

READING COMPREHENSION

The third section of the TOEFL test is the Reading Comprehension section. This section consists of fifty questions (some tests may be longer). You have fifty-five minutes to complete the fifty questions in this section.

In this part of the test you will be given reading passages, and you will be asked two types of questions about the reading passages:

1. **Reading Comprehension** questions ask you to answer questions about the information given in the reading passages. There will be a variety of questions about each reading passage, including main idea questions, directly answered detail questions, and implied detail questions.
2. **Vocabulary** questions ask you to identify the meanings of vocabulary words in the reading passages. To answer these questions, you may have to know the meanings of the words. You can also identify the meanings of some of the words by understanding the context surrounding the words, by using structural clues to identify the meanings of the words, or by breaking down the unknown words into known word parts in order to identify them.

GENERAL STRATEGIES

1. **Be familiar with the directions.** The directions on every TOEFL test are the same, so it is not necessary to spend time reading the directions carefully when you take the test. You should be completely familiar with the directions before the day of the test.
2. **Do not spend too much time reading the passages!** You do not have time to read each reading passage in depth, and it is quite possible to answer the questions correctly without first reading the passages in depth. Some students prefer to spend a minute or two on each passage reading for the main idea before starting on the questions. Other students prefer to move directly to the questions without reading the passages first.
3. **Do not worry if a reading passage is on a topic that you are unfamiliar with.** All of the information that you need to answer the questions is included in the passages. You do not need any background knowledge to answer the questions.
4. **Never leave any answers blank on your answer sheet.** Even if you are unsure of the correct response, you should answer each question. There is no penalty for guessing.