

TOEFL WRITING SUCCESS

5th Edition

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How to Use the Book

About the Book

The book you are going to read is intended for **upper-intermediate** and **advanced students** who want to take part in the TOEFL iBT Test and get a score from 25 to 30 in the writing task. It helps you to build necessary skills to address the writing task in an excellent fashion. It also familiarizes you with the format of TOEFL iBT writing tasks and teaches essential test-taking strategies to help you guarantee a great score. For the independent writing task, all the five types of writing tasks, that is, **Stating a Preference, Agree or Disagree, Argument, Explanation, and Compare and Contrast the Advantages and Disadvantages of Something**, are separately elaborated upon, and for each of which quite a few samples, **153 independent and integrated samples**, including my own samples, are presented for more familiarity with each task. To find a specific sample, you can **search the topic** in a word file named **Topics Written in the Book**, which is on the CD accompanying the book. In many of these samples, the track of the mistakes is left so that you became aware of the common mistakes of the Iranian test takers. It also contains **punctuation** and **grammar section** that are of great help to those who want to take part in **IELTS, GMAT, and GRE** tests in general and to **TOEFL** test takers in particular. Furthermore, the section allocated to the integrated task is one of a kind, thorough and varied, in which some good sample responses of my students are included.

The book is accompanied by a CD, which contains: the audio files for the integrated task; a version of Babylon dictionary with all the learner's glossaries; a folder containing tips for note taking as well as time saving techniques; multimedia complete tests from ETS; type learning software; and some PDF files for vocabulary, TOEFL essay samples, and TOEFL topics, to name but a few. Since the vocabularies used in the example answers seem to be difficult to follow, a **glossary** was prepared for these words, which is included in the CD accompanying the book. These words or phrases are either underlined or boldfaced all through the book.

Apart from what you learn from this book for the writing tasks, this book is an invaluable source of practical vocabularies that are good for your general English and is full of great ideas that will help you in your speaking task as well.

It is worth mentioning that the writing samples in this book may look too complicated and advanced to have been written within the given time, thirty minutes. My students have spent a great deal of time to write these samples, and their writing samples have been edited by the author of the book. Therefore, I hope these advanced samples do not discourage you because a sample writing which is much lower than these samples, concerning quality and quantity, can still earn a high score. The writing samples are categorized into three groups and are identified with stars: one star (*) for almost easy samples, two stars (**) for difficult ones, and three stars (***) for advanced samples.

Essay Writing in Nine Steps

1. Planning

1. Read the essay topic (at least two times).

2. Identify the writing task (one of the five major tasks that are frequently offered in TOEFL: Preference, Agree or Disagree, Argument, Explanation, and Discuss the Advantages and Disadvantages of something, each of which will be elaborated upon in the next chapters).

3. Write down your idea (thesis statement).

4. Start making notes about your general ideas. (Brainstorming)

5. Expand your notes to include specific details.

2. Writing

6. Write the introduction.

7. Write the body of the essay.

8. Write the conclusion.

3. Revising

9. Check the punctuation, spelling, as well as the clarity of the text.

Summary of the Writing Task Two

This is a summary of what you have already read about the Writing Task Two

Introduction

1. **A general statement** (a fact)/a proverb/a quote/a rhetorical question/an anecdote
2. **Restatement of the topic**
3. **Your thesis statement—your stance—which is necessary**
4. **Your reasons (optional)**

Body of the Essay (At least two paragraphs)

1. **Write a topic sentence**
2. **Write ideas that support your topic sentence.**
3. **Add details.**
 - A. Give an authoritative quotation or proverb regarding the issue
 - B. Use facts, examples, or personal experiences.
 - C. Use statistics, but never mention an exact research or number.
 - D. Illustrate your own idea with an anecdote.
 - E. Mention the opposing point of view, but do not elaborate upon it.

Write the Conclusion

1. **A restatement of the thesis statement**
2. **A summary of the three or two main points from the body of the paper**
3. **A final statement that gives the reader signals that the discussion has come to an end.**
 - A. A general statement
 - B. A prediction
 - C. A recommendation
 - D. A rhetorical question

Three kinds of plans for the essays in TOEFL

4.6.1 For *Agree/Disagree type 2* and *Preference*, the plan looks like this.

| Country life ++- | | City life --+ |
|------------------|---|---------------|
| | 1 | |
| | 2 | |
| | 3 | |

4.6.2 For *Agree/Disagree type 1*, *Argument*, and *Explanation* essays, the plan looks like this.

| Mahatma Gandhi | |
|----------------|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |

4.6.3 For *Discuss or Compare and Contrast* essays, the plan looks like this.

| For (in support of the topic) | Against (against the topic) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| + | - |

6. Punctuation

Punctuation—the use of special marks that you add to writing to separate phrases and sentences, to show that something is a question, etc—plays a significant role in your getting a high score in such tests as TOEFL, IELTS, GRE, and GMAT, to name but a handful. Take these two sentences as an example to see how a minor change in punctuation changes the whole meaning within a sentence.

*A woman, **without her man**, is nothing.*

*A woman, **without her**, man is nothing.*

Therefore, it stands to reason that a test taker does his or her best to master them. In order for you to become proficient in using punctuations properly, you are supposed to be familiar with some definitions that will follow.

Some Writing Samples from the Book

21. Which one do you think is preferable: shopping at a big store or several small stores? Use reasons and specific examples to support our answer. **

In today's modern world, shopping is an indispensable part of a person's everyday life. Different stores, ranging from small shops to huge malls, have been established in order to respond to this matter/issue. As far as the place from which one shops is concerned, people express opposing ideas as to whether one should buy from a small store or a big store. I, personally, would rather shop from big stores. The reasons for my choice are manifold, among which convenience of purchasing, recalling the things to be bought, and guaranteeing a good quality dominate.

In my opinion, purchasing from big stores provides its users with a great deal of convenience. Everything that may appear on a person's shopping list can be found in a big store or in a mall. Although it may feel comfortable to buy from a small local store, not everything can be obtained from there. For example, one must go to one store for dairy products, another for fruits, and even a third or fourth store for some other requirements. While in a big store, everything is within reach, and, by making only one ride to a mall, one can obviate all the journey required to go from one store to another. On the whole, shopping from a big store makes more sense in terms of convenience.

Sometimes people tend to forget what they have to buy when they are out to do so. The variety of products that are being sold in a big store can remind a person of the things yet to be bought. For example, a person goes to a big store to get a bottle of milk, but, by seeing some eggs in the dairy section, he or she remembers that they are also in need of eggs. On the other hand, by shopping from a small store, that person will buy the milk he or she went out for, goes back home, and only realizes he or she needs eggs when it is too late.

Additionally, big stores and malls are more promising when it comes to guaranteeing the quality of their products. Because the system at these stores are more organized, and they plan to keep their customers more satisfied, they tend to keep a close eye on the quality of their goods. It has commonly been observed that a big store will exchange a defective unsatisfactory object with another object or even with store credit give them a full refund. In small stores, on the other hand, business is more limited, and shopkeepers cannot afford to conforming to the customers' objections all the time.

To sum up, I can suggest that shopping from big stores highly fulfills the needs and requirements of the modern society, which is increasing in speed and consumption on a daily basis.

460 words

Sara Alinia: University of Tehran

25. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is better for children to choose jobs that are similar to their parents' jobs than to choose jobs that are very different from their parents' jobs. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. **

Undoubtedly, choosing and commencing a job is an inevitable and critical juncture in **the** life of most people, for/**since** leading an even simple life is not feasible without a job in today's world. People are inclined to diverse jobs according to their personality, skills, age, and traditions socially acceptable in their countries, to name but a few. With this in mind, a controversy exists as to whether one should continue his or her parents' job. While some argue that it is not recommended for children to choose their parents' job as their own, others believe otherwise. I, for one, subscribe to the latter group, specifically in the case of not being adequately intelligent **for some reasons**, ~~and~~ three substantial ~~reasons~~ of which are elaborated upon **hereunder**.

It is crystal clear, particularly for those having started their job, that the first year of **a** career is fraught with hardships, as the person is not familiar with his or her coworkers, working conditions, and the use of their knowledge in practice, to name but a few. Thus, having someone who has gone this way, especially with the same job, would definitely be invaluable, and since parents are closest people to any individual, if ~~he or she~~**they** select the job of their parents, the difficulties associated with commencing the job and getting accustomed to it will become easier. Furthermore, parents can provide their children with the best resources available in their field. It is statistically proven that the majority of young people become hopeless, and even leave their job in the first months of work, which has its roots in not enjoying a person assisting them.

Without any doubt, parents have job experience for about half of the age of their children, and they know whatever is pivotal in order that ~~one~~**their children** can improve in the very job. In other words, the more time one works, the more knowledge he or she **can** possess**es** about the key points of the job, and as the result of which the more useful information they can offer to others. Thus, children are able to develop without having any experience themselves by the assistance of their parents, and even learn the "trade secrets" of the job—secret formulas of becoming more thriving than others—**which requiring requires** years of trying to be achieved.

It stands to reason that **noticeable improvements and** getting promotions and bonuses,~~and noticeable improvements~~ at **a** job are not possible unless one is convincingly skilled and intelligent in his or her field. This does not mean, however, that people lacking the aforementioned attributes are deprived of such successes. In the case of choosing **one's** parents' job, one is able to find **a** job in **the** best companies thanks to their parents' good ~~reputation~~**background**, and succeed with the ~~least~~**ss** effort. In this regard, there is a renowned Persian proverb which states, "It is possible to become rich overnight by knowing **the** nuts and bolts of a career," which is indicative of the importance of correct guidance in one's prosperity.

All in all, it stands to reason that the accuracy of this assessment varies from person to person based on their characteristics. Nevertheless, **due to the easy access to resources and a trustful experienced person and because of the accessible success**, choosing **one's** parents' job can be obviously helpful, especially for those who are not that creative and talented ~~due to easy access to resources and a trustful experienced person, and accessible success~~. Therefore, it is highly recommended that one have a better understanding of his or her capabilities first, and then decide about their job due to its conspicuous effects on life.

Sahar Sadrizadeh: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

An Integrated Writing Sample from the Book

Reading Time - 3 minutes

Rembrandt is the most famous of the seventeenth-century Dutch painters. However, there are doubts whether some paintings attributed to Rembrandt were actually painted by him. One such painting is known as attributed to Rembrandt because of its style, and indeed the representation of the woman's face is very much like that of portraits known to be by Rembrandt. But there are problems with the painting that suggest it could not be a work by Rembrandt.

First, there is something inconsistent about the way the woman in the portrait is dressed. She is wearing a white linen cap of a kind that only servants would wear, yet the coat she is wearing has a luxurious fur collar that no servant could afford. Rembrandt, who was known for his attention to the details of his subjects' clothing, would not have been guilty of such an inconsistency.

Second, Rembrandt was a master of painting light and shadow, but in this painting these elements do not fit together. The face appears to be illuminated by light reflected onto it from below. But below the face is the dark fur collar, which would absorb light rather than reflect it. So the face should appear partially in shadow, which is not how it appears. Rembrandt would never have made such an error.

Finally, examination of the back of the painting reveals that it was painted on a panel made of several pieces of wood glued together. Although Rembrandt often painted on wood panels, no painting known to be by Rembrandt uses a panel glued together in this way from several pieces of wood.

For these reasons, the painting was removed from the official catalog of Rembrandt's paintings in the 1930s.

Track 9

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they answer the specific problems presented in the reading passage.

Sample Response: In this sample response, you can see the corrections made in the class.

The passage and the lecturer both discuss the authenticity of ~~the a~~ painting ~~whether or not it should be~~ attributed to ~~the~~ Rembrandt. The reading states that some reasons can clarify the fact that this painting was not made by Rembrandt. The lecturer, however, casts doubt on this claim by bringing up three reasons to reject the specific points made in the reading passage.

First, the reading states that the clothes of the woman **in the painting** are not in harmony **with one another**. ~~On the one hand,~~ ~~†The~~ white linen cap is specifically for servants, but the expensive fur collar **in the painting** is not compatible ~~to with~~ servants' clothes ~~on the other~~. The lecturer, however, maintains that **the** analysis of the pigments of the painting by X-ray analysis shows that the color of the fur collar **does** not belong to the original painting. ~~but~~ ~~†Rather,~~ it was added one hundred years after the painting was made. The lecturer contends that it was possible that someone thought that by adding this fur collar, **he or she** could increase the value of the painting.

Second, the reading says **that** one of the outstanding features of the Rembrandt's works was his ability to paint the lights and shadows skillfully. ~~But~~ ~~Nevertheless,~~ in this painting, the shadows and lights were not used properly. The lecturer highlights the fact that after the added pigments in the painting ~~is were~~ removed, it was shown that the color ~~is had been~~ used masterfully and the face ~~had did~~ not **have** partial shadows in the original painting.

Third, the reading states that other ~~analysis analyses~~ illustrates ~~s~~ that this painting was painted in the panel mode which was formed by some pieces of the wood that was glued to ~~each other one another~~. Hence, this painting does not belong to Rembrandt, reasoning that he ~~tends tended~~ to painted on wood panels. Nonetheless, the lecture asserts that the original painting had a large wood panel that some extra pieces of the wood **were** glued to the sides and the top of the painting to make it more valuable. Moreover, she states that some analysis showed **that** the wood of this painting and one of the other paintings that is made by Rembrandt ~~was extracted~~ from the same tree. This painting, as a result, belongs to Rembrandt.

362 words

Alireza Ghanbarpour: Sharif University of Technology

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