

TOEFL SPEAKING PRACTICE TEST - INTEGRATED

SPEAKING TASK

QUESTION: 1

READ A CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chemistry Department is planning to award scholarships to students who have received an average grade of 90% or above. We have found there to be a serious need for well-educated chemistry students and the current pool of chemists is highly lacking. By awarding these scholarships, it will allow future chemists to get a better handle on their tuition costs as well as encourage students to study harder in class. After the recent audit, we have found there to be plenty of funds for this department and we feel this is the best place to use them. Considering this school spends most of its funds on the Sports Department, we want to get students more interested in chemistry and we feel this is the best place to start.

LISTEN TO A LECTURE

Female: This is a bad move from the Chemistry Department. I can't believe they are going to spend school funding like this.

Male: Why would you say that?

Female: Have you seen the [outdated](#) equipment in the Chemistry Department? Most of it is older than I am. If the department has so much extra money, they should spend it on updating the chemistry equipment before pushing for more students. I mean, think about it! Most companies use updated equipment, so how do they expect us to compete for positions when we're accustomed to using outdated equipment? We're going to be at a [disadvantage](#).

Male: Yea, you're right. I never thought about that. We will need to know how to use the latest equipment in the Chemistry field for our future careers.

Female: Exactly! Also, I think they should consider spending money on current students who are actually working hard and not try to lure in [potential](#) students. I know a lot of my friends are studying hard. Even though they are not getting an average grade of 90%, they are still getting good grades in Chemistry. I think the Chemistry department should award them, like giving them a bonus or something.

Male: That's true! You make a good point. It would be great if my hard work was rewarded.

Question:

The woman expresses her opinion about the announcement. State her opinion and explain the [reasons](#) that she gives for holding that opinion

QUESTION: 2

READ A PASSAGE

The peak-end rule describes a theory that humans judge past experiences based upon a single high moment and the end of that event rather than judging by a sum of the event in its entirety. Whether that peak moment is good or bad, coupled with their feelings at the end of the event, determine their overall perception of an experience being pleasant or unpleasant.

LISTEN TO A LECTURE (AUDIO SCRIPT)

Okay! As you can see from the textbook, the Peak-End rule is a theory that describes how humans hedonically evaluate a past experience by its most intense point and its end. In other words, when we remember a particular event or experience, we don't look at the whole picture, but instead look at its very best, worst or most intense moments. It's from those things that we evaluate the entire experience. It's like reading a story and judging it by its most exciting point and by its ending. Everything else is just white noise. That's what we do with our past experiences, whether they're good or bad.

And I know this from experience! When I think about high school I recall when my friends and I were skipping school one afternoon, got caught in a gunfight between rival gangs. I remember the security guard who patrolled the hallways and left us in stitches with his jokes. I remember a new teacher we scared off in short order. And these and other high points are what I judge years of high school by. I don't factor in the average or ordinary middle part, though they made up the bulk of the entire experience. In fact, I barely remember those! But the peaks and highlights, good and bad, and the end? Now those I remember vividly!

Question:

Explain Peak-End rule and how the example used by the professor illustrates the concept.

QUESTION: 3

READ A PASSAGE

Paradox of choice refers to the idea that humans deal with greater anxiety today because of the vast number of choices they face. When a person is given more choices, they have heightened expectations that can also result in disappointment when their desires aren't satisfied. This need to satisfy their desires by making the right choice creates apprehension.

LISTEN TO A LECTURE (AUDIO SCRIPT)

What is the paradox of choice? Is having more choices a better situation? Today, whether we're buying a pair of jeans, ordering a cup of coffee, or selecting a cell phone, every decision has become increasingly complex due to the overwhelming number of choices presented to us.

Psychologist Barry Schwartz advocated that eliminating consumer choices could greatly reduce anxiety for shoppers. In other words, having too many options sometimes makes it

difficult to make a decision.

I'll give you an example. When I was a kid, there were only a few selections. I could only choose a few oversized fitting shirts, but I had no regrets, because there was no one to blame but the world. In addition, my expectations were low, so I knew to expect a poorly made shirt. However, recently I was trying to decide on buying a shirt from a local shopping mall and it took me an hour to try on all the different shirts. I ended up with the best fitting shirt I have ever worn, but I was disappointed. Why? Why was I disappointed? I picked a great shirt. But, it wasn't perfect. With the choices today, my expectations have sky rocketed, so the shirt was not living up to my expectations. So, who can I blame? Well, with all the shirt selections, I blamed myself. I was disappointed with myself for not choosing a shirt that lived up to my expectations. This is a classic example of the paradox of choice. The burden of decision-making amplified with overwhelming choices often leads to buyers' anxiety.

Question:

Using the main points and examples describe [paradox](#) of choice.

QUESTION: 4

LISTEN TO A LECTURE (AUDIO SCRIPT)

Okay! Let's continue! Here's a thought: have you ever wondered why trees are capable of living for long periods of time, despite local bad weather conditions, or even global [environmental](#) changes? Well, they're able to do that, because they have special [adaptations](#) that allow them to survive and change with the environment. One adaptation is their ability to [release](#) chemicals that can prevent damage from insects. Now, we all know that insects need to eat the trees' leaves and branches to survive, causing damage. Trees can limit this damage by releasing a chemical substance that insects can't live with. This makes the trees less [vulnerable](#) to these attacks. For example, redwood trees release gallotannic [acid](#) from their leaves and branches to scare off hungry insects.

Another adaptation is their [complex](#) root system that helps them to survive during a storm. You see, trees have many roots and the roots can grow in all directions, even tangling with other trees' roots. So during a big storm, trees can survive by "holding each other up"! Take redwood trees as an example, they have the strongest root system found in trees. Their root system often extends as much as 100 feet around the tree. This is a very long distance compared to other trees' root systems. In addition to that, these underground root networks often end up growing in circular clusters. These circular clusters give them [tremendous](#) strength against the [forces](#) of nature. This way they can [withstand](#) high winds and even floods.

Question:

Using the main point and examples from the lecture, describe two types of adaptations that trees have that allow them to survive in the environment..