

TOEFL iBT 2026 — Full-Length Mock Test 3 (Rising Difficulty)

Total Time: 100 minutes | 4 Sections | No scheduled break *Questions progress from easier to harder within each section.*

SECTION 1: READING (35 minutes | 20 questions)

Adaptive format — Stage 1 determines Stage 2 difficulty. Answers cannot be revisited once Stage 2 begins.

STAGE 1 — Passage 1 (Easier) — 10 questions, 17 minutes

The Return of the Night Market

In many cities across Asia, night markets have long been a fixture of daily life, offering food, clothing, and household goods well after regular stores close. In recent years, a similar concept has begun appearing in cities across Europe and North America, as municipal governments and local business associations experiment with evening markets as a way to bring foot traffic back to downtown areas after dark.

Unlike traditional farmers' markets, which typically operate during morning or early afternoon hours, these new night markets are designed around a different rhythm of urban life — one shaped by people who work standard daytime jobs and have limited free time until evening. Vendors report that night markets attract a mix of customers who might not otherwise visit a market at all, including young professionals stopping by after work and families looking for a low-cost evening outing.

City planners have also noted a secondary benefit: night markets can improve the perceived safety of an area. Empty streets after dark are often associated with higher crime rates, whereas a well-lit, well-attended market can make a neighborhood feel more active and secure, even if no formal safety measures have changed.

Not every attempt has succeeded, however. Several cities have discontinued their night market programs after low attendance during colder months, and some vendors have complained that evening setup and teardown add significant labor costs compared to daytime markets. Organizers who have sustained successful programs tend to agree that year-round success requires seasonal adaptations, such as covered or indoor spaces for winter months.

Questions:

1. What is the main topic of the passage? (1 mark)
 - A) The history of Asian street food
 - B) The spread of night markets to new cities and the challenges they face
 - C) A comparison of farmers' markets and grocery stores
 - D) Crime prevention strategies in urban areas

2. According to the passage, why are night markets being introduced in new cities? (1 mark)
 - A) To replace farmers' markets entirely
 - B) To bring foot traffic back to downtown areas after dark
 - C) To reduce the cost of city services
 - D) To attract tourists exclusively

3. How do night markets differ from traditional farmers' markets, according to paragraph 2? (1 mark)
 - A) They sell only food
 - B) They operate in the evening rather than morning or early afternoon
 - C) They are always located outdoors
 - D) They don't allow vendors to sell clothing

4. **Complete the Words:** "Night markets can improve the perc__v_d safety of a neighborhood." (1 mark)

5. Why might a well-attended night market make an area feel safer? (1 mark)
 - A) It increases the number of police patrols
 - B) A lit, active space feels less associated with crime than an empty street
 - C) It requires visitors to register in advance

D) It reduces the number of cars on the road

6. What challenge have some night markets faced? *(1 mark)*

A) Too many vendors applying to participate

B) Low attendance during colder months

C) Conflicts with local farmers' markets

D) Opposition from city governments

7. What do successful organizers say is necessary for year-round success? *(1 mark)*

A) Lower vendor fees

B) Seasonal adaptations like covered or indoor spaces

C) Government funding

D) Moving markets to daytime hours

8. The word "discontinued" in paragraph 4 most nearly means — *(1 mark)*

A) expanded

B) stopped

C) relocated

D) advertised

9. Which group does the passage say is newly attracted to night markets? *(1 mark)*

A) Retirees

B) Young professionals and families

C) Tourists only

D) Farmers

10. Which best summarizes the passage's overall structure? *(1 mark)*

- A) It presents only the benefits of night markets
 - B) It introduces the trend, explains its appeal, then discusses its challenges
 - C) It argues night markets should be banned
 - D) It focuses solely on vendor complaints
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STAGE 2 — Passage 2 (Harder — dense argument, abstract vocabulary) — 10 questions, 18 minutes

Pluralistic Ignorance and Collective Inaction

Social psychologists have long observed a curious pattern in group behavior: individuals frequently misjudge the private beliefs of those around them, assuming that others hold different, often more extreme, views than they actually do. This phenomenon, known as pluralistic ignorance, occurs when a majority of group members privately reject a norm but publicly comply with it, each incorrectly assuming that everyone else genuinely endorses it. The result is a self-perpetuating cycle in which a norm persists not because it reflects majority sentiment, but because no individual believes they have sufficient social standing to be the first to challenge it.

A frequently cited illustration involves bystander intervention during emergencies. Contrary to the intuitive assumption that a larger crowd increases the likelihood that someone will help a person in distress, empirical research has repeatedly demonstrated the opposite: as group size increases, the probability that any individual will intervene tends to decrease, a phenomenon termed the bystander effect. One contributing mechanism is precisely pluralistic ignorance — bystanders scan the reactions of others to gauge whether a situation is genuinely an emergency, and if everyone else appears outwardly calm, each infers, often incorrectly, that intervention is unnecessary, even if privately they suspect otherwise.

This dynamic extends well beyond emergencies. Researchers studying organizational behavior have documented similar patterns in corporate settings, where employees privately doubt a controversial policy but assume, often erroneously, that their colleagues support it, leading to a climate of silent compliance that can persist for years despite widespread private disagreement. Some scholars argue that this mechanism helps explain the surprising durability of unpopular institutional norms, which can appear robust from the outside while resting on a foundation of misperceived consensus that could, in principle, collapse rapidly if the underlying private disagreement were ever made visible.

Correcting pluralistic ignorance is notoriously difficult precisely because the false consensus is self-reinforcing: any individual who breaks from apparent consensus risks social costs

disproportionate to the private support they might actually have, since they cannot know in advance how many others secretly share their view. Some intervention strategies attempt to sidestep this problem by providing anonymous or aggregated feedback mechanisms that reveal the true distribution of private opinion without requiring any single individual to be the first, and visible, dissenter.

Questions:

11. What is pluralistic ignorance? (1 mark)
- A) A lack of interest in social issues among group members
 - B) A situation where most people privately reject a norm but assume others support it
 - C) A form of intentional deception between group members
 - D) A tendency to ignore statistical evidence
12. According to the passage, why does an unpopular norm sometimes persist? A) Because a majority genuinely supports it B) Because no individual believes they have the standing to challenge it first C) Because it is enforced by law D) Because group members are unaware the norm exists (1 mark)
13. What does research on the bystander effect show? (1 mark)
- A) Larger crowds increase the likelihood of intervention
 - B) Larger crowds tend to decrease the likelihood that any individual will intervene
 - C) Crowd size does not affect intervention
 - D) Bystanders always intervene regardless of crowd size
14. How does pluralistic ignorance contribute to the bystander effect? (1 mark)
- A) Bystanders assume a situation isn't an emergency because others appear calm
 - B) Bystanders are too afraid to be blamed for a bad outcome
 - C) Bystanders lack the physical ability to help
 - D) Bystanders wait for official authorities regardless of the situation
15. The word "erroneously" in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to — (1 mark)

- A) correctly
- B) mistakenly
- C) deliberately
- D) rarely

16. According to paragraph 3, what pattern have researchers found in corporate settings? (1 mark)

- A) Employees openly criticize unpopular policies
- B) Employees privately disagree with a policy but assume colleagues support it, leading to silent compliance
- C) Corporate policies are always based on employee surveys
- D) Employees are generally unaware of company policy

17. **Complete the Words:** "Unpopular norms can rest on a foundation of misp_rc__v_d consensus." (1 mark)

18. Why is correcting pluralistic ignorance described as difficult? (1 mark)

- A) Because people are generally unwilling to change their minds
- B) Because breaking from apparent consensus carries social risk that feels disproportionate to one's actual private support
- C) Because it requires government intervention
- D) Because most people are unaware the concept exists

19. What strategy does the passage mention for correcting pluralistic ignorance? (1 mark)

- A) Public shaming of dissenters
- B) Anonymous or aggregated feedback mechanisms that reveal true private opinion
- C) Mandatory group discussions
- D) Increasing group size

20. Which best describes the relationship between the bystander effect and pluralistic ignorance, as presented in the passage? (1 mark)
- A) They are unrelated phenomena
 - B) The bystander effect is presented as one specific example of pluralistic ignorance in action
 - C) Pluralistic ignorance only occurs in corporate settings, not emergencies
 - D) The bystander effect disproves pluralistic ignorance
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SECTION 2: LISTENING (29 minutes | 28 questions)

Part A — Listen and Choose a Response (Easier — 6 items, audio only)

1. You hear: "Do you know if the gym is open before 6 AM?" (1 mark)
 - A) "Yes, it opens at 5:30."
 - B) "I usually go in the evening."
 - C) "The gym has new equipment."
2. You hear: "Could you send me the notes from today's seminar?" (1 mark)
 - A) "Sure, I'll send them tonight."
 - B) "The seminar was interesting."
 - C) "I missed today's seminar."
3. You hear: "Is this seat taken?" (1 mark)
 - A) "No, go ahead."
 - B) "I sat here yesterday."
 - C) "The seats are uncomfortable."

4. You hear: "What time does the shuttle leave for the airport?" (1 mark)
- A) "It leaves every hour on the half hour."
 - B) "The airport is pretty far."
 - C) "I took a taxi last time."
5. You hear: "Did the professor post the grades yet?" (1 mark)
- A) "Not yet, she said by Friday."
 - B) "The exam was difficult."
 - C) "I studied a lot for that exam."
6. You hear: "Would you like to grab lunch after class?" (1 mark)
- A) "Sure, there's a new place near campus."
 - B) "I had lunch already."
 - C) "Class starts at noon."
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Part B — Listen to a Conversation (Medium — 2 conversations × 2 questions)

Conversation 1 — *A student speaks with an IT help desk employee.*

Student: Hi, I'm having trouble accessing the online course portal. It keeps saying my password is invalid, but I'm sure I'm typing it correctly.

Employee: That's usually a sign the account needs a password reset — did you change it recently?

Student: Actually, yes, about a week ago, right after the system update.

Employee: That explains it. Sometimes the update doesn't sync properly with older passwords. I can send you a reset link right now, but it'll take about ten minutes to process.

Student: That works. Should I try logging in again after that, or wait for a confirmation email?

Employee: Wait for the confirmation email just to be safe — logging in too early can sometimes lock the account again.

7. Why is the student unable to log in? (1 mark)

- A) They forgot their username
- B) Their recently changed password didn't sync properly after a system update
- C) The portal is down for maintenance
- D) They never had an account

8. What does the employee advise the student to do? (1 mark)

- A) Try logging in immediately
- B) Wait for a confirmation email before logging in again
- C) Create a brand-new account
- D) Call back tomorrow

Conversation 2 — *Two students discuss a study abroad application.*

Student A: Have you submitted your study abroad application yet?

Student B: Almost — I'm just waiting on a recommendation letter from one of my professors. She said she'd have it done by Friday.

Student A: Isn't the deadline Thursday, though?

Student B: I thought so too, but I emailed the office, and they said late letters are accepted as long as the rest of the application is submitted on time.

Student A: Oh, that's good to know. I was worried about the same thing with mine.

9. What is Student B waiting on? (1 mark)

- A) A test score
- B) A recommendation letter from a professor

- C) A visa approval
- D) A tuition payment confirmation

10. What did the study abroad office tell Student B? *(1 mark)*

- A) The entire application must be submitted by Thursday, no exceptions
- B) Late recommendation letters are accepted if the rest of the application is on time
- C) The deadline has been extended for everyone
- D) Recommendation letters are no longer required

Part C — Listen to an Announcement (Medium — 2 announcements × 2 questions)

Announcement 1

"A reminder to all students living in campus housing: the annual fire safety inspection will take place next week. Maintenance staff will need access to your room sometime between Monday and Wednesday, so please ensure hallways and personal spaces are clear of obstructions during that window."

11. What is the purpose of the announcement? *(1 mark)*

- A) To announce a fire in a dormitory
- B) To inform students of an upcoming fire safety inspection
- C) To recruit maintenance staff
- D) To announce a new housing policy

12. What are students asked to do? *(1 mark)*

- A) Leave campus during the inspection
- B) Keep hallways and personal spaces clear of obstructions
- C) Submit a written request for inspection

D) Pay an inspection fee

Announcement 2

"Before we begin today's lecture, I wanted to mention that the guest speaker originally scheduled for next week has had to cancel due to a scheduling conflict. We'll be rescheduling for later in the semester, and I'll share the new date as soon as it's confirmed."

13. Why was the guest speaker's visit postponed? (1 mark)

- A) The speaker fell ill
- B) A scheduling conflict
- C) The classroom was unavailable
- D) The event was cancelled permanently

14. What does the professor say will happen next? (1 mark)

- A) The event is cancelled for good
- B) A new date will be shared once confirmed
- C) A different speaker will be found
- D) The lecture will be moved online

Part D — Academic Lecture (Harder — 2 lectures, 7 questions)

Lecture 1 — *Linguistics: Language Death and Revitalization*

"Linguists estimate that of the roughly seven thousand languages spoken worldwide today, nearly half are at risk of falling out of use within this century — a process referred to as language death. Language death typically doesn't happen abruptly; rather, it unfolds gradually across generations, as a community shifts toward a dominant language for economic or social reasons, and children increasingly grow up as passive understanders rather than active speakers of the heritage language.

What's particularly notable is that language loss is rarely just a linguistic phenomenon — it often entails the loss of culturally specific knowledge that resists

straightforward translation. Certain indigenous languages, for instance, encode detailed ecological knowledge about local plant and animal species, accumulated over centuries, that has no direct equivalent in the dominant language replacing them. When such a language falls silent, that embedded knowledge frequently disappears alongside it, rather than transferring intact into the new linguistic system.

Revitalization efforts have had mixed success. Some, like the revival of Hebrew as a widely spoken first language in the twentieth century, are often cited as remarkable successes, though linguists note that Hebrew's case was unusual due to a combination of strong ideological motivation and centralized institutional support that most endangered languages lack. More typical revitalization projects — such as immersion schools for indigenous languages in North America and Oceania — have shown that revitalization can meaningfully slow language loss and even produce new fluent speakers, but rarely restores a language to its former scale of everyday, community-wide use."

15. What is the main focus of the lecture? (1 mark)

- A) The grammar rules of endangered languages
- B) The process of language death and efforts to reverse it
- C) The history of the Hebrew language specifically
- D) How children learn their first language

16. According to the lecture, how does language death typically occur? (1 mark)

- A) Suddenly, within a single generation
- B) Gradually, as communities shift toward a dominant language over generations
- C) Only through government policy
- D) Exclusively due to war or conflict

17. What does the professor say is often lost alongside a dying language? (1 mark)

- A) Nothing beyond the language itself
- B) Culturally specific knowledge, such as ecological knowledge, that doesn't translate directly
- C) A country's entire economy

D) Written records only

18. Why is the Hebrew revival considered unusual, according to the lecture? (1 mark)

A) It happened without any institutional support

B) It combined strong ideological motivation with centralized institutional support, which most endangered languages lack

C) It was accomplished within a single year

D) It relied entirely on immersion schools)

19. What does the lecture say about typical revitalization projects, like indigenous immersion schools? (1 mark)

A) They fully restore languages to their former scale of use

B) They can slow language loss and create new fluent speakers, but rarely restore full community-wide use

C) They have universally failed

D) They work only for written languages

20. **Complete the Words:** "Children increasingly grow up as p_ss_ve understanders rather than active speakers." (1 mark)

21. What is the overall tone of the lecture regarding revitalization efforts? (1 mark)

A) Entirely pessimistic — nothing can be done

B) Cautiously realistic — some success is possible, but full restoration is rare

C) Entirely optimistic — most efforts succeed fully

D) Dismissive of revitalization as a concept

(Items 22–28 continue in the same format at adaptive Stage 2 difficulty.)

SECTION 3: SPEAKING (16 minutes | 4 tasks)

Task 1 & 2: Listen and Repeat (~4 minutes)

Task 1 (Easier):

"The campus bookstore is having a sale on textbooks this week." (2 marks)

Task 2 (Harder — longer, embedded clause):

"Even though the researchers had anticipated some resistance to the new policy, the scale of public opposition ultimately surprised them." (2 marks)

Task 3 & 4: Take an Interview (~12 minutes)

Task 3 (Easier — personal/familiar topic):

Prompt: "A classmate asks: 'What's a hobby you'd like to try but haven't had the chance to yet?' Respond naturally." (*Response time: 60 seconds, with an adaptive follow-up question.*) (5 marks)

Task 4 (Harder — abstract reasoning, requires taking and defending a position):

Prompt: "Your professor asks: 'Some argue that remote work has permanently changed how people value work-life balance, while others believe this shift is temporary and will reverse as companies push for a return to offices. Which view do you find more convincing, and why?' Respond as if speaking directly to your professor, with a clear position and supporting reasoning." (*Response time: 60 seconds, followed by an adaptive follow-up question that may challenge your position.*) (5 marks)

SECTION 4: WRITING (20 minutes | 3 tasks)

Task 1: Build a Sentence (~3 minutes)

Easier:

1. "the / textbooks / bookstore / sale / a / on / campus / having / is"

Harder (more clauses, subordinate structure): 2. "anticipated / had / although / resistance / researchers / the / policy / new / the / to / opposition / scale / of / surprised / them / public" (2 marks each)

Task 2: Write an Email (~7 minutes)

Prompt: You purchased a required textbook from the campus bookstore, but you later realized it's the wrong edition for your course. Write an email to the bookstore explaining the situation and requesting an exchange or refund. (~80–120 words) (5 marks — *Task Achievement, Coherence, Grammatical Accuracy*)

Task 3: Academic Discussion (Harder — abstract policy topic, ~10 minutes)

Professor's Prompt: "Given that many endangered languages are disappearing, should governments prioritize funding language revitalization programs, or is this better left to the communities themselves?"

Classmate 1 (Amara): "I think government funding is essential — most communities don't have the financial resources to run immersion schools or training programs on their own."

Classmate 2 (Lucas): "I'd argue community leadership matters more than funding source. Government-led programs can end up imposing outside standards on a language that isn't theirs to shape."

Write a response that states your own position and directly engages with at least one classmate's point. (~100–150 words) (5 marks — *Task Achievement, Coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Accuracy*)

ANSWER KEY

Section 1 — Reading

Passage 1 (Stage 1): 1-B, 2-B, 3-B, 4-perceived, 5-B, 6-B, 7-B, 8-B, 9-B, 10-B

Passage 2 (Stage 2): 11-B, 12-B, 13-B, 14-A, 15-B, 16-B, 17-misperceived, 18-B, 19-B, 20-B

Section 2 — Listening

Part A: 1-A, 2-A, 3-A, 4-A, 5-A, 6-A **Part B:** 7-B, 8-B, 9-B, 10-B **Part C:** 11-B, 12-B, 13-B, 14-B **Part D:** 15-B, 16-B, 17-B, 18-B, 19-B, 20-passive, 21-B

(Speaking and Writing are scored by ETS rubric criteria — *Delivery/Language Use/Topic Development for Speaking; Task Achievement/Coherence/Lexical Resource/Grammatical Accuracy for Writing* — not a fixed answer key.)