

# Lesson 7

## Short Readings

### Lesson Outline

- **Format**
- **Tactics**
- **Preview Test**
- **Types of Readings and Practice Exercises**
  - A. *Articles*
  - B. *Business Correspondence*
  - C. *Advertisements*
  - D. *Announcements*
  - E. *Non-Prose Readings*
- **Review Test**

### Format

#### Part VII

Part VII is the longest part of TOEIC. It's also the last part, so you may be starting to get tired. However, you need to stay focused on the test for a little longer. (Of course, if you want, you may work on part VII before you work on parts V and VI.)

Part VII consists of short reading passages followed by questions about the passages. There are four possible answer choices for each question. You must pick the best answer choice based on the information in the passage and then mark that answer on your answer sheet.

### The Passages

There are from twelve to fifteen passages. Most are quite short. Some consist of only three or four sentences; the longest have around 150 words. The passages deal with a wide variety of topics and involve many different types of written materials.

There are from two to five questions per passage for a total of 40 questions. They include these three main types:

1. Overview questions
2. Detail questions
3. Inference questions

- **Overview questions** occur after most of the passages. To answer overview questions correctly, you need a "global" (overall) understanding of the passage. The most common overview question asks about the purpose or the main topic of the passage:

*What does this article mainly discuss?*

*What is the purpose of this letter?*

*Why was this notice written?*

Some ask about the best title or heading of a passage:

*What is the best heading for this announcement?*

*Which of the following is the best title for the article?*

Other overview questions ask about the writer of the passage, the readers of the passage, or the place of publication:

*In what business is the writer of the passage?*

*What is the author's opinion of \_\_\_\_\_ ?*

*Who would be most interested in the information in this announcement?*

*For whom is this advertisement intended?*

*Where was this article probably published?*

- **Detail questions**, the most common type of Part VII question, ask about specific points in the passage. You will usually have to scan the passage to find and identify the information. Sometimes the answer and the information in the passage do not look the same. For example, a sentence in a passage may read "This process is not as simple as it once was." The correct answer may be "The process is now more complex."

Some detail questions are negative questions. These almost always include the word NOT, which is printed in uppercase (capital) letters:

*Based on the information in the passage, which of the following is NOT true?*

Negative questions usually take longer to answer than other detail questions.

- A few questions in Part VII are **inference questions**. The answers to these questions are not directly stated in the passage. Instead, you must draw a conclusion about the information that is given. Some typical inference questions:

*Which of these statements is probably true?*

*Which of the following can be inferred from this notice?*

## Answer Choices

All are believable answers to the questions. Incorrect choices often contain information that is presented somewhere in the passage but does not correctly answer the question.

## A Note About Vocabulary

Most of the vocabulary in the passages consists of relatively common English words and phrases, but there will certainly be expressions that you do not know. However, you can understand most of a reading and answer most of the questions even if you don't know the meaning of all the words. Also, you can guess the meaning of many unfamiliar words in the passages through context. In other words, you can use the familiar words in the sentence in which an unfamiliar word appears to get an idea of what the unfamiliar word means.

## Tactics

### Part VII

1. First, look at the passage quickly to get an idea of what it is about.
2. Next, read the questions about the passage. You should not read the answer choices at this time. Try to keep these questions in the back of your mind as you read the passage.
3. Read the passage. Try to read quickly, but read every word; don't just skim the passage. Look for answers to the questions that you read.
4. Answer the questions. For detail and inference questions, you will probably have to refer back to the passage. Use the eraser-end of your pencil as a pointer to focus your attention as you look for the information needed to answer the question.
5. If you are unsure of the answer, eliminate answer choices that are clearly wrong, and then guess.
6. Don't spend too much time on any item. If you find a question or even an entire passage confusing, guess at the answer or answers and come back to these items later if you have time.
7. If you have not answered all the questions and only a few minutes are left, read the remaining questions without reading the passages, and choose the answers that seem most logical.

## Preview Test Part VII

**Directions:** Questions in this part of the test are based on a wide range of reading materials, including articles, letters, advertisements, and notices. After reading the passage, decide which of the four choices — (A), (B), (C), or (D) — best answers the question and mark your answer. All answers should be based on what is stated in or on what can be inferred from the readings.

Now read the following example

La Plata Dinner Theater announces the opening of *Life on the River*, a musical play based on a book by Mark Twain. Dinner is served from 6:30 to 8:00, and the performance begins at 8:30 every evening.

What is opening?

- (A) A bookstore
- (B) An art exhibit
- (C) A musical play
- (D) A new restaurant

The reading states that *Life on the River* is a musical play that is opening at La Plata Dinner Theater. You should choose (C).

Questions 1 to 3 refer to the following article:

Go ahead, have a cheeseburger, France's Constitutional Council said recently.

The agency that monitors the constitutionality of laws wasn't ruling on nutrition but on linguistics. Its decision substantially weakens a recent law meant to stop the invasion of foreign words into the French language. That law banned the use of English in broadcasting, advertising,

and science. The law would have, for instance, forced restaurateurs to advertise "hamburgers au fromage" instead of cheeseburgers.

However, the Council ruled that the law encroached on "the fundamental liberty of thought and expression" guaranteed by the French constitution.

1. What is this article mainly about?
  - (A) The passage of a new bill
  - (B) A breakthrough in research
  - (C) An invasion of foreigners
  - (D) The weakening of a recent law
2. The members of the Council are probably experts in which of these fields?
  - (A) Nutrition
  - (B) Advertising
  - (C) Law
  - (D) Linguistics
3. How will the owners of restaurants in France be affected by this ruling?
  - (A) They can now serve hamburgers with cheese.
  - (B) They must now use only French words on menus.
  - (C) They may now use English words in advertisements.
  - (D) They no longer must serve only French foods.

Questions 4 to 6 are based on the following chart:

**METRO LODGING REPORT: JULY**

Location	Room Nights		Occupancy Percentage	Average Room Cost
	Occupied	Available		
AIRPORT	89,649	104,847	85.5%	\$98.28
NORTH SUBURBAN	29,686	35,065	84.7%	\$73.75
WEST SUBURBAN	46,279	50,950	90.8%	\$87.78
MIDTOWN	29,681	37,851	78.0%	\$69.70
DOWNTOWN	62,620	77,271	81.0%	\$119.61

4. What does this report concern?
- (A) Apartment buildings
  - (B) Hotels
  - (C) Parking lots
  - (D) Office buildings
5. Which area had the highest rate of occupancy in July?
- (A) North Suburban
  - (B) Midtown
  - (C) West Suburban
  - (D) Downtown

6. What information does the chart provide about Downtown?
- (A) On the average, it had the most expensive rooms.
  - (B) It had fewer empty rooms in July than Midtown did.
  - (C) It had more rooms than any other area.
  - (D) There were more rooms per building than in other areas.

Questions 7 and 8 refer to the following advertisement:

## Owning a franchise can be magical!

The expanding children's service market offers an excellent return on your investment—and puts a little magic into your summer. Summer Magic Day Camps franchises provide door-to-door pick-up services for children (ages 6–13) and a wide variety of activities in parks and other locations. No need to invest in expensive camp facilities, as all activities are held off-premises. You can operate the business part-time and from home. We provide all the know-how and direction needed for start-up and day-to-day operations. Very reasonable franchise fees.

7. For whom is this advertisement intended?
- (A) People who want to operate their own business
  - (B) Parents of young children
  - (C) People who own summer camps
  - (D) People who want to work as camp counselors
8. The company placing this advertisement would probably NOT provide information on which of the following?
- (A) Where to hold activities
  - (B) What kind of activities to provide
  - (C) How to attract campers
  - (D) How to choose a site for the camp

Questions 9 and 10 are based on the following letter:

# The Richmond Hotel

Chicago, Illinois

Warren Purcell, Convention Chair  
American Association of Photoengravers  
North Central District  
Suite 28  
621 Plum Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48201



Dear Mr. Purcell:

Mr. Scarlotti, our general manager, passed on your letter to him requesting information regarding our convention facilities and asked me to respond. I am happy to comply.

As you can see from our brochure, we offer large meeting rooms for plenary sessions and display areas, and an ample number of small "breakout" rooms for workshops and concurrent meetings. Banquet facilities are also available. Our centralized location is convenient to other hotels, fine restaurants, and all the sights of downtown Chicago, as you can see from the map I've sent. I'm also enclosing a list of special room rates for convention attendees.

I think you will find the Richmond Hotel the perfect host for your convention. Our experienced and courteous staff really knows what it takes to make a convention run smoothly.

Please let me know if there is any other information or help I can provide.

Sincerely,

Diana Lockhurst, Convention and Banquet Manager

Encl: (3)  
DL/pw

9. What is the main purpose of this letter?

- (A) To ask for further information
- (B) To respond to a request
- (C) To confirm a reservation
- (D) To explain the general manager's opinion

10. Which of the following is NOT enclosed?

- (A) A schedule of events
- (B) A publicity brochure
- (C) A map of downtown Chicago
- (D) A list of room rates

Questions 11 and 12 are based on the following announcement:

“American Impressionism and Realism: The Paintings of Modern Life, 1885-1915.” This display features more than 80 paintings that contrast two important turn-of-the-century schools of art. Featured

artists include impressionists John Singer Sargent and Mary Cassatt and realists Robert Henri, John Sloan, and William Blackins. At the Los Angeles Museum of Art through May 24.

11. What is the main theme of this display?

- (A) The range of contemporary painting in Los Angeles
- (B) The contrast between today’s art and turn-of-the-century art
- (C) Paintings produced by students from two universities
- (D) Differences between two important styles of art

12. Which of the following artists is NOT considered a realist?

- (A) John Sloan
- (B) Mary Cassatt
- (C) William Blackins
- (D) Robert Henri

## Types of Readings and Practice Exercises

The readings in Part VII cover a wide range of topics and represent many types of materials. Many fit into the five categories described in this part of the lesson. Each section of this part describes a type of reading, presents an analysis of an example of that type, and offers an exercise in answering questions about that type of reading.

### A. Articles

Readings of this type resemble brief articles or parts of articles such as the ones found in newspapers or magazines. Some concern business topics. Another common type is a report on a survey or study. You will probably see from two to four articles per test.

Overview questions about articles ask about the main point of the article. They may also ask you about the author’s opinion or background. Some ask what type of reader would be interested in this article or where the article was probably published.

Detail and negative questions deal with specific points made in the article. Some questions ask you to interpret numbers that appear in the article.

Go ahead, have a cheeseburger, France's Constitutional Council said recently.

The agency that monitors the constitutionality of laws wasn't ruling on nutrition but on linguistics. Its decision substantially weakens a recent law meant to stop the invasion of foreign words into the French language. That law banned the use of English in broadcasting, advertising,

and science. The law would have, for instance, forced restaurateurs to advertise "hamburgers au fromage" instead of cheeseburgers.

However, the Council ruled that the law encroached on "the fundamental liberty of thought and expression" guaranteed by the French constitution.

1. What is this article mainly about?

- (A) The passage of a new bill
- (B) A breakthrough in research
- (C) An invasion of foreigners
- (D) The weakening of a recent law

The article is primarily about a ruling of the French Constitutional Council that "substantially weakens a recent law."

2. The members of the Council are probably experts in which of these fields?

- (A) Nutrition
- (B) Advertising
- (C) Law
- (D) Linguistics

The article says that the Council is "The agency that monitors the constitutionality of laws."

3. How will the owners of restaurants in France be affected by this ruling?

- (A) They can now serve hamburgers with cheese.
- (B) They must now use only French words on menus.
- (C) They may now use English words in advertisements.
- (D) They no longer must serve only French foods.

The ruling weakened the law that would have forced advertisers to use only French terms, such as "hamburger au fromage." Therefore, owners are now able to advertise their products using English expressions such as "cheeseburger."