

# Lesson

# 3

## Short Conversations

### *Lesson Outline*

- **Format**
- **Tactics**
- **Preview Test**
- **Testing Points and Skill-Building Exercises**
  - A. *Overview Questions*
  - B. *Detail Questions*
  - C. *Inference Questions*
- **Review Test**

### *Format*

#### Part III

This part of TOEIC consists of thirty short conversations, either between a man and a woman or between two men. The conversations are three-part exchanges: The first speaker says something, the second speaker responds, and the first speaker says something else. Two typical patterns are given below:

Speaker 1: Asks a question.  
Speaker 2: Responds to the question.  
Speaker 1: Comments on the response.

Speaker 1: Makes a statement.  
Speaker 2: Questions the statement.  
Speaker 1: Responds to the question.

In your test book, each question is written out, followed by four possible answer choices. Your job is to decide which one of these best answers the question. Then you need to mark the corresponding answer on your answer sheet.

### *Tactics*

#### Part III

1. Between each conversation there is an eight-second pause. This may not sound like a long time, but you can actually accomplish quite a bit during this pause. You need to mark the answer for the item that you just heard and then preview the next item. Previewing the item consists of reading the question — this tells you what to listen for — and of quickly looking over the four answer choices.
2. While listening to the conversation, keep your eyes on the answer choices. Don't close your eyes or look away. Try to evaluate the four choices as you are listening.
3. Remember that distractors are sometimes mentioned in the conversations but are not answers to the question. Don't choose an answer just because you hear a word or two from the answer in the conversation.
4. If the correct answer is not obvious, try to eliminate answers that seem to be incorrect. If more than one answer choice is left, take a guess.
5. Mark your answers as quickly as possible so that you can preview the next item.
6. Never leave any answers blank. If you are not sure, always guess.



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

Directions: In this part of the test, you hear short conversations involving two speakers. Each conversation is spoken only once and is not written out in the book, so listen carefully.

In your book, you will read a question about each conversation. Following each question are four answer choices. Choose the best one — (A), (B), (C), or (D) — and mark the answer.

Look at the example

You hear:

You read:

How will the man and his wife travel to the Grand Canyon?

- (A) By plane.
- (B) In a rental car.
- (C) By bus.
- (D) In a taxi.

Choice (B), "In a rental car," is the best answer to the question, "How will the man and his wife travel to the Grand Canyon?" You should choose (B).

1. What is the problem?
  - (A) The contract cannot be found.
  - (B) The man did not know the way.
  - (C) The contract is confusing.
  - (D) The man arrived too soon.
2. When will Rita leave?
  - (A) Monday.
  - (B) Tuesday.
  - (C) Wednesday.
  - (D) Thursday.
3. Where are they?
  - (A) At a theater.
  - (B) At a party.
  - (C) At an airport.
  - (D) At a restaurant.
4. What are they discussing?
  - (A) A new outfit that the woman is wearing.
  - (B) How people dress at the man's company.
  - (C) Where to buy clothes for work.
  - (D) A social event that the man attended.

5. Why is Mr. Tupton calling?
- (A) To complain about an order.  
 (B) To discuss a legal problem.  
 (C) To reassure a customer.  
 (D) To place an order.
6. What is George planning to do?
- (A) Watch a video.  
 (B) Talk to the manager.  
 (C) Change his style.  
 (D) Read a book.
7. What advice does the woman give?
- (A) To stay on the job.  
 (B) To take a risk.  
 (C) To apply for another position.  
 (D) To give someone a present.
8. Who is the first speaker?
- (A) A lawyer.  
 (B) A hotel clerk.  
 (C) A journalist.  
 (D) A dry cleaner.
9. What do the speakers think of the book?
- (A) It is very enjoyable.  
 (B) It is too critical.  
 (C) It is difficult to find.  
 (D) It is hard to understand.
10. What is Brian doing now?
- (A) Designing products.  
 (B) Working as a manager.  
 (C) Studying management.  
 (D) Teaching a class.

## Testing Points and Skill-Building Exercises

Many kinds of questions may be asked about the conversations, but they can be divided into these general categories:

- A. Overview questions  
 B. Detail questions  
 C. Inference questions

### A. Overview Questions

These questions require you to have a "global" or overall understanding of the dialogs that you hear. There are four kinds of overview questions:

Types of Overview Questions	Typical Question Words
1. Questions about locations	1. Where . . . ?
2. Questions about occupations	2. Who . . . ?
3. Questions about activities	3. What . . . doing?
4. Questions about topics	4. What . . . talking about?

## Questions About Locations

These ask where the conversation occurs. There are a number of ways these questions can be asked:

- *Where are they?*
- *Where are the speakers?*
- *Where is the man/woman?*
- *Where is the conversation taking place?*

The answer choices for these questions are the names of four locations of various types — for example, a restaurant, a bank, an advertising agency, a tailor shop. To answer these questions, you can't simply listen for the name of the location, which is seldom provided in the conversation. You need to listen for vocabulary that is tied to a certain location. For example, if you hear the words *reservations*, *first class*, and *tickets*, the answer will probably be "In a travel agency." However, don't choose an answer on the basis of just one of these words or phrases. The word *reservations* could also be heard in a restaurant or hotel; the phrase *first class* could also be heard at a post office; the word *tickets* could also be heard at a concert, movie, or sporting event.

### Sample Item: Location Question

- M:** We don't have any reservations. Is it possible for us to get a table?  
**W:** You're in luck — a party of two just canceled their reservations. We can seat you in a few minutes.  
**M:** Great.

**Q.** Where are they?

- (A) At a theater.
- (B) At a party.
- (C) At an airport.
- At a restaurant.

The mention of *reservations*, *table*, and *party of two* indicates that they are at a restaurant.

## Exercise 3.1

**Focus:** Linking vocabulary to locations.

**Directions:** Match the locations below with the appropriate group of vocabulary words by writing the appropriate letter in the blank. The first one has been done as an example.

*There is no audio program for this exercise.*

- |                      |                      |                   |                     |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| a. airport           | g. construction site | m. hair salon     | r. post office      |
| b. apartment complex | h. courtroom         | n. hardware store | s. restaurant       |
| c. bakery            | i. farm              | o. hotel          | t. stationery store |
| d. bank              | j. football stadium  | p. jewelry store  | u. theater          |
| e. beach             | k. freeway           | q. laundromat     | v. travel agency    |
| f. computer store    | l. grocery store     |                   |                     |

1.     C    

rolls  
cake  
bread

2.           

stage  
cast  
box office

3.           

bulldozer  
hard hat  
crane

4.           

chain  
ring  
bracelet

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
menu  
terminal  
keyboard

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
dryer  
hangers  
detergent

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
terminal  
concourse  
gate

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
surf  
towel  
umbrella

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
pens  
envelopes  
letterhead

10. \_\_\_\_\_  
lanes  
drivers  
exit

11. \_\_\_\_\_  
suite  
front desk  
reservations

12. \_\_\_\_\_  
field  
barn  
fertilizer

## Occupation Questions

These questions are very similar to the ones asked about locations, but they ask about the job or profession of one or both of the speakers. There are various ways these questions can be asked:

- *Who is the man/woman?*
- *Who are they?*
- *What is he/she?*
- *What are they?*
- *What is the man's/woman's profession?*
- *What is the man's/woman's occupation?*
- *What is the man's/woman's job?*

The answer choices for these questions are the names of four occupations: banker, bus driver, travel agent, secretary, and so on. The occupations are seldom given directly in the conversations. As with location questions, you must listen for key vocabulary that ties the speaker or speakers to one of the answers. For example, if you hear the terms *fare*, *transfer*, and *next stop*, the correct answer will be "bus driver." Again, don't choose an answer based on just one term; the word *fare* could also be used by a travel agent.

### Sample Item: Location Question

**1st Man:** Front desk.

**2nd Man:** Yes, I'd like to have my suit cleaned and pressed.

**1st Man:** Certainly. I'll have someone come by your room in a few minutes to pick it up.

**Q.** Who is the first speaker?

- A hotel clerk.
- B A lawyer.
- C A journalist.
- D A dry cleaner.

The words *front desk* and *room* indicate that the first speaker is the clerk at the front desk of a hotel.