

9. (A) Meat tastes delicious to him when it's cooked rare.  
 (B) He isn't sure if the meal is delicious.  
 (C) This meat is the best he's tasted in a long time.  
 (D) He'd like to eat some meat from this delicatessen.
10. (A) He broke his arm trying to move it.  
 (B) He only hurt the broken arm.  
 (C) He only tries to move the broken arm.  
 (D) There's no pain if he rests quietly.

### SKILL 10: LISTEN FOR NEGATIVES WITH COMPARATIVES

Negatives can be used with comparatives in Listening Part A of the TOEFL test. A sentence with a negative and a comparative has a superlative, or very strong, meaning.

#### Example

On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) *What do you think of the new student in math class?*  
 (man) *No one is more intelligent than she is.*  
 (narrator) *What does the man say about the new student?*

In your test book, you read:

- (A) She is not very smart.  
 (B) He is smarter than she is.  
 (C) Other students are smarter than she is.  
 (D) She is the smartest student in the class.

The man responds to the woman's question with the negative *no* and the comparative *more intelligent*, and this combination has a superlative meaning. The best answer is therefore answer (D).

The following chart outlines comparisons that you should be careful of when they are used with negatives:

COMPARATIVES WITH NEGATIVES		
Comparative	Example	Meaning
more	No one is more beautiful than she is.	She is the most beautiful.
-er	He couldn't be happier.	He is extremely happy.

**EXERCISE 10:** In this exercise, underline the negative and the comparative in the second line of each short conversation. Then read the question and choose the best answer to that question. Remember that the best answer is one that expresses a superlative, or very strong, idea.

- (woman) *Have you gotten over your cold yet?*  
 (man) *I couldn't be feeling any better today.*  
 (narrator) *What does the man mean?*

(A) He's feeling terrific.  
 (B) He felt a lot worse today.  
 (C) He's not feeling too well today.  
 (D) He's a bit better today.
- (woman) *What did you think of Mike when you first met him?*  
 (man) *He couldn't have been more unfriendly.*  
 (narrator) *What does the man mean?*

(A) Mike was extremely friendly when he met him.  
 (B) Mike could have met him sooner.  
 (C) Mike didn't seem to like him at all.  
 (D) When he met Mike, he didn't have a friend.
- (man) *Did you see Theresa's grade on the math exam? It was unbelievable!*  
 (woman) *No one else could have done better.*  
 (narrator) *What does the woman mean?*

(A) Theresa could've gotten a higher grade.  
 (B) Anyone could get a good grade.  
 (C) Theresa got the highest grade.  
 (D) A high grade is impossible for anyone.

**TOEFL EXERCISE 10:** In this exercise, listen carefully to the short conversation and question in the recording program, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of comparatives with negatives.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING PROGRAM AT TOEFL EXERCISE 10.

- (A) She's not very happy.  
 (B) She didn't do very well on the exam.  
 (C) She could be somewhat happier.  
 (D) She's delighted with the results.
- (A) Paula is always lazy.  
 (B) Paula didn't work very hard this semester.  
 (C) Paula made a strong effort.  
 (D) Paula could have worked harder.
- (A) The prices were great!  
 (B) The prices were too high.  
 (C) She didn't buy much because of the prices.  
 (D) The prices could have been lower.
- (A) She is not very smart.  
 (B) She always tells him everything.  
 (C) He doesn't know her very well.  
 (D) She's extremely intelligent.
- (A) The patient absolutely didn't need the surgery.  
 (B) The necessity for the surgery was unquestionable.  
 (C) The surgeon felt that the operation was necessary.  
 (D) It was essential that the surgery be performed immediately.
- (A) They were not very lucky.  
 (B) No one was hurt.  
 (C) The accident was unfortunate.  
 (D) She wanted to have better luck.
- (A) Nothing was very difficult.  
 (B) The exam wasn't at all easy.  
 (C) The exam couldn't have been easier.  
 (D) The exam had nothing difficult on it.