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ESSENTIAL WORDS FOR THE TOEFL®

7TH EDITION

Steven J. Matthiesen

- A fully updated list of 500 words that frequently appear on the TOEFL
- Definitions, sample sentences, and practice exercises to build your word power
- An overview of each section of the TOEFL iBT and ITP
- A practice reading test with answers to help you assess your test-taking readiness

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ESSENTIAL WORDS FOR THE

TOEFL®

Test of English as a Foreign Language

7TH EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

SUCCESS ON THE TOEFL

What vocabulary is necessary to score high on the TOEFL?

Why is it especially important to have a strong vocabulary for the current TOEFL?

Why must I improve my vocabulary and how can I succeed?
How can I be a better TOEFL test taker?

Essential Words for the TOEFL answers these questions and provides you with a proven plan for improving your English vocabulary while also preparing you for the TOEFL. The words and practice questions that appear throughout this book will help you to maximize your understanding of words that will likely appear in every section of the TOEFL. Important information about how to maximize your score on the TOEFL is given in addition to vocabulary building hints and exercises. By following the program and mastering the words in this book, you will be ready to earn a higher score on the TOEFL.

This 7th edition of *Essential Words for the TOEFL* has an extensive, revised list of 500 words with improved exercises and updated reading selections. This edition makes *Essential Words* one of the most thoroughly researched books of its kind. It is the product of extensive study of previous TOEFLs and academic materials from which the questions on the TOEFL are produced. The result of this research is this powerful book of words that will lead you to success on the TOEFL.

MAXIMIZING YOUR VOCABULARY POTENTIAL— A DESCRIPTION OF THIS PROGRAM

This book is divided into six chapters. This introduction gives you basic information about their contents and how to use the book. Let's look at the six chapters.

Getting to Know the iBT

Chapter 1 describes the complete iBT test format and contains sample questions from each part. The questions are explained in detail and test-taking strategies are introduced.

Understanding the Internet-Based TOEFL

Chapter 2 describes the importance of building a strong vocabulary in order to score well on the iBT. You will find sample reading passages typical of those found in Section One of the iBT with a detailed analysis of the kinds of words and questions that are found on the TOEFL. In this chapter you will learn important strategies and hints to follow that will increase the probability of maximizing your score on the TOEFL.

Improving Your TOEFL Vocabulary

Chapter 3 gives you a plan for studying vocabulary. You should use the plan when studying the words in this book.

Building Your TOEFL Vocabulary

Chapter 4 provides powerful information that helps you build your TOEFL vocabulary. You will be introduced to “roots, prefixes, and suffixes”; parts of words that provide or add meaning. You will also be introduced to dictionary and thesaurus use, both print and online resources that contribute to any strategy to build your TOEFL vocabulary.

The Essential TOEFL Vocabulary

Barron’s TOEFL Vocabulary Building Program is explained in Chapter 5. The carefully selected words that appear on the list are important for all TOEFL test takers. An explanation of the program is given, including how to study the list, how to understand the words, and how to follow the program from beginning to end. Thirty carefully developed vocabulary lessons follow the explanation. Each lesson ends with practice questions like those that appear on both the iBT and the ITP, the paper-based TOEFL.

The iBT Practice Reading Test

Chapter 6 contains a complete practice iBT reading test, typical of those found in Section 3 of the TOEFL. The test gives you practice with reading comprehension and vocabulary questions that closely follow the iBT format. At the conclusion of the practice test, you will be able to assess your iBT knowledge and skills by using the included answer key and conversion tables to convert your number of correct answers to a score on the TOEFL scale. Both the iBT and ITP scales are included. Chapter 6 is followed by an index of the 500 essential words presented in this book, followed by the page number where the word can be found in the text.

CHAPTER 1

GETTING TO KNOW THE TOEFL

WHAT IS THE TOEFL?

The TOEFL is a comprehensive English language examination that helps colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world make admission decisions. It is also used by some organizations to certify professionals to practice their vocations both in the United States and abroad.

ABOUT THE iBT (INTERNET-BASED TOEFL)

Many years ago, the TOEFL was administered only in a paper-based format. Examinees marked their answers with a pencil on an answer sheet. The test primarily assessed listening comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills. Then, beginning in the late 90s, the Educational Testing Service (the maker of the TOEFL) began offering a computer-based TOEFL known as the iBT. Taking advantage of advances in technology, the iBT has expanded the range of skills tested by adding speaking and writing sections to the test as well as integrating reading, grammar, and vocabulary skills to mimic how we use language every day.

ABOUT THE ITP (INSTITUTIONAL TOEFL PROGRAM)

Some educational institutions use a paper-based TOEFL, known as the ITP TOEFL. The Educational Testing Service makes this form of the TOEFL available to institutions who often use the test to generally assess individuals' English language skills for placement purposes. Institutions also use results to assess the effectiveness of their English language instructional programs. These TOEFLs are typically previously administered paper-based TOEFLs. Generally, colleges and universities do not accept ITP TOEFL scores in place of an iBT score. The two versions of the TOEFL are quite different. A description of both formats follows.

THE iBT

The iBT is a timed test that consists of the four sections listed below.

Section 1	Reading 3–4 Passages	60–80 minutes 12–14 questions per passage
Section 2	Listening 2–3 Conversations 4–6 Lectures	60–90 minutes 5 questions per conversation 6 questions per lecture
Section 3	Speaking 2 Independent Tasks 4 Integrated Tasks	20 minutes
Section 4	Writing 1 Integrated Task 1 Independent Task	50 minutes

SECTION 1: READING

The iBT reading section is presented in two formats. The short format iBT gives you three passages of approximately 700 words. The long format contains four passages. After each passage, you will answer 12–14 test questions. If you are taking the long format iBT, only three sets of the test questions will be answered. The responses to the questions for the other two passages will be evaluated by ETS for use on future iBTs. You will have 60 minutes to read all of the passages and respond to the questions (80 minutes for the long format). You will be allowed to take notes while you read. You will see some words or phrases highlighted. You may see an explanation or definition of the word or phrase by clicking on it.

The majority of questions in this section are in the multiple-choice format. Make your answer choice for each and proceed to the next question by clicking on **Next**. To return to the previous question, click on **Back**. At any time, you can click on **Review** to see a list of the questions that you have and have not answered. You may return to any question while you are working on this section, but once you have left the reading section, you may not return to it. A clock will appear on the screen to help you manage your time.

In this section, you first read the passage completely. You do so by using the scroll bar to view the entire passage on the screen. The

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING THE TOEFL READING SECTION

Developing a good English vocabulary is the most important way to prepare for the vocabulary you will see and hear on the TOEFL. It is also a good way to prepare for the test generally. In addition to developing a good English vocabulary, it is very important to know the kind of vocabulary you will see on the TOEFL and to understand how it is tested.

The reading section of the iBT contains approximately three to five passages with 12–14 questions for each passage. In the ITP, there are four to five reading passages and up to 50 questions. It is important for you to remember that your general vocabulary is tested in all sections of the TOEFL. However, it is in this section of the TOEFL where your knowledge of specific vocabulary items is tested.

Passages from which vocabulary questions are drawn are written in a formal, academic style, typical of most college- or university-level texts and journals. The topics of these passages are those a first-year college student in North America would be likely to encounter. The topics come from such areas as the Natural Sciences, Business, Liberal Arts, and the Social Sciences. Some passages contain references to North American places and personalities. Others will refer to historical events and may include dates. It is important for you to understand that your knowledge of these North American places and personalities is never tested on the TOEFL. You do not have to be familiar with the content of the passages to be successful on this section of the TOEFL.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The following passage and the questions that follow are used to illustrate and discuss the types of reading comprehension questions and tasks that you will find on the TOEFL. First, as a warm-up, you will read a sample passage for the ITP and work through the test questions. Then you will read a sample iBT passage and work through those questions.

CHAPTER 3

IMPROVING YOUR TOEFL VOCABULARY

THE IMPORTANCE OF READING . . . A LOT!

One of the best ways to build your vocabulary is to read authentic English language material. You should read material that a college student would read. Examples of such material are newspapers, college textbooks, encyclopedia articles, magazines, and academic books. Any material that has an academic theme will help you to get used to the kinds of words and the style of writing you will find on the TOEFL. Reading articles on a variety of topics of interest to you will help you to develop your vocabulary. Pay attention to new groups of words, expressions, and phrases you encounter in your reading. Take advantage of resources—teachers, native speakers of English—to learn their meanings.

MAKE WORD LISTS

Another good way to learn new words is to make word lists. Many students use a small notebook, word processing program, or the note pad on their tablet or smart phone for this purpose. When you discover a new word, or group of words, add it to a list of words to be learned. On one side of the page, list the new words. To the right of this list, write synonyms for the new words. Study the words by covering the synonyms, looking at the new word, and recalling the synonyms. It is also useful to reverse the process so that you practice both the new words and their synonyms.

LEARN WORDS FROM OLD TOEFLs

Learn words that have been tested on previous TOEFLs. The underlined words on previous TOEFL tests are sometimes tested again, but they frequently appear among the four choices presented as synonyms for new words that are tested. You can find words to put on your word lists on any TOEFL tests that you have. TOEFL tests can be found online and in the TOEFL test kits available from the Educational Testing Service.

CHAPTER 4

BUILDING YOUR TOEFL VOCABULARY

DEVELOPING WORD ATTACK SKILLS

When readers find an unfamiliar word in a sentence, they are sometimes able to determine its meaning by reading the other words in the sentence. The other words give the “context” that allows readers to make an educated guess about the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

Words fit into contexts in two ways. One is purely grammatical: The *form* of the word is grammatically correct for its position in the sentence. For example, you know that the space between “the” and “student” belongs to an adjective, so you know that “brilliant” fits into that space correctly, while “brilliance,” which is a noun, does not.

However, we already know that on TOEFL vocabulary questions all of the possible answers fit the grammatical context of the sentence. Therefore, the degree of success you will have on this part of the TOEFL depends upon whether you understand a word’s *meaning* as well as its form. That in turn depends upon how well you can understand its parts and how well you can read its context for clues to its meaning. In this chapter, you will learn how to determine the meaning of a word by studying its parts.

Many English words consist of more than one part. Let’s examine three important parts you should know in order to improve your vocabulary.

Word Roots

Many words in English contain Latin and Greek roots. These roots convey the basic meaning of the word and they occur repeatedly throughout the language. Knowing these roots will help you to determine the meaning of words with which you are not familiar. On page 33 is a list of common roots and their general meanings.

Learning these roots will help you to recognize the basic meaning of hundreds of English words. Let’s look at the word *manufacture*. Manufacture is a combination of two root words, *manu* and *fact*. Using the list

CHAPTER 5

THE ESSENTIAL TOEFL VOCABULARY

This chapter contains 30 lessons. Each lesson presents a set of key TOEFL words. Following the entries, there are 10 matching exercises. At the end of each lesson, there are 10 TOEFL-like vocabulary questions that contain most of the words presented in each lesson. All of these TOEFL-like questions provide an excellent vocabulary review as well as solid preparation for not only the reading section of the TOEFL, but also for all sections of the TOEFL.

You should study the lessons in order. For example, after studying lesson 1, go directly to lesson 2. Do not study lessons out of order. The book is designed to provide systematic review of words in previous lessons. By studying the lessons out of order, you will be defeating the review system.

Let's examine a sample entry to see the kinds of information you will learn.

intricate

adj. having many parts; finely detailed

adv. intricately
n. intricacy

syn. complex

The *intricate* design of the vase made it a valuable piece for her collection.

I cannot begin to understand all of the *intricacies* of modern automobile motors.

The entry features the word *intricate*. Directly under the word, you will find other forms of the same word. These words have the same general meaning; they represent the different parts of speech of the word. For each of the forms, the part of speech is given. The following abbreviations for parts of speech are used in the word entries:

LESSON 1

- **abroad**
- **abrupt**
- **acceptable**
- **acclaim**
- **adverse**
- **aspect**
- **attractive**
- **autonomous**
- **chronic**
- **disapproval**
- **disruptive**
- **haphazardly**
- **intervention**
- **persistent**
- **postpone**
- **valid**
- **withdraw**

abroad *adv.* to or in another country
syn. overseas; internationally

Louis Armstrong often traveled *abroad*.

Living *abroad* can be an educational experience.

abrupt *adj.* quick; without warning
adv. abruptly *syn.* sudden
n. abruptness

There was an *abrupt* change in the weather.

After the incident everyone left *abruptly*.

acceptable *adj.* allowable or satisfactory
v. accept *syn.* permissible
adv. acceptably *n.* acceptability
adj. accepting

The idea was *acceptable* to everyone.

The registrar *accepted* more applicants than he should have.

acclaim *n.* enthusiastic approval; applause
adj. acclaimed *syn.* praise
n. acclamation

Leonardo DiCaprio has earned *acclaim* abroad as an actor.

Acclaimed authors often win Pulitzer Prizes.

adverse *adj.* displeasing, objectionable, or bad
adv. adversely *syn.* unfavorable
n. adversity *n.* adversary

The game was cancelled by officials due to the *adverse* weather conditions.

His indecision *adversely* affected his job performance.

aspect

n. a part or characteristic of something; an element
syn. facet

I would trust the professional's advice in that *aspect* of economics.

There are many fascinating *aspects* to the complex procedure.

attractive

v. attract
n. attraction
n. attractiveness
adv. attractively

adj. calling attention to; pleasing; creating interest; pretty
syn. appealing

The idea of working four, ten-hour work days was *attractive* to many employees.

The major *attraction* of the show was a speech by the president.

autonomous

adv. autonomously

adj. by itself; with no association
syn. independent

Mexico became an *autonomous* state in 1817.

Although working closely with the government, all businesses function *autonomously*.

chronic

adv. chronically

adj. always present; continual
syn. constant

The author's *chronic* headache prevented her from finishing the chapter.

He is *chronically* late to class.

disapproval

v. disapprove
adv. disapprovingly

n. the act of disagreeing; not giving approval
syn. objection

Their *disapproval* of the plan caused the experiment to be abandoned.

The students *disapproved* of the level of difficulty of the test.

disruptive

v. disrupt
n. disruption
adv. disruptively

adj. causing confusion and interruption
syn. disturbing

Frequent questions during lectures can be *disruptive*.

The storm caused a *disruption* in bus service.

haphazardly

adj. haphazard
n. haphazardness

adv. having no order or pattern; by chance

syn. arbitrarily; carelessly

It was obvious that the house was built *haphazardly*.

Susan completed the assignment in a *haphazard* way.

intervention

v. intervene

n. taking action; be involved

syn. involvement

The tutor's *intervention* helped him improve his grade.

Some world leaders decide to not *intervene* in the affairs of other nations.

persistent

v. persist
n. persistence
adv. persistently

adj. continuous; refusing to give up; firm in action or decision

syn. constant

The attorney's *persistent* questioning unsettled the witness.

Her *persistence* earned her a spot on the team.

postpone

adj. postponable
n. postponement

v. to change to a later time; to delay

syn. reschedule

The referees decided to *postpone* the soccer match.

The *postponement* of the meeting upset the impatient club members.

valid

n. validity
adv. validly

adj. producing a desired result based on truths or facts

syn. convincing

The students had a *valid* reason for missing class.

The professor questioned the *validity* of the test results.

withdraw

n. withdrawal

v. to remove, take out, or take back

syn. extract

The player *withdrew* from the competition.

Gloria had to make a *withdrawal* from her savings to pay tuition.

MATCHING

Choose the synonym.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. withdraw | 6. haphazardly |
| (A) extract | (A) suddenly |
| (B) describe | (B) secretly |
| (C) copy | (C) carelessly |
| (D) convince | (D) constantly |
| | |
| 2. autonomous | 7. constant |
| (A) independent | (A) disruption |
| (B) sudden | (B) acceptable |
| (C) international | (C) abrupt |
| (D) abrupt | (D) persistent |
| | |
| 3. chronic | 8. valid |
| (A) famous | (A) attractive |
| (B) visible | (B) convincing |
| (C) constant | (C) normal |
| (D) ordinary | (D) abrupt |
| | |
| 4. intervene | 9. unfavorably |
| (A) involve | (A) attractively |
| (B) oppose | (B) haphazardly |
| (C) interrupt | (C) acceptably |
| (D) create | (D) adversely |
| | |
| 5. aspect | 10. postpone |
| (A) attraction | (A) respond |
| (B) talent | (B) reschedule |
| (C) characteristic | (C) assert |
| (D) objection | (D) reveal |

LESSON 1—MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST QUESTIONS

1. A customs union is an organization of **autonomous** countries that agree that international trade between member states is free of restrictions. They place a tariff or other restriction on products entering the customs union from nonmember states. One of the best-known customs unions is the European Union, or EU.

The word **autonomous** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) massive
- (B) acclaimed
- (C) prosperous
- (D) independent

2. The search to hide natural body odors led to the discovery and use of musk. Musk is a scent used in perfumes. It is obtained from the sex glands of the male musk deer, a small deer native to the mountainous regions of the Himalayas. The odor of musk, penetrating and **persistent**, is believed to act as an aphrodisiac. In animals, musk serves the functions of defining territory, providing recognition, and attracting mates.

The word **persistent** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) attractive
- (B) disruptive
- (C) constant
- (D) pleasant

3. Until the late nineteenth century all rubber was extracted **haphazardly** from trees found in the jungles of South America. It was expensive and the supply was uncertain. However, during the 1860s the idea of transporting rubber trees to the British colonies in Asia was conceived. This led to the larger-scale cultivation of rubber trees on organized plantations.

The word **haphazardly** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) carelessly
- (B) secretly
- (C) constantly
- (D) dangerously

4. Some animals use bold coloration to **disrupt** a would-be predator's perception. Other animals have color patterns that blend with their surroundings. Such coloration serves for protection, to attract mates, or to distract enemies. Called cryptic coloration, it uses the animals' living place, habits, and means of defense. Cryptic coloration may blend an animal so well with its environment that it is virtually invisible.

The word **disrupt** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) disturb
- (B) distinctive
- (C) brilliant
- (D) unfavorable

5. Cognitive approaches to therapy assume that emotional disorders are the result of irrational beliefs or perceptions. The mind may interpret an event as scary or calming, happy or sad. The emotionally disordered person may perceive **adverse** events as personal failures. Cognitive psychotherapies seek to make the patient aware of the irrationality of this perception and to substitute more rational evaluations of such events.

The word **adverse** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) monotonous
- (B) threatening
- (C) inoffensive
- (D) unfavorable

6. Increasingly, authorities are uneasy about teenagers who talk or text on their phones while driving. For many, phone use and driving are perfectly compatible; others, however, are more easily distracted, especially while listening to music. The growing number of accidents associated with phone use supports this claim. Many communities now **disapprove of** this habit so much that they have forbidden anyone of any age to use cell phones while driving.

In stating that many communities now **disapprove of** these phones, the author means that they

- (A) fully endorse their popularity.
- (B) condemn or oppose their use.
- (C) favor their use only by adults.
- (D) agree to their unrestricted use.

7. Fans are used to circulate air in rooms and buildings and for cooling and drying people, materials, or products. Even though air that is circulated by a fan is comforting, no fan actually cools the air. Air conditioners use a complicated process to cool the air and create changes in temperature. While repairing a fan is relatively simple, a professional repairman will often have **to intervene** when home owners face problems with their air conditioning units.

The words **to intervene** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) to be interested in
- (B) to learn about
- (C) to get involved
- (D) to be prepared

8. Tornadoes strike in many areas of the world, but nowhere are they as frequent or as devastating as in the United States. A vast "tornado belt" embraces large portions of the Great Plains of the United States and the southeastern portion of the country. Tornadoes pose the greatest threats to these areas, which are especially vulnerable to **abrupt** changes in weather conditions.

The word **abrupt** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) sudden
- (B) vivid
- (C) sharp
- (D) direct

9. For women in the 1920s, freedom in dress reflected their new freedom to take up careers. Only a small percentage of women pursued such opportunities, but the revolutionary change affected the types of clothes worn by most women. For example, trousers became **acceptable** attire for almost all activities. This milestone in the fashion world favored more stylish and comfortable clothing instead of more formal modes of dress.

The word **acceptable** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) usable
- (B) endurable
- (C) believable
- (D) permissible

SCORE HIGHER with BARRON'S

For more than 75 years, BARRON'S experts have been helping students surpass their expectations on standardized tests. This book will help you expand your English vocabulary and earn a high score on the TOEFL.

- ✓ Includes the TOEFL's 500 most frequently encountered words to help you expand your English vocabulary
- ✓ Features a sample practice reading test with answer key to help you assess your mastery of TOEFL vocabulary
- ✓ Provides advice on getting the most out of your dictionary and thesaurus
- ✓ Contains practical strategies to help you learn and retain word meanings
- ✓ Extensive vocabulary practice exercises help test your word knowledge

Updated word list reflects the advanced reading level of the TOEFL!

