

II-6. TOEFL Speaking Task Types

English speaking skills are critical for communicating in multiple ways with other people, including to socialize and to complete a wide range of academic or daily life tasks. The tasks in the Speaking section measure both foundational language skills as well as the ability to communicate. Foundational skills, such as the ability to process language and produce fluent and intelligible speech, are measured when test takers reproduce spoken input. Communication ability is measured when test takers speak about their opinions and experiences in the context of a simulated conversation. Speaking skills are measured with the following task types: *Listen and Repeat* and *Take an Interview*.

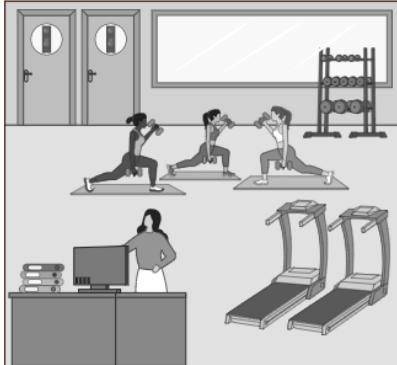
Listen and Repeat

The *Listen and Repeat* task measures the test taker’s ability to process the sentences they hear and then accurately and intelligibly reproduce these sentences. In the *Listen and Repeat* task, test takers repeat a series of sentences within a scenario, typically in an academic setting (see Figure 11). The scenario provides a communicative purpose for listening and repeating the sentences. Each series of sentences is associated with a visual representation of the setting, and progress through the sentences corresponds to visual movement through related parts of the illustration on the screen. After each sentence, there is a pause, and then test takers repeat exactly what was said. Sentences get progressively longer and more complex as test takers progress through the scenario. The *Listen and Repeat* task measures the test taker’s ability to process the sentences they hear and then produce a spoken response that is

- an accurate repetition and
- clearly intelligible.

Figure 11. Example of *Listen and Repeat* Task Type

You are learning how to guide new students through the campus gym. Listen to the speaker and repeat what she says. Repeat only once.



The illustration shows a gym interior. In the foreground, a person is standing at a desk with a computer monitor and papers. In the background, three people are performing lunges. There are also two treadmills and a weight rack.

Source: TOEFL iBT® test, ETS

Note. Test takers hear audio and then repeat:

Welcome to our campus gym.

Cardio machines are near the entrance.

Free weights are in the back.

All of our locker rooms are equipped with showers and towels.

Our fitness instructors hold exercise classes over here.

You can check the schedule for available classes and timings.

If you have any questions, please seek assistance from the attendants at the help desk.

Take an Interview

In the *Take an Interview* task, test takers participate in a simulated conversation with a prerecorded interviewer (see Figure 12). The interview takes place during a variety of situations, such as applying for scholarships or participating in a research study, among others. During the interview, test takers answer questions related to the interview topic, where they describe their experiences and opinions. Initial questions focus on factual information and personal experience, whereas later questions ask test takers to express and support opinions regarding broader issues.

The *Take an Interview* task measures the test taker's ability to respond to a range of questions on various topics, producing a spoken response that

- answers the question with appropriate and coherent elaboration;
- maintains a good conversational speaking pace;
- is intelligible and makes good use of rhythm and intonation to convey meaning; and
- makes effective and accurate use of a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Figure 12. Example of *Take an Interview* Task Type

You have volunteered for a research study about lifelong learning. You will have a short online interview with a researcher. The researcher will ask you some questions.



Source: TOEFL iBT® test, ETS

Note. Test takers hear audio and then answer the question.

Thank you for agreeing to participate. I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences with lifelong learning. First, do you currently engage in any activities aimed at obtaining new skills or knowledge? How often do you do this?

Thank you. Can you describe one or two ways you like to study new things? For example, do you take online courses, read books, or attend workshops?

Interesting. If money and time were not issues, what skill would you like to learn or what new knowledge would you like to develop? And why?

Great. Some people believe that, as adults, continuing education and gaining new knowledge are essential for personal development. Do you agree or disagree with this viewpoint? Why?