

—THE READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS—

The Reading Comprehension section of the TOEFL test consists of five reading passages, each followed by a number of reading comprehension and vocabulary questions. Topics of the reading passage are varied, but they are often informational subjects that might be studied in an American university: American history, literature, art, architecture, geology, geography, and astronomy, for example.

Time is definitely a factor in the Reading Comprehension section. Many students who take the TOEFL test note that they are unable to finish all the questions in this section. Therefore, you need to make the most efficient use of your time in this section to get the highest score. The following method is the best way of attacking a reading passage to get the most questions correct in a limited amount of time.

STRATEGIES FOR THE READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. **Skim the reading passage to determine the main idea and the overall organization of ideas in the passage.** You do not need to understand every detail in each passage to answer the questions correctly. It is therefore a waste of time to read the passage with the intent of understanding every single detail before you try to answer the questions.
2. **Look ahead at the questions to determine what types of questions you must answer.** Each type of question is answered in a different way.
3. **Find the section of the passage that deals with each question.** The question-type tells you exactly where to look in the passage to find correct answers.
 - For *main idea questions*, look at the first line of each paragraph.
 - For *directly and indirectly answered detail questions*, choose a key word in the question, and skim for that key word (or a related idea) in order in the passage.
 - For *vocabulary questions*, the question will tell you where the word is located in the passage.
 - For *overall review questions*, the answers are found anywhere in the passage.
4. **Read the part of the passage that contains the answer carefully.** The answer will probably be in the same sentence (or one sentence before or after) the key word or idea.
5. **Choose the best answer to each question from the four answer choices listed in your test book.** You can choose the best answer according to what is given in the appropriate section of the passage, eliminate definitely wrong answers, and mark your best guess on the answer sheet.

The following skills will help you to implement these strategies in the Reading Comprehension section of the TOEFL test.