

TOEFL Reading Practice Paper 19

SET 1

Questions 1–6

Read the passage. Then answer the questions below. This is the first of three sections.

Risk-Taking and the Monkey Economy

Humans are uniquely smart among all the other species on the planet. We are capable of outstanding feats of technology and engineering. Then why are we so prone to making mistakes? And why do we tend to make the same ones time and time again? When Primate Psychologist Laurie Santos from the Comparative Cognition Lab at Yale University posed this question to her team, they were thinking in particular of the errors of judgement which led to the recent collapse of the financial markets. Santos came to two possible answers to this question. Either humans have designed environments which are too complex for us to fully understand, or we are biologically prone to making bad decisions.

In order to test these theories, the team selected a group of Brown Capuchin monkeys. Monkeys were selected for the test because, as distant relatives of humans, they are intelligent and have the capacity to learn. However, they are not influenced by any of the technological or cultural environments which affect human decision-making. The team wanted to test whether the capuchin monkeys, when put into similar situations as humans, would make the same mistakes.

[A] Of particular interest to the scientists was whether monkeys would make the same mistakes when making financial decisions. [B] In order to find out, they had to introduce the monkeys to money. [C] The monkeys soon **cottoned on**, and as well as learning simple exchange techniques, were soon able to distinguish 'bargains' – If one team-member offered two grapes in exchange for a metal disc and another team-member offered one grape, the monkeys chose the two-grape option. [D] Interestingly, when the data about the monkey's purchasing strategies was compared with economist's data on human behaviour, there was a perfect match.

So, after establishing that the monkey market was operating effectively, the team decided to introduce some problems which humans generally get wrong. One of these issues is risk-taking. Imagine that someone gave you \$1000. In addition to this \$1000, you can receive either A) an additional \$500 or B) someone tosses a coin and if it lands 'heads' you receive an additional \$1000, but if it lands 'tails' you receive no more money. Of these options, most people tend to choose option A. They prefer guaranteed earnings, rather than running the risk of receiving nothing. Now imagine a second situation in which you are given \$2000. Now, you can choose to either A) lose \$500, leaving you with a total of \$1500, or B) toss a coin; if it lands 'heads' you lose nothing, but if it lands 'tails' you lose \$1000, leaving you with only \$1000. Interestingly, when we stand to lose money, we tend to choose the more risky choice, option B. And as we know from the experience of financial investors and gamblers, it is unwise to take risks when we are on a losing streak.

So would the monkeys make the same basic error of judgement? The team put them to the test by giving them similar options. In the first test, monkeys had the option of exchanging their disc for one grape and receiving one bonus grape, or exchanging the disc for one grape and sometimes receiving two bonus grapes and sometimes receiving no bonus. It turned out that monkeys, like humans, chose the less risky option in times of plenty. Then the experiment was reversed. Monkeys were *offered* three grapes, but in option A were only actually *given* two grapes. In option B, they had a fifty-fifty chance of receiving all three grapes or one grape only. The results were that monkeys, like humans, take more risks in times of loss.

The implications of this experiment are that because monkeys make the same irrational judgements that humans do, maybe human error is not a result of the complexity of our financial institutions, but is

imbedded in our evolutionary history. If this is the case, our errors of judgement will be very difficult to overcome. On a more optimistic note however, humans are fully capable of overcoming limitations once we have identified them. By recognising them, we can design technologies which will help us to make better choices in future.

What was the aim of the experiment outlined above?

- A To investigate whether monkeys could learn to use money
- B To investigate where human mistakes come from
- C To find out whether it is better to take risks in times of loss
- D To determine whether monkeys make more mistakes than humans

2 Where in paragraph 3 could the sentence below be best placed?

The team distributed metal discs to the monkeys, and taught them that the discs could be exchanged with team-members for food.

- A
- B
- C
- D

3 Which of the following statements is the best paraphrase of the highlighted sentence?

On a more optimistic note however, humans are fully capable of overcoming limitations once we have identified them.

- A Hopefully, humans will soon be able to solve these problems.
- B Fortunately, humans can solve problems that we know about.
- C Luckily, humans do not have many limitations which have been identified.
- D We are happy to note that we can solve the problem which we have identified.

4 The words 'cottoned on' are closest in meaning to:

- A learnt
- B knew
- C completed
- D concluded

5 Which paragraph addresses why monkeys were chosen for the experiment?

- A Paragraph 2
- B Paragraph 3
- C Paragraph 4
- D Paragraph 5

6 What can be inferred about Laurie Santos?

- A She thinks that both humans and monkeys are greedy.
- B Her job frequently involves working with monkeys.
- C She believes that humans should never take risks.
- D She prefers monkeys to humans.

SET 2

Robert Capa

1. Robert Capa is a name that has for many years been synonymous with war photography.
2. Born in Hungary in 1913 as Friedmann Endre Ernő, Capa was forced to leave his native country after his involvement in anti government protests. Capa had originally wanted to become a writer, but after his arrival in Berlin had first found work as a photographer. He later left Germany and moved to France due to the rise in Nazism. He tried to find work as a freelance journalist and it was here that he changed his name to Robert Capa, mainly because he thought it would sound more American.
3. In 1936, after the breakout of the Spanish Civil war, Capa went to Spain and it was here over the next three years that he built his reputation as a war photographer. It was here too in 1936 that he took one of his most famous pictures, *The Death of a Loyalist Soldier*. One of Capa's most famous quotes was 'If your pictures aren't good enough, you're not close enough.' And he took his attitude of getting close to the action to an extreme. His photograph, *The Death of a Loyalist Soldier* is a prime example of this as Capa captures the very moment the soldier falls. However, many have questioned the authenticity of this photograph, claiming that it was staged.
4. When World war II broke out, Capa was in New York, but he was soon back in Europe covering the war for Life magazine. Some of his most famous work was created on 6th June 1944 when he swam ashore with the first assault on Omaha Beach in the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Capa, armed only with two cameras, took more than one hundred photographs in the first hour of the landing, but a mistake in the darkroom during the drying of the film destroyed all but eight frames. It was the images from these frames however that inspired the visual style of Steven Spielberg's Oscar winning movie 'Saving Private Ryan'. When Life magazine published the photographs, they claimed that they were slightly out of focus, and Capa later used this as the title of his autobiographical account of the war.
5. Capa's private life was no less dramatic. He was friend to many of Hollywood's directors, actors and actresses. In 1943 he fell in love with the wife of actor John Austin. His affair with her lasted until the end of the war and became the subject of his war memoirs. He was at one time lover to actress Ingrid Bergman. Their relationship finally ended in 1946 when he refused to settle in Hollywood and went off to Turkey.
6. In 1947 Capa was among a group of photojournalists who founded Magnum Photos. This was a co-operative organisation set up to support photographers and help them to retain ownership of the copyright to their work.
7. Capa went on to document many other wars. He never attempted to glamorise war though, but to record the horror. He once said, "The desire of any war photographer is to be put out of business."
8. Capa died as he had lived. After promising not to photograph any more wars, he accepted an assignment to go to Indochina to cover the first Indochina war. On May 25th 1954 Capa was accompanying a French regiment when he left his jeep to take some photographs of the advance and stepped on a land mine. He was taken to a nearby hospital, still clutching his camera, but was pronounced dead on arrival. He left behind him a testament to the horrors of war and a standard for photojournalism that few others have been able to reach.
9. Capa's legacy has lived on though and in 1966 his brother Cornell founded the International Fund for Concerned Photography in his honor. There is also a Robert Capa Gold Medal, which is given to the photographer who publishes the best photographic reporting from abroad with evidence of exceptional courage. But perhaps his greatest legacy of all are the haunting images of the human struggles that he captured.

Why did Capa change his name?

To hide his identity
Because he had been involved in protests
To sound more American
Because he had to leave Hungary

2 Capa originally wanted to be
A photojournalist
A writer
American
A protestor

3 Capa went to Spain to
fight in the civil war.
build his reputation.
have a holiday.
take photographs.

4 Capa's famous picture *Death of a Loyalist Soldier*
was taken by someone else.
was definitely genuine.
wasn't even taken in Spain.
cannot be proven genuine or staged.

5 When World War II broke out Capa
went to New York.
swam ashore on Omaha Beach.
went to Europe.
went to Normandy.

6 A mistake meant that
only one hundred of Capa's photographs were published.
Capa lost both of his two cameras.
Capa's images inspired an Oscar winning movie.
Most of Capa's images of the D-Day landing were destroyed.

7 Capa's private life was
less dramatic than his professional life.
spent mostly in Hollywood.
very glamorous.
spent in Turkey.

8 Capa wanted his work to
be very famous.
show how glamorous war can be.
show the true horror of war.
make lots of money.

9 Which sentence best paraphrases paragraph 5?

Capa had a tragic private life and was never able to settle down and find happiness.

Despite having many good friends and lovers, Capa always put his work first.

Capa wanted to make friends with important people in Hollywood so that he could move into the movie industry.

Capa's private life was very complicated. He could not choose between the two women he loved, so he went off to work in Turkey.

10 Which sentence best paraphrases paragraph 4?

Capa never tried to avoid danger. He risked his life to take photographs of the D-Day invasion, but then destroyed most of them.

Capa took some of his most famous photographs during the D-Day invasion, but most were tragically destroyed in an accident.

Capa only kept the best eight D-Day photographs as the others were out of focus. These inspired the visual style of a Hollywood film.

Capa left Europe when the war broke out and went to take his most famous photographs of the D-Day invasion.