



## *Tomorrow's Leaders Program*

### *University Preparation Course Advanced Academic & Study Skills*

**4. Speaking Skills –  
Independent Tasks 1 & 2**

**Topics & checklist**

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## *iBT* Test Structure:

### Speaking Skills:

#### Independent tasks

- Task 1: Personal experience & preferences
- Task 2: Choices: Personal opinion

#### Integrated tasks

- Campus-related situations
- Academic-type content material

## *iBT* Test Structure: Speaking

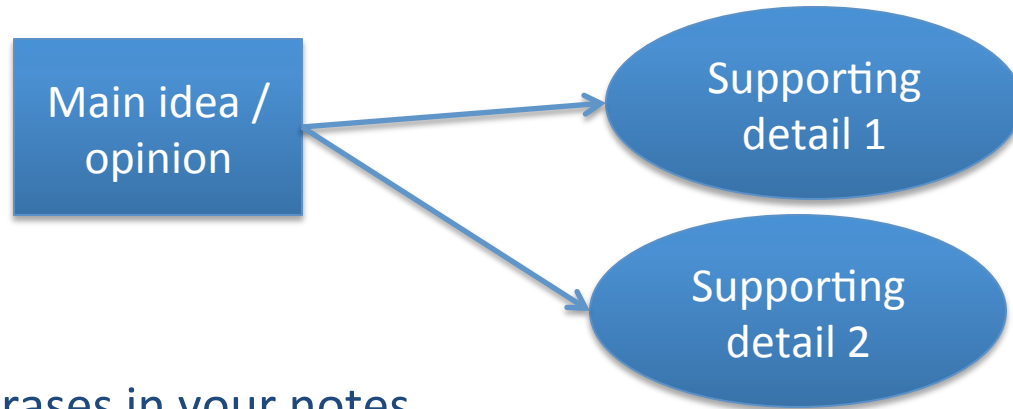
### Independent Tasks

- |                        |  |   |
|------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Personal Preference | This question asks the test taker to express and defend a personal choice from a given category—for example, important people, places, events, or activities that the test taker enjoys. | Preparation time: 15 seconds<br>Response time: 45 seconds |
| 2. Choice              | This question asks the test taker to make and defend a personal choice between two contrasting behaviors or courses of action.   | Preparation time: 15 seconds<br>Response time: 45 seconds |

## Task 1: Personal Experience & Preferences: Exemplar Topics

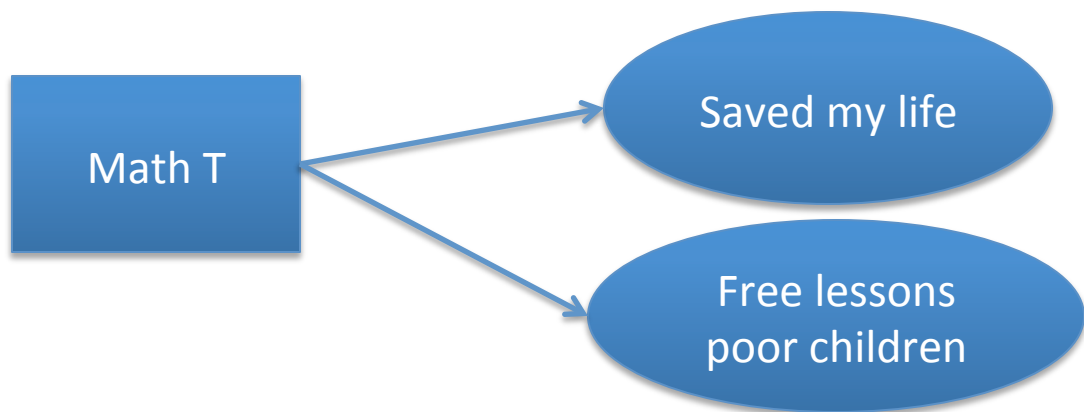
A Person	A Place	A Thing	An Event/Activity
A family member	A room	A class/course	A hobby
A teacher	A house/building	An instrument/tool	A sport
A coach	A park	A skill/ability	A festival/holiday
A friend	A lake/river		A custom
A boss	A mountain		
A neighbor	A city		
	A country (this is broad and tough to describe in 45 sec.)		

# Note-taking Tips for Speaking Tasks 1 & 2:



- ✓ Write words & phrases in your notes
- ✓ Answer all parts of the question
- ✓ Relevant details: give specific
- ✓ reasons and examples
- ✓ Well-connected ideas

**Task 1: Example: Choose a teacher you admire. Explain why. Give examples & details.**



# Task 2: Choices: Personal Opinion, Persuasive Logic

Two possible choices between:

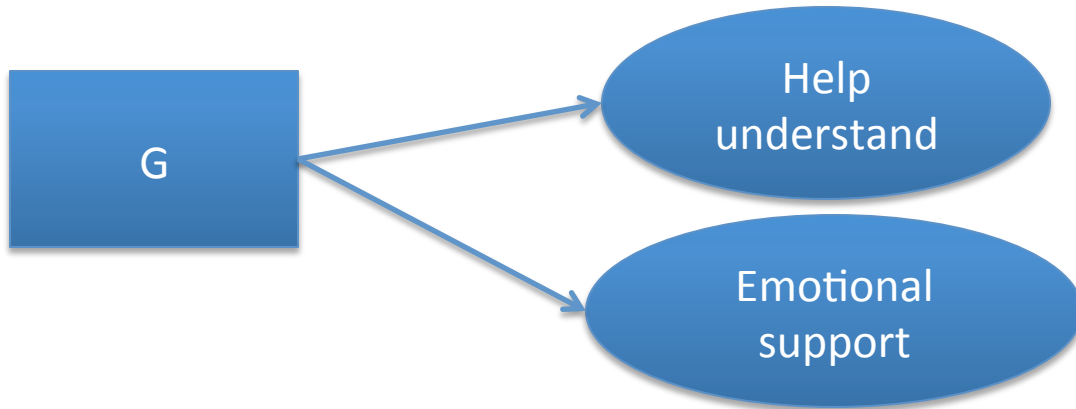
1. Actions
2. Situations
3. Opinions

## Task 2: Choices: Personal Opinion, Persuasive Logic: Exemplar Topics

Parents/Children	Schools/ Education	Civic Projects	Government
<p>Should parents be strict or not?</p> <p>Should parents raise children in the city or the country?</p> <p>Is television bad for children or not?</p> <p>Should parents force lazy children to exercise?</p>	<p>Should female and male students live together or separately?</p> <p>Is it better for a student to live on campus or off?</p> <p>Should all education be free?</p> <p>Should students study many subjects or just their major?</p>	<p>Can the city build a new community center near your home?</p> <p>Can the city build a highway near your home?</p> <p>The city will reduce bus service but make it free. Do you agree or disagree?</p> <p>Are zoos good or bad?</p>	<p>Is government censorship good or bad?</p> <p>Do government workers need privacy?</p> <p>Should government officials be paid or not?</p>



**Question 2: Example: Some students study for classes individually and other study in groups. Which method of studying do you think is better for students and why?**



# Important Tips

1. Use coherence markers to organize your ideas & clarify connection between them.
2. Breathe well before starting to talk.
3. Do not touch the microphone or your mouth while talking.
4. Do not use fillers while talking.
5. Do not repeat your words or phrases.
6. Do not be too emotional about any thing!!

# Speaking Rubric/Checklist

Your response will be scored holistically:

A. Delivery:

1. Clear speech
2. Good pronunciation
3. Natural speed of speech
4. Natural intonation

B. Language Use:

5. Correct grammar use
6. Correct sentence structures
7. Appropriate vocabulary use

C. Topic Development:

8. Answer all parts of the question
9. Relevant details: give specific reasons and examples
10. Well-connected ideas

# TOEFL iBT® Test

## Independent Speaking Rubrics

SCORE	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	DELIVERY	LANGUAGE USE	TOPIC DEVELOPMENT
4	The response fulfills the demands of the task, with at most minor lapses in completeness. It is highly intelligible and exhibits sustained, coherent discourse. A response at this level is characterized by all of the following:	Generally well-paced flow (fluid expression). Speech is clear. It may include minor lapses, or minor difficulties with pronunciation or intonation patterns, which do not affect overall intelligibility.	The response demonstrates effective use of grammar and vocabulary. It exhibits a fairly high degree of automaticity with good control of basic and complex structures (as appropriate). Some minor (or systematic) errors are noticeable but do not obscure meaning.	Response is sustained and sufficient to the task. It is generally well developed and coherent; relationships between ideas are clear (or clear progression of ideas).

# Assignments 1:

Take 15 seconds to prepare each the following topics then record a 45-second response. You will get from your teacher and from your friends a grade out of 100 and commentary feedback on your performance.

## Task 1: Personal Experience

Pick a person who influenced your childhood. Who is he/she? Why and how did this person affect you? Give examples to explain your ideas.

## Task 2: Choices & Persuasive Logic

Schools should be mixed; boys & girls studying together. Do you agree or disagree? Give examples to explain your ideas.

## Assignments 2:

Take 15 seconds to prepare each the following topics then record a 45-second response. You will get from your teacher and from your friends a grade out of 100 and commentary feedback on your performance.

### Task 1: Personal Experience

Pick a musical instrument that you would like to learn how to play. What is it? Why did you pick it? Give examples to explain your ideas.

### Task 2: Choices & Persuasive Logic

Zoos should be closed as they are places that hold animals in cages in captivity as prisoners while they should live in the wilderness. Do you agree or disagree? Give examples to explain your ideas.

## *iBT* Test Structure:

### Speaking Skills:

#### Independent tasks

- Task 1: Personal experience & preferences
- Task 2: Choices: Personal opinion

#### Integrated tasks

- Campus-related situations
- Academic-type content material

## Integrated Tasks

### Read/Listen/Speak

3. Campus Situation  
Topic: Fit and Explain

- A reading passage (80–110 words) presents a campus-related issue.
- A listening passage (60–80 seconds) comments on the issue in the reading passage.
- The question asks the test taker to summarize the speaker's opinion within the context of the reading passage.

Preparation time: 30 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

4. Academic Course  
Topic: General/  
Specific

- A reading passage (80–110 words) broadly defines a term, process, or idea from an academic subject.
- An excerpt from a lecture (60–90 seconds) provides examples and specific information to illustrate the term, process, or idea from the reading passage.
- The question asks the test taker to combine and convey important information from the reading passage and the lecture excerpt.

Preparation time: 30 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

### Listen/Speak

5. Campus Situation  
Topic: Problem/  
Solution

- The listening passage (60–90 seconds) is a conversation about a student-related problem and two possible solutions.
- The question asks the test taker to demonstrate an understanding of the problem and to express an opinion about solving the problem.

Preparation time: 20 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

6. Academic Course  
Topic: Summary

- The listening passage is an excerpt from a lecture (90–120 seconds) that explains a term or concept and gives concrete examples to illustrate that term or concept.
- The question asks the test taker to summarize the lecture and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the examples and the overall topic.

Preparation time: 20 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

# iBT Test Structure: Speaking

TOTAL

20 minutes



## *iBT* Test Structure: Speaking

### Read/Listen/Speak

3. Campus Situation  
Topic: Fit and Explain

- A reading passage (80–110 words) presents a campus-related issue.
- A listening passage (60–80 seconds) comments on the issue in the reading passage.
- The question asks the test taker to summarize the speaker's opinion within the context of the reading passage.

Preparation time: 30 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

# Task Content

- A reading that provides the context of the issue and the background needed.
- The reading could present two reasons either for or against one of the issues.
- The speakers will talk about the same thing and one speaker will have a strong opinion about the matter.
- Your mission will be to give a **summary** of this opinion based on what you read and what you heard.

# Important Tips for the Summary

- Detect the viewpoint and the attitude of the speakers through their word choice, tone of speech, and intonation (how they vary their voice volume).
- Detect feelings and emotions like anger, amusement, certainty level...etc.
- Take notes.
- Use adjectives and adverbs to describe those attitudes and emotions.
- Paraphrase the content in your own words. Never use the words of the original materials.
- Don't sound like you're repeating the whole content orally.

# Question 3 Topics

Curriculum: add/drop a course, new textbooks, Mid-term/final exams.

Majors/minors: deadline for announcing, course requirements.

Campus facilities and dormitories: gender mixing/separation, radios & music in rooms, visitors' restrictions, curfew, campus newspapers articles, new parking rules, new play courts.

Activities: field trips, galleries, movies, concerts, student associations/committees.

Visiting professors/guest speakers.

School services: cafeteria, councilors/advisors, gym, lounge, media, computer lab, security guards, lighting, phone installation, volunteer activities.

University policies, rules, procedures, plans.

# Question 3 Topics Vocabulary

Conversation in a Professor's Office	Conversation for a School Service
Homework, project, essay is late	Bursar: fees, tuition, pay, postpone, cancel
Topic is too vague, narrow	Loans, bursaries, scholarships: apply, qualify, get
Problems with group work, partners	Academic credits: transfer, requirements
Need an extension, postponement	Registrar: records, major, minor, drop class
Don't have sources, bibliography, citation	Library: find, borrow, return, late fees/fine
Missed lecture, class notes, test	Labs: fees, procedures, equipment, safety
Need make up assignment, make up exam	Sports: facilities, teams, gym, try out, join
Drop, join, observe a class	Dormitories: co-ed, location, change, rules
Mark/grade is too low, unfair, vague	Parking: location, theft, fees, schedule
Plagiarism	Transportation: bus, train, schedule, fares
	Security: lights, walk-safe, guards
	Appointments, directions

## *iBT* Test Structure: Speaking

### 4. Academic Course Topic: General/ Specific

- A reading passage (80–110 words) broadly defines a term, process, or idea from an academic subject.
- An excerpt from a lecture (60–90 seconds) provides examples and specific information to illustrate the term, process, or idea from the reading passage.
- The question asks the test taker to combine and convey important information from the reading passage and the lecture excerpt.

Preparation time: 30 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

# Task Content

- A reading that provides an abstract, general and broad background about an academic topic.
- The speaker is a professor who will talk about the same topic but will tackle it from a very specific and concrete point: examples, counter example, application.
- Your mission will be to give a **summary** integrating the ideas from both sources.

# Important Tips for the Summary

- Detect the major concepts and ideas in the reading.
- Find the opinion of the professor/speaker detecting the status of the viewpoint.
- Use paraphrased expressions and phrases to summarize ideas and info from both sources.
- Use coherence markers and connectors to organize your ideas and to show the relationships between them. (similarly, additionally, moreover, however, contrary... etc.)



# Question 4 Topics:

1. Arts.
2. Life science (biology, medicine,...etc.)
3. Physical science (Physics, Technology, Chemistry, Computer science...etc.)
4. Social science (Anthropology, Mass Communication, History, Education, Business...etc.)

*Complete list p. 120, 121.*

## *iBT* Test Structure: Speaking

### Listen/Speak

5. Campus Situation  
Topic: Problem/  
Solution

- The listening passage (60–90 seconds) is a conversation about a student-related problem and two possible solutions.
- The question asks the test taker to demonstrate an understanding of the problem and to express an opinion about solving the problem.

Preparation time: 20 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

## Question 5: Content and Task

- Listen to a short conversation about a campus-related issue: class absences, financial difficulties, unavailable resources, scheduling conflicts, transportation, university clinic, workload, study groups... etc.
- It will be between two speakers: students, student-professor, student-staff.
- There will be a problem presented with two possible solutions.
- Your mission will be:
  1. To briefly **describe** the situation discussed.
  2. To give your **opinion** about solutions to the problem.

## iBT Test Structure: Speaking

6. Academic Course  
Topic: Summary

- The listening passage is an excerpt from a lecture (90–120 seconds) that explains a term or concept and gives concrete examples to illustrate that term or concept.
- The question asks the test taker to summarize the lecture and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the examples and the overall topic.

Preparation time: 20 seconds  
Response time: 60 seconds

# Question 6 Topics:

1. Arts.
2. Life science (biology, medicine,...etc.)
3. Physical science (Physics, Technology, Chemistry, Computer science...etc.)
4. Social science (Anthropology, Mass Communication, History, Education, Business...etc.)

*Complete list p. 120, 121.*

# Assignment

Go to the 'Course Materials' section and find the folder:

4. MR - iBT - Assignment - Speaking Section Practice -  
Tasks 1 – 6 – KAPLAN

You have the audios in a folder together with the questions/tasks prompts in pdf file.

*Thank you!*  
*Good Luck*