

# Lesson 1

## Sentences About Photographs

### Lesson Outline

- **Format**
- **Tactics**
- **Preview Test**
- **Testing Points and Skill-Building Exercises**
  - A. *Sentences with Meaning Problems*
  - B. *Sentences with Sound Problems*
  - C. *Sentences with Sound and Meaning Problems*
- **Review Test**

### Formal

#### Part I

The first part of TOEIC consists of twenty numbered photographs that are in your test book. For each photograph, you will hear on the audio program four sentences that refer to it. You must decide which of the sentences best describes something you can see in each photograph.

The photographs are pictures of ordinary situations. Around two-thirds of the photographs involve a person or people; around one-third involve an object or a scene without people.

The sentences are short and grammatically simple. They generally deal with the most important aspects of the photographs, but some focus on small details or on objects or people in the background.

Each item is introduced by a statement that tells you to look at the next numbered photograph. The pacing for this part is fast: There is only a five-second pause between items, and there is no pause between sentences (A), (B), (C), and (D).

### Tactics

#### Part I

1. Always complete each item as quickly as possible so that you can preview the photograph for the next item. Don't wait for the statement that says, "Now look at photograph number \_\_\_\_."
2. If you are previewing a photograph that involves a person or people, look for aspects of the photographs that are often mentioned in the sentences:
  - What are the people doing?
  - Where are they?
  - Who are they? (Is there a uniform or piece of equipment or anything else that indicates their profession or role?)
  - What distinguishes them? (Is there a hat, a mustache, a purse, a pair of glasses, a tie, or anything else that differentiates the people?)
  - What do the people's expressions tell you? (Do they look happy? Unhappy? Excited? Bored? Upset?)
3. If you are previewing a photograph of an object, focus on these aspects:
  - What is it?
  - What is it made of?
  - What — if anything — is it doing?
  - Where is it?
4. If you are previewing a photograph of a scene, focus on these aspects:
  - Where is it?

- What is in the foreground (the “front” of the picture)?
  - What — if anything — is happening?
  - What is in the background (the “distant” part of the picture)?
5. Don't mark an answer until you have heard all four choices. When you hear a choice that you think is correct, rest your pencil on that oval on your answer sheet. If you change your mind and hear a sentence that you think is better, move your pencil to that choice. Once you have heard all four sentences, mark the oval that your pencil is resting on. (This technique helps you remember which choice you think is best.)
  6. Try to eliminate choices with problems in *meaning*, *sound*, and *sound + meaning*. (There is more information about recognizing these problems in the main part of this lesson.)
  7. Most correct answers involve verbs in the simple present (“The furniture looks new.”) or present progressive tense (“The woman is riding a bicycle.”). Be suspicious of answer choices involving any other tenses.
  8. Never leave any blanks. Always guess before going on to the next item.
  9. As soon as you have finished marking the answer, stop looking at and thinking about that photograph and move on to the next item.

## Preview Test Part I



Start the audio program and read along as the directions are read.

**Directions:** For each item, there is a photograph in the book and four short sentences about it on the audio program. The sentences are not written out, so you must listen carefully.

You must choose the one sentence — (A), (B), (C), or (D) — that best describes what can be seen in the photograph, then mark the correct answer.

Look at the example



You see this photograph:

Listen to the four sentences:

- (A) (B) (C) (D)

Choice (C) — “He’s waving to someone” — is the best description of what can be seen in the photograph.

1.



(A) (B) (C) (D)

2.



(A) (B) (C) (D)

3.



- (A) (B) (C) (D)

4.



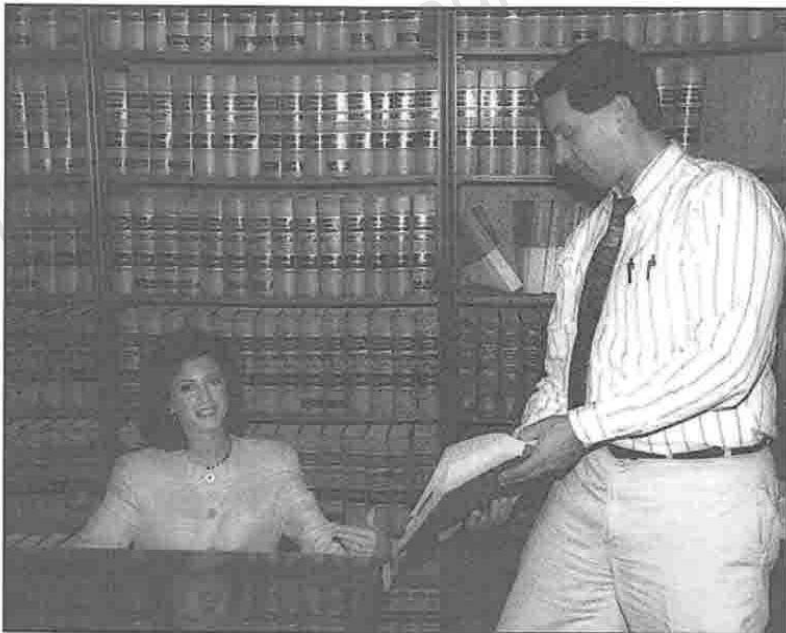
- (A) (B) (C) (D)

5.



(A) (B) (C) (D)

6.



(A) (B) (C) (D)

## Testing Points and Skill-Building Exercises

The correct answer for a Part I item is one that correctly describes what can be seen in the photograph. The distractors — incorrect answers — are incorrect for one of the following reasons:

- A. **Meaning** — The sentence does not correctly describe what is shown in the photograph.
- B. **Sound** — The sentence contains a word that sounds like — but is not the same as — something visible in the photograph.
- C. **Meaning + Sound** — The sentence not only is an incorrect description of what is shown in the photograph but also contains a sound-alike word.

Let's look at the first item from the Preview Test to see examples of each type of distractor.

### Sample Item



- (A) She's holding the fruit.
- (B) She's playing a game.
- (C) She's preparing some food.
- (D) She's playing music on the flute.

Choice (A) involves a **sound** problem — the girl is holding a flute, not a fruit. Choice (B) is a problem of **meaning**. She's not playing a game, she's playing a musical instrument. Choice (C) involves a **meaning + sound** problem: The girl is not preparing some food; she is playing a flute. (Flute and food sound somewhat alike.) Choice (D) best describes what is pictured in the photograph.

# Exercise

1.1

**Focus:** Identifying types of distractors for Part I items.

**Directions:** There are five photographs taken from the Sample Test section. The sentences spoken about them are printed next to the photographs. Identify each sentence according to the following system:

- M = **Meaning** problem  
S = **Sound** problem  
M + S = **Meaning + sound** problem  
C = **Correct** answer



Now start the audio program.

1.



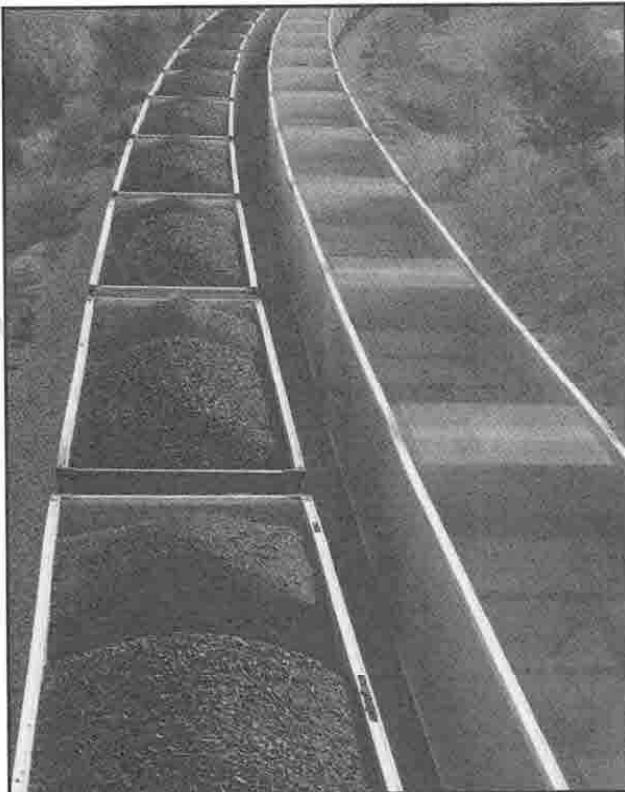
- (A) The couple is painting the wall.  
— (B) The woman is pushing a stroller.  
— (C) They're hanging a painting on the wall.  
— (D) They're planting a garden.

2.



- (A) There is a lock on the door.
- (B) There are some cards on a rock.
- (C) There is a card in the time clock.
- (D) There are several cars lined up.

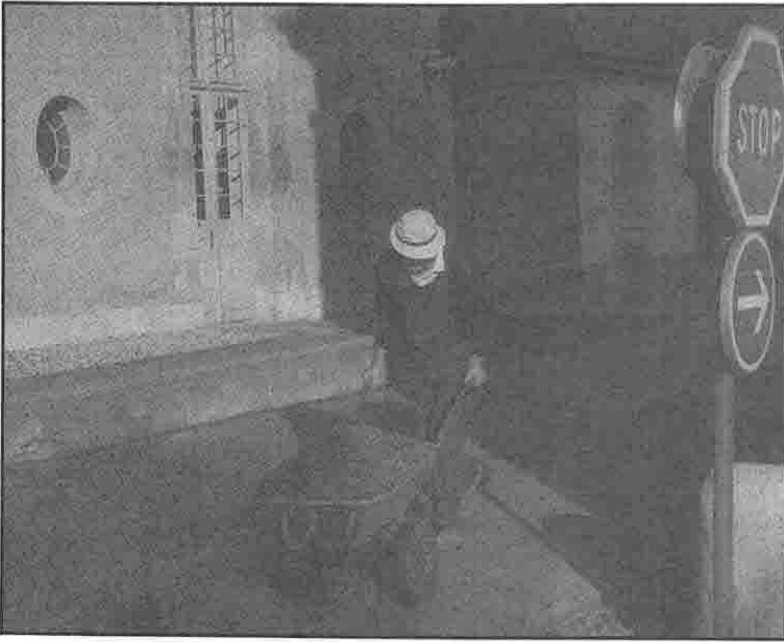
3.



- (A) The trains are passing through a tunnel.
- (B) A loaded train is passing by an empty one.
- (C) One train is far ahead of the other one.
- (D) Both trains are loaded with coal.



4.



- (A) He's pushing a steel barrel.
- (B) He's going the wrong way.
- (C) He has just stepped out of the shadow.
- (D) He's waiting at a stop sign.

5.



- (A) The man is holding the book open.
- (B) They're standing by themselves.
- (C) The books are all of different sizes.
- (D) The woman is pointing at the page.