understand.

2

An essay at this level displays limited development in response to the topic and task, with inappropriate or insufficient supporting details. It has poor organization or connections among ideas and is marked by obviously inappropriate word choice or word forms and an accumulation of errors in

grammar and/or usage.

1

An essay at this level responds to the task confusingly. It lacks any organization and development. It contains little or no detail or details that are not related to the task, and it shows serious and frequent errors in grammar and usage.

0

An essay at this level only contains words from the topic, is not related to the topic, is written in a language other than English, or is blank.

CHAPTER 1 - TASK 1 THE INTEGRATED WRITING TASK

The Integrated Writing Task is the first section of the TOEFL Writing Task. It tests your ability to understand important ideas from an academic reading passage and a lecture.

You will first be given 3 minutes to read a passage. After those 3 minutes, the passage will disappear from the screen and you will listen to a lecture for about 2 minutes. Both the reading and the lecture are about the same academic topic, but their point of view on the topic is different. Generally, a writer will make an argument in the reading passage. Then, in the lecture, a professor will cast doubt on the writer's argument.

Your task is to summarize the main points of the lecture and explain how they relate to the reading passage. The question will be phrased something like this:

Question: Summarize the points made in the lecture you just heard, explaining how they cast doubt on points made in the reading.

WRITING PROCESS

Reading

- A passage about an academic topic that is approximately 230–300 words is given.
- You will have 3 minutes to read the passage. The passage will disappear from the screen during the listening section.

Listening

- A lecture on a topic related to the reading is given that lasts about 2 minutes.
- You must take notes as you listen, as you will only be allowed to listen to

the lecture once.

Writing the Essay

- You will have 20 minutes to write your essay.
- The reading passage will appear on the screen while you write your essay.

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR RESPONSE

Introduction

- Summary of the speaker's position
- Relationship of the lecture to the reading

Body 1 (Point 1)

- Summary of the speaker's first point
- Summary of related points from the reading

Body 2 (Point 2)

- Summary of the speaker's second point
- Summary of related points from the reading

Body 3 (Point 3)

- Summary of the speaker's third point
- Summary of related points from the reading

SAMPLE QUESTION

Reading Passage

The Knights Templar occupy a unique place in Crusades history. The Templars were the first Christian warriors organized as an official part of the Catholic church. They were first formed to protect pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land after the First Crusade successfully returned Jerusalem to Christian control.

The Templars recruited members from the knightly warrior class that ruled Europe in the Middle Ages. These members were already highly trained warriors before entering the Templars, where they received further training. Members of the Templars generally joined the order while in Europe and were then transferred to the Holy Land, resulting in a mass transfer of manpower from Europe to the Middle East. The Templars needed constant recruitment to refresh their ranks due to losses in battle.

Like the monks in Europe at the start of the Middle Ages, the Templars followed strict rules designed to keep them away from sin. Knights entering the Templar order were expected to take a vow of poverty. In fact, the ban on material wealth was so strict that any Templar brother who was found with money on his person was expelled from the order. The Templars also followed a rigid diet. Finally, Templars were not allowed to marry and avoided contact with women.

The Templars were based in Jerusalem and played a vital role in the defense of the Holy Land. The strict rules made the Templars the most disciplined and effective military force in the region. While many of the secular knights who traveled to the Holy Land were primarily motivated by the promise of gaining treasure, the Templars were motivated by their faith, and thus their actions were primarily selfless. This meant that they were willing to take on missions that held little promise of profit, such as guarding pilgrims.

Reading Note-taking

The Knights Templar - The first Christian warriors

- 1. trained warriors, transferred to the Holy Land*
- 2. strict rules, a vow of poverty*
- 3. motivation: their faith, selfless actions*

Audio Script

OK, uh, today we need to talk a bit more about the Templars. You know, the Templars figure so largely in our popular conceptions of the Crusades that there are a lot of inaccuracies surrounding them. We have this image of, uh, well, this poor, chivalrous warrior fighting for his religion... and that's not entirely false, but it's not entirely true either.

First, we know that the Templars were a military order of the church. But actually, only about 30% of the Templars were knights. You see, they were such a huge organization... uh, spread halfway across the known world at that time, that they needed a sizable support staff. Many of the members of the Templar order performed strictly clerical duties in Europe and were as far removed from the danger and chaos of battle as you or I.

Another thing... the Templars were definitely not poor. OK, individual Templars were forbidden to carry money, but as an organization they were fantastically rich. The authority the Pope had given them exempted them from paying taxes, and the European nobility gave generously to the Templars. They had land holdings spread all over the Middle East and Europe. Uh, actually, here's something that might surprise you... the Templars were the primary source of loans when the monarchs of Europe were strapped for cash.

Uh, that brings me to a final common misconception. The motivations of the Templars were not entirely religious in nature. Sure, some knights did enter the order out of sincere religious conviction. But you have to remember that the Templars were one of the largest and most influential organizations in European society at the time. Their leaders wielded enormous wealth and

influence. So for many, especially the younger sons of a noble family who couldn't expect to inherit land or title, entering the Templars was simply a wise career move.

Lecture Note-taking

The Knights Templar: common conception — Not true

1. only 30% actual knights, spread across the world, clerical duties, no battles

*2. not poor — organization: v. rich
Pope-no tax, nobility-money, much land
primary source of loan for monarchs*

3. motivation: Not religious, wealth & influence, wise career move

Contradiction Points

Main Topic - The Knights Templar

	Reading
1	The Templars were trained warriors from Europe and were then transferred to the Holy Land.
2	Templars took vows of poverty and were strictly forbidden from gaining material wealth.
3	Templars joined out of religious conviction and a selfless desire to protect their fellow Christians.

	Lecture
1	Most of them never traveled to the Holy Land or took part in battle.
2	Although they took vows of poverty, they were one of the richest groups in Europe as an organization.
3	They were such a powerful organization that joining was seen as a wise career move for many.

SAMPLE SCORING

Score 5

The professor says that much of what we think about the Templars is false. The professor makes three main points, each of which casts doubt on what was stated in the reading.

Firstly, the lecture states that most members of the Templars were not actually warriors, and most of them were stationed in Europe, not in the holy land. This was because, the Templars, as the huge international organization, had a large support staff and many Templars were just doing clerical things. This contradicts the reading because the reading says that the Templars moved huge numbers of warriors to the holy land, but the professor said that most Templars stayed in Europe and didn't fight.

Secondly, the professor stresses the wealth of the Templars. The professor says that individual Templars were not rich, but that the organization was very rich. The Pope prohibited the Templars from paying taxes, and this allowed them to become very rich. They were so rich that they could give loans to the kings of Europe. The reading, however, talks about the templar's vow of poverty. Based on the professor's lecture, this is incorrect.

Finally, the professor shows that many templars were younger sons in their

family and so they couldn't get the land. They just joined the templars to help their careers because it was powerful organization. The reading says that the Templars joined for religious reasons, and did not act in their own self-interest. Again, this seems to be incorrect based on the professor's lecture.

Score 4

The Knights Templar was an organization of a military force fo the church. It is well known for protecting Pilgrims when they were going to the Holy land. But there has been many misunderstandings about them. Some of the misunderstandings are, there members, wealth, and the point of joining it.

It is known that the members were mostly knights. But the truth is that only 30 percent of the members were knights, most were doing clerical duties. Which means that most members of the Knights Templar was not involved in any danger. This makes the part of the reading where it says it recruited knights. When in reality it was only a 30 percent of the members who were knights,

In the reading passage it mentions that the knights were very poor. But that is not entirely true. Knights In indivisual may not have been so rich, but the organization itself was very rich. The organization had lands they owned all over Europe. Even more it was the main subject for loans. Most people, when lacked money they came to the Knights Templar for loan. In truth the organization was very wealthy.

Religion is the most commonly known reason for entering the organization. But only a few joined for religion. Most members were sons of less wealthier families with low chance inheriting land or wealth. Joining the Knights Templar was an excellant opportunity to own some land. Furthermore, the organization had huge inspiration. Joining it would be a chance to become famous and well treated. The common knowledge about the Knights Templar seems not intirely true. Wealth, members are some of them. Sometime knowledge i

Score 3

The lecture and the passage both points out that the templars are the first Christian warriors that protected the pilgrins The passage describes templars as poor warriors fighting for their religion, but the lecture casts doubt about this There are two of them, and they were that the templars were not all knights, and that the organization itself was quite rich.

The first point that the lecture made is that not all of the templars were knights. Since the templars was such a big organization, it needed many people to take care of it. In fact, only 30% of the templars actually fought, the others were far removed from the war. This point doubts on the poin from the passage that templars were warriors that fought for their religion.

The second point is that the organization was very rich. Although the individuals were very strict on banning wealth, the organization itself had many money. The pope that gave money to the templars didn't make them pay taxes. This casts a doubt on the point from the passage that the templars were very poor.

The lecture doubted on two things. One was pointing out that there were only 30% of the templars were knights, although the templars individuals were poor, the templars orginization itself was very rich. These are the things that the lecture mentioned about the templars.

Score 2

The knights Templars were important to the history and society. They were close to the Catholic church. They were went to the Holy Land tor protect pilgrims.

They were also traveling. They learned how to fighting, and being knights. In paragraph number two says, they joined the order while in Europe and were them trasferred to the Holy Land, resulting in a mass trasfer of man power from Europe to the Middle East. I guess this group of Templars are very big and popular.

The Templars followed rules, that is for keep them. In fact, templars were not allowed to marry and avoided contact with women. I think this group is

really hard to join in.

The Templars strict rules and they are effective. The listening passage tells they were rich. They could find the treasures, too. They were taking missions and very courage at the mission. Protect pilgrim is example of this truth.

Score 1

Templar is Europe warier in Midle Age. Templar keep the rule. It make great warrior and many poeples want them. Templar have mony not much so woman not like. Mostly templar protet the peoples. Is very good thing but money not much. I think templar get the money. Get the money, they eat much food and womans like.

QUESTION TYPES

Summarize the points made in the lecture you just heard, explaining how they cast doubt on points made in the reading.

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they challenge specific claims/arguments made in the reading passage.

cf. This question type accounts for almost all of the questions that have been asked on the so far.

TIP

You should mention all three points and counterpoints. You should relate each point and its counterpoint one at a time, providing the reasons why each counterpoint disagrees with the point in the reading passage.

TASK 1 STRATEGIES

1. Note Taking & Outlining

- Take notes on each of the main points in the reading passage and the

lecture.

- Create an outline to show each point and counterpoint.
- Focus on the main ideas, not the minor ones.

2. Synthesizing & Organizing

- Recognize how the points and counterpoints are related to one another.
- Be sure to mention all three of the points and counterpoints in your response.
- Paraphrase the sentences from the reading passage and the lecture.
- Organize your response by including an introduction and, when appropriate, a short conclusion.

3. Writing & Checking

- Write your response from the notes that you made.
- Be sure to include an introduction, body, and conclusion. However, the conclusion is optional.
- Check over your writing to make sure that you did not make any mistakes.

SKILLS FOR INTEGRATED WRITING

1. Note-taking

2. Outlining

3. Paraphrasing

4. Summarizing

5. Citing

6. Connecting/Linking

SAMPLE QUESTIONS & RESPONSES

Question 1.

Reading

You will have 3 minutes to read the passage.

Maya was one of the most densely populated and culturally dynamic societies in the world, reaching its peak of economic development from 250 to 900 AD. Afterwards, the Maya centers of the southern lowlands "collapsed", but in the next six hundred years, there was continued development in the northern centers of the area, continuing through to the present. Although Mayan culture survives in different forms, the world famous civilization with its extraordinary temples, cities and infrastructure, experienced a sharp decline for notable reasons.

Scientists have determined that in the 9th and 10th centuries, deforestation and the consequent soil erosion and temperature increase caused a 200-year-long drought. This left the Mayans unable to provide enough food and water to sustain the Mayan human population.

Farmland deterioration may be another factor in the collapse of the Mayan region. Land clearing may have led to systemic ecological collapse including deforestation, siltation, and the decline of biological diversity, which degenerate the function of farmland. With unfertilized farmland, Mayans would suffer from massive starvation, which could directly result in the collapse of the civilization.

Another theory posits that before Maya collapsed there was a fierce war between Mayans and foreign invaders. The latest hypothesis states that the southern lowland was invaded by an outside group whose homeland was probably in the Gulf Coast Lowlands. This invasion began in the 9th century and set off, within 100 years, a group of events that destroyed the Classic Maya civilization. It is believed that this invasion was somehow influenced by the Toltec people of Central Mexico.

Listening

Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic you just read about.

Audio Script

Mayan civilization survives today in various forms, but the glorious civilization that has claimed the attention of world famous archaeologists and centered in their southern lowlands apparently "collapsed" abruptly. Was it due to serious farmland deterioration or a devastating drought or even a bloody war? These theories seem true, but when you take a closer look at them, some incongruities arise.

For starters, there was a series of droughts that took place in the history of the Mayan civilization approximately once every two hundred years. If these droughts were the source of the Mayans' downfall, the northern region would have been the first place to collapse. However, as a matter of fact, the southern region crashed first.

Second, some experts contend that farmland deterioration led to the collapse of the Mayan civilization. Thankfully though, the Mayans had mastered exquisite solutions to this problem, such as fertilizing and nourishing the farmland. Another theory is about warfare by foreign invaders in Maya, which could be the cause of Maya collapse. Warfare and foreign invasion is indisputably a theme throughout Mayan history. However, the Mayans had a mighty military with well-trained soldiers that had experience of numerous wars. Therefore, it is unlikely that one single war by foreign invaders can cause the demise of the Mayans.