

Sample Independent Writing Topics

The following is a list of some of the actual Independent Writing topics on former versions of the TOEFL® test. You'll see topics very similar to these on the test. None of the topics requires specialized knowledge. Most topics are general and are based on the common experience of people in general and students in particular. Whatever the topic, you'll be asked to give your opinion and to support your opinion with specific reasons and examples.

Sample Writing Topic List

- 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? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
- Choose **one** of the following transportation vehicles and explain why you think it has changed people's lives:
 - automobile
 - bicycle
 - airplane

Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

- Some people prefer to work for a large company. Others prefer to work for a small company. Which would you prefer? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.
- Should a city try to preserve its old, historic buildings or destroy them and replace them with modern buildings? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

- If you were an employer, which kind of worker would you prefer to hire: an inexperienced worker at a lower salary or an experienced worker at a higher salary? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.
- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Technology has made the world a better place to live. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.
- If you could go back to some time and place in the past, when and where would you go? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.
- In your opinion, what is the most important characteristic (for example, honesty, intelligence, a sense of humor) that a person can have to be successful in life? Use specific reasons and examples from your experience to explain your answer.
- 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.
- 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.