



## Writing Topics

Topics in the following list may appear in your actual test. You should become familiar with this list before you take the computer-based TOEFL test. Remember that when you take the test you will **not** have a choice of topics. You must write only on the topic that is assigned to you.

When choosing a place to live, what do you consider most important: location, size, style, number of rooms, types of rooms, or other features? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Films can tell us a lot about the country in which they were made. What have you learned about a country from watching its movies? Use specific examples and details to support your response.

Because of developments in communication and transportation, countries are becoming more and more alike. How is your country becoming more similar to other places in the world? Use specific examples and details to support your answer.

People attend colleges or universities for many different reasons (for example, new experiences, career preparation, increased knowledge). Why do **you** think people attend colleges? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

If you could change one important thing about your hometown, what would you change? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

If you had the time and money to invent something **new**, what product would you develop? Use specific details to explain why this product is needed.

Some people say that physical exercise should be a required part of every school day. Other people believe that students should spend the whole school day on academic studies. Which opinion do you agree with? Give reasons to support your answer.

Some people prefer to eat at food stands or restaurants. Other people prefer to prepare and eat food at home. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some high schools require all students to wear school uniforms. Other high schools permit students to decide what to wear to school. Which of these two school policies do you think is better? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

If you could make one important change in a school that you attended, what change would you make? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

Your school has received a gift of money. What do you think is the best way for your school to spend this money? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.

It has been said, "Not everything that is learned is contained in books." Compare and contrast knowledge gained from experience with knowledge gained from books. In your opinion, which source is more important? Why?

Some people believe that the best way of learning about life is by listening to the advice of family and friends. Other people believe that the best way of learning about life is through personal experience. Compare the advantages of these two different ways of learning about life. Which do you think is preferable? Use specific examples to support your preference.

Some people believe that university students should be required to attend classes. Others believe that going to classes should be optional for students. Which point of view do you agree with? Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.

Some people enjoy change, and they look forward to new experiences. Others like their lives to stay the same, and they do not change their usual habits. Compare these two approaches to life. Which approach do you prefer? Explain why.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Playing a game is fun only when you win. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some people prefer to spend time with one or two close friends. Others choose to spend time with a large number of friends. Compare the advantages of each choice. Which of these two ways of spending time do you prefer? Give reasons to support your answer.

Effective advertising sells products. Describe an advertisement and explain why it is effective. Use specific details to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Playing games teaches us about life. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some people think that the family is the most important influence on young adults. Other people think that friends are the most important influence on young adults. Which view do you agree with? Use examples to support your position.

Some people choose friends who are different from themselves. Others choose friends who are similar to themselves. Compare the advantages of having friends who are different from you with the advantages of having friends who are similar to you. Which kind of friend do you prefer for yourself? Why?

Neighbors are the people who live near us. In your opinion, what are the qualities of a good neighbor? Use specific details and examples in your answer.

The twentieth century has seen great change. In your opinion, what is **one** change that should be remembered about this century? Give specific reasons and details to explain your choice.

Some people believe that a college or university education should be available to all students. Others believe that higher education should be available only to good students. Discuss these views. Which view do you agree with? Explain why.

The government has announced that it plans to build a new university. Some people think that **your** community would be a good place to locate the university. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a new university in your community. Use specific details in your discussion.



## Writing Topics (continued)

Think of the most important class you have ever taken. Why did you enjoy this class so much? Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Universities should give the same amount of money to their students' sports activities as they give to their university libraries.  
Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Some people think that children should begin their formal education at a very early age and should spend most of their time on school studies. Others believe that young children should spend most of their time playing. Compare these two views. Which view do you agree with? Why?

Some people prefer to spend most of their time alone. Others like to be with friends most of the time. Do you prefer to spend your time alone or with friends? Give reasons to support your answer.

Which activity is most important?

- reducing pollution in your neighborhood
- helping a child learn to read
- visiting an elderly person regularly

Explain your choice using reasons and details.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
People should read **only** those books that are about real events, real people, and established facts. Use specific reasons and details to support your opinion.

You need to travel from your home to a place 40 miles (64 kilometers) away. Compare the different kinds of transportation you could use. Tell which method of travel you would choose. Give specific reasons for your choice.

Some people prefer to spend their free time outdoors. Other people prefer to spend their leisure time indoors. Would you prefer to be outside or would you prefer to be inside for your leisure activities? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Books are not needed any more because people can read information on computers. Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.

Some people believe that students should be given one long vacation each year. Others believe that students should have several short vacations throughout the year. Which viewpoint do you agree with? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

Students at universities often have a choice of places to live. They may choose to live in university dormitories, or they may choose to live in apartments in the community. Compare the advantages of living in university housing with the advantages of living in an apartment in the community. Which would you prefer? Give reasons for your preference.

What do you consider to be the most important room in a house? Why is this room more important to you than any other room? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Would you prefer to live in a traditional house or in a modern apartment building? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
A person's childhood years (the time from birth to 12 years of age) are the most important years of a person's life. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
People should sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing.  
Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Your country is going to build a new national university. What academic area should be the main focus of this university? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Parents are the best teachers. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

In the twentieth century, food has become easier to prepare. Has this change improved the way people live? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Your community has enough money to hire **one** new employee. Which one of the following (three choices will be presented in the actual test) should your community hire?

- a community health worker
- a counselor
- an emergency medical technician
- a firefighter
- a judge
- a landscaper
- a police officer
- a recreation center director
- a teacher

Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Television, newspapers, magazines, and other media pay too much attention to the personal lives of famous people such as public figures and celebrities. Use specific reasons and details to explain your opinion.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
Children should be required to help with household tasks as soon as they are able to do so. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some young children spend a great amount of their time practicing sports. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this. Use specific reasons and examples in your answer.

Some people believe that the Earth is being harmed (damaged) by human activity. Others feel that human activity makes the Earth a better place to live. What is your opinion? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

A gift (such as a soccer ball, a camera, or an animal) can contribute to a child's development. What gift would you give to help a child develop? Why? Use reasons and specific examples to support your choice.

Some people pay money for the things they want or need. Other people trade products or goods for what they need. Compare the advantages of these two ways of obtaining things. Which way do you prefer? Explain why.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
People are never too old to attend college or university.  
Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Read and think about the following statement:  
**Only** people who earn a lot of money are successful. Do you agree or disagree with this definition of success? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.



Read and think about the following statement: People behave differently when they wear different clothes. Do you agree that different clothes influence the way people behave? Use specific examples to support your answer.

What is the most important animal in your country? Why is this animal important? Use reasons and specific details to explain your answer.

Some items (such as clothes or furniture) can be made by hand or by machine. Which do you prefer — items made by hand or items made by machine? Use reasons and specific examples to explain your choice.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A zoo has no useful purpose. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

Some people prefer to live in a small town. Others prefer to live in a big city. Which place would you prefer to live in? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

Entertainers such as actors, singers, and comedians contribute as much to society as professionals such as doctors, engineers, and teachers. Do you agree or disagree? Use reasons and specific examples to support your opinion.

People learn in different ways. Some people learn by doing things; other people learn by reading about things; others learn by listening to people talk about things. Which of these methods of learning is best for you? Use specific examples to support your choice.

Some people trust their first impressions about a person's character because they believe these judgments are generally correct. Other people do not judge a person's character quickly because they believe first impressions are often wrong. Compare these two attitudes. Which attitude do you agree with? Support your choice with specific examples.

A university plans to develop a new research center in your country. Some people want a center for business research. Other people want a center for research in agriculture (farming). Which of these two kinds of research centers do you recommend for your country? Give reasons for your recommendation.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? There is nothing that young people can teach older people. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

How do movies or television influence people's behavior? Use reasons and specific examples to explain your answer.

Music tells us something about a culture. What does the music of your country reveal about the culture of your country? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.

It has recently been announced that a new movie theater may be built in your neighborhood. Do you support or oppose this plan? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

Is it better for children to participate in team sports or individual sports? Why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

A company has announced that it wishes to build a large factory near your community. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this new influence on your community. Do you support or oppose the factory?

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Television has destroyed communication among friends and family.  
Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

In some countries people are no longer allowed to smoke in many public places and office buildings. Do you think this is a good law or a bad law? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Imagine that you have received some land to use as you wish. How would you use this land? Use specific details to explain your answer.

Many parts of the world are losing important natural resources, such as forests, animals, or clean water. Choose **one** resource that is disappearing and explain why it needs to be saved. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

When people move to another country, some of them decide to follow the customs of the new country. Others prefer to keep their own customs. Compare these two choices. Which one do you prefer? Support your answer with specific details.

Decisions can be made quickly, or they can be made after careful thought. Read and think about the following statement: The decisions that people make **quickly** are always wrong. Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Use reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Someone who was considered an educated person in the past (for example, in your parents' or grandparents' generation) would not be considered an educated person today. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is more important for students to study history and literature than it is for them to study science and mathematics. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
All students should be required to study art and music in high school. Give specific reasons to support your opinion.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
It is better to make the wrong decision than to make no decision at all. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Reading fiction (such as novels and short stories) is more enjoyable than watching movies. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Some people think we should spend as much money as possible exploring outer space (for example, traveling to the moon and to other planets). Other people disagree and think we should spend this money for our basic needs on Earth. Which of these two opinions do you agree with? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

English is quickly becoming the world language. Some people think this is good. Others think it is not good. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of English as the world language. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

What is one of the most important decisions you have made? Why was this decision important? Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? When people succeed, it is because of hard work; luck has nothing to do with success. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.



## Writing Topics (continued)

Some people think that governments should spend as much money as possible on developing or buying computer technology. Other people disagree and think that this money should be spent on more basic needs. Which one of these opinions do you agree with? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

It is better for children to grow up in the countryside than in a big city. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to develop your essay.

In general, people are living longer now. Discuss the causes of this phenomenon. Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay.

In general, people are living longer now. How will this change affect society? Use specific details and examples to develop your essay.

Choose a building that has special meaning for you. Explain why this building is important to you. Support your explanation with specific details.

We all work or will work in our jobs with many different kinds of people. In your opinion, what are some important characteristics of a co-worker (someone you work closely with)? Use reasons and specific examples to explain why these characteristics are important.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Sometimes it is better not to tell the truth. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

In some countries, teenagers have jobs while they are still students. Do you think this is a good idea? Support your opinion by using specific reasons and details.

A person you know is planning to move to your town or city. What do you think this person would like and dislike about living in your town or city? Why? Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Private companies should spend more money to clean up pollution in the environment. Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay.

In the future, students may have the choice of studying at home by using technology such as computers or television or of studying at traditional schools. Which would you prefer? Use reasons and specific details to explain your choice.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? You can learn just as much by losing as you can by winning. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

When famous people such as actors, athletes, and rock stars give their opinions, many people listen. Do you think we should pay attention to these opinions? Give specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

When people need to complain about a product or poor service, some prefer to complain in writing and others prefer to complain in person. Which way do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

People remember special gifts or presents that they have received. Why? Give specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some famous athletes and entertainers earn millions of dollars every year. Do you think these people deserve such high salaries? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Your school has enough money to purchase either computers for students or books for the library. Which should your school choose to buy — computers or books? Use specific reasons and examples to support your recommendation.

If you could know something about the future, what would you choose to know about and why? Give reasons and details to support your choice.

People listen to music for different reasons and at different times. Why is music important to many people? Give specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

When students move to a new school, they sometimes face problems. How can schools help these students with their problems? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your answer.

Every generation of people is different in important ways. How is your generation different from your parents' generation? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your answer.

You have the opportunity to visit a foreign country for two weeks. Which country would you like to visit? Use specific reasons and details to explain your choice.

You want to persuade someone to study your native language. What reasons would you give? Support your answer with specific details.

You have been asked to suggest improvements to a park that you have visited. This might be a city park, a regional park, or a national park. What improvements would you make? Why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your recommendations.

If you were asked to send one thing representing your country to an international exhibition, what would you choose? Why? Use specific reasons and details to explain your choice.

There are many different kinds of advertising (on the radio, on television, in newspapers, in magazines, and on billboards). In your opinion, which **one** of these kinds of advertising is the most effective? Why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Many people have a close relationship with their pets. These people treat their birds, cats, or other animals as members of their family. In your opinion, are such relationships good? Why or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

A friend of yours has received some money and plans to use all of it either to go on a vacation or buy a car. Your friend has asked you for advice. Compare your friend's two choices and explain which one you think your friend should choose. Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.

Advertising helps to sell products. Describe the qualities of an effective advertisement. Use specific details and examples to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A sense of humor can sometimes be helpful in difficult situations. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some people think that they can learn better by themselves than with a teacher. Others think that it is always better to have a teacher. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons to develop your essay.

What are some important qualities of a good supervisor (boss)? Use specific details and examples to explain why these qualities are important.





Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Teachers should be paid according to how much their students learn.  
Give specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Should governments spend more money on improving roads and highways, or should governments spend more money on improving public transportation (buses, trains, subways)? Why? Use specific reasons and details to develop your essay.

Choose **one** of the following careers (three choices will be presented in the actual test) and explain why it is important to society.

accountant	actor
airplane pilot	architect
computer programmer	dentist
farmer	lawyer
tour guide	

Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.

It has recently been announced that a shopping center may be built in your neighborhood. Do you support or oppose this plan? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

It is generally agreed that society benefits from the work of its members. Compare the contributions of artists to society with the contributions of scientists. Which type of contribution do you think is valued more by your society? Give specific reasons to support your answer.

Many people visit museums when they travel to new places. Why do you think people visit museums? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
High schools should allow students to study the courses that students want to study. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
It is better to be a member of a group than to be the leader of a group. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some people prefer to plan activities for their free time very carefully. Others choose not to make any plans at all for their free time. Compare the benefits of planning free time activities with the benefits of not making plans. Which do you prefer — planning or not planning for your leisure time? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

Schools should ask students to evaluate their teachers. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People are never satisfied with what they have; they always want something more or something different. Use specific reasons to support your answer.

Some people say that advertising encourages us to buy things we really do not need. Others say that advertisements tell us about new products that may improve our lives. Which viewpoint do you agree with? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

You have enough money to purchase either a house or a business. Which would you choose to buy? Give specific reasons to explain your choice.

Some students prefer to study alone. Others prefer to study with a group of students. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Some people like doing work by hand. Others prefer using machines. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

It is sometimes said that borrowing money from a friend can harm or damage the friendship. Do you agree? Why or why not? Use reasons and specific examples to explain your answer.

It has recently been announced that a new restaurant may be built in your neighborhood. Do you support or oppose this plan? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

It has recently been announced that a new high school may be built in your neighborhood. Do you support or oppose this plan? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

You have been told that dormitory rooms at your university must be shared by two students. Would you rather have the university assign a student to share a room with you, or would you rather choose your own roommate? Use specific reasons and details to explain your answer.