

7. Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word “devastating” in line 9?

- (A) Described
- (B) Delicate
- (C) Destructive
- (D) Determined

8. Look at the word **swirled** in paragraph 2. This word is closest in meaning to

- decreased
- rose
- settled
- circled

### SKILL 11: USE CONTEXT TO DETERMINE MEANINGS OF SIMPLE WORDS

On both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test, you may be asked to determine the meaning of a simple word in a reading passage, a word that you see often in everyday English. In this type of question, you should *not* give the normal, everyday meaning of the word; instead, a secondary meaning of the word is being tested, so you must determine the meaning of the word in this situation. Look at a multiple-choice example from the paper TOEFL test where a secondary meaning is the best answer to the question.

#### Example from the Paper TOEFL Test

##### The passage:

Faced with serious threats to its future, the company is taking steps to improve its outlook. The company has brought in a new crop of trainees to staff some of its empty positions.

*Line* In addition, the company has created a new committee to  
 (5) research various proposals and has appointed a key member of its management team to chair the committee.


##### The question:

The word “**steps**” in line 1 could best be replaced by

- (A) stairs
- (B) walks
- (C) actions
- (D) footprints

In this question, you are asked to choose a word that could replace *steps*. You should understand that *steps* is a normal, everyday word that is not being used in its normal, everyday way. Because the primary meaning of *steps* is *stairs*, this answer is not the correct answer. To answer this type of question, you must see which answer best fits into the context in the passage. You cannot say that *a company is taking stairs*, or *walks*, or *footprints*, but you can say that *a company is taking actions*. Answer (C) is therefore the best answer to this question.

Now look at a multiple-choice example from the computer TOEFL test where a secondary meaning is the best answer to the question.

**Example from the Computer TOEFL Test** 

Reading

Faced with serious threats to its future, the company is taking steps to improve its outlook. The company has brought in a new crop of trainees to staff some of its empty positions. In addition, the company has created a new committee to research various proposals and has appointed a key member of its management team to chair the committee.

Look at the word *crop* in the passage. This word could best be replaced by

produce


group

situation

plantation

In this question, you are asked to choose which word could replace *crop*. You should again understand that the word *crop* is not being used in its primary meaning. The primary meaning of *crop* might be *produce*, so this answer is not correct. To answer this type of question, you must see which answer best fits into the context in the passage. A company would not have *a new produce of trainees*, *a new situation of trainees*, or *a new plantation of trainees*, but a company might have *a new group of trainees*. *Group* is the word that best fits into the context and is therefore the best answer to this question, so you should click on the second answer to answer this question.

Next, look at a click-on example from the computer TOEFL test where a secondary meaning is the best answer to the question.

**Example from the Computer TOEFL Test** 






Reading

Faced with serious threats to its future, the company is taking steps to improve its outlook. The company has brought in a new crop of trainees to staff some of its empty positions. In addition, the company has created a new committee to research various proposals and has appointed a key member of its management team to chair the committee.

Click on the word in the passage that could best be replaced by "lead."

In this question, you are asked to find a word that could best be replaced by *lead*. You should try the word *lead* in place of each of the words in the passage until you find a place where it fits. Since it is possible to *lead a committee*, you can determine that *chair* could best be replaced by *lead* in this context. You should click on *chair* to answer this question.

The following chart outlines the key information that you should remember about vocabulary questions containing simple words:

VOCABULARY QUESTIONS CONTAINING SIMPLE WORDS  		
HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION	on both paper and computer tests  	What is the <b>meaning</b> of “X” in line Y? The word “X” in line Y <b>could best be replaced by...</b>
	on computer test only 	Look at the word X in paragraph Y. Click on another word that <b>could best be replaced by...</b> Click on the word in paragraph Y that <b>could best be replaced by...</b>
WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER	Information to help you understand the secondary meaning of a simple word can often be found in the context surrounding the word.	
HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find the word in the passage.</li> <li>2. Read the sentence that contains the word carefully.</li> <li>3. Look for context clues to help you understand the meaning.</li> <li>4. Choose the answer that the context indicates.</li> </ol>	

**TOEFL EXERCISE 11:** Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

*PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–3)*

Line (5) The “piece of eight” was the nickname of the Spanish “peso,” which was the rough equivalent of the American dollar in early America; the peso was accepted coin in much of the Americas, particularly during the period when the stores of Spanish ships were regularly stripped by pirates on the waters off the Americas and “redistributed” throughout coastal towns. The nickname “piece of eight” derived from the fact that the peso was equal to eight “reals” and therefore had the numeral 8 stamped on it. The “piece of eight” was sometimes actually cut into pieces, or bits, and one popular size was one-quarter of a “piece of eight,” or two bits. As a consequence, the U.S. quarter of a dollar is sometimes referred to today as two-bits, particularly in the western part of the country. A visitor to that area, if told “It’ll be two-bits,” should take it that the price of an item is being given.

(10)

1. The word “rough” in line 1 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) unsmooth
  - (B) mean
  - (C) approximate
  - (D) heavy
2. Look at the word stores in the passage. Stores are probably
  - departments
  - markets
  - shops
  - supplies
3. Look at the expression take it in the passage. This expression could best be replaced by
  - hold
  - understand
  - possess
  - grab

## PASSAGE TWO (Questions 4–7)

Although *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith appeared in 1776, it includes many of the ideas that economists still consider the foundation of private enterprise. The ideas put forth by Smith compose the basis of the philosophies of the school of thought called classical economics.

Line (5) According to Smith's ideas, free competition and free trade are vital in fostering the growth of an economy. The role of government in the economy is to ensure the ability of companies to compete freely.

(10) Smith, who was himself a Scot, lived during the period of the revolutions in America and in France. During this epoch, the predominant political thought was a strong belief in freedom and independence in government. Smith embraced economic ideas of free trade and competition which are right in line with these political ideas.

4. A "school" in line 3 is
- (A) a common belief
  - (B) a college
  - (C) a university
  - (D) an educational institution
5. Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word "free" in line 4?
- (A) Cheap
  - (B) No cost
  - (C) Uncontrolled
  - (D) Democratic
6. Look at the word embraced in paragraph 3. This word could best be replaced by
- hugged
  - believed in
  - encircled
  - handed over
7. Click on the word in paragraph 3 that could best be replaced by "agreement."

**TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 8–11):** Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

## PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–5)

Line (5) Cardamom is not as widely used as a spice in the United States as it is in other parts of the world. This fruit of the ginger plant provides an oil that basically has been used solely as a stimulant in American and English medicines. Other cultures have recognized the multipurpose benefits of this aromatic fruit. In Asia it is used to season sauces such as curry; in Middle Eastern countries it is steeped to prepare a flavorful, golden-colored tea; in parts of Northern Europe it is used as a spice in various types of pastry.

1. Click on the word in the passage that could best be replaced by “only.”
2. The word “multipurpose” in line 3 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) health
  - (B) singular
  - (C) recognized
  - (D) varied
3. Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word “season” in line 4?
  - (A) Divide
  - (B) Forecast
  - (C) Spice
  - (D) Put a time limit
4. Look at the word **curry** in the passage. Curry is
  - the fruit of the ginger plant
  - a spicy type of sauce
  - a culture in the area of the Middle East
  - a type of golden-colored tea
5. Click on the word in the passage that could best be replaced by “steamed.”

*PASSAGE TWO (Questions 6–13)*

The life span of an elephant that dies from natural causes is about sixty-five years. Of course, an elephant can **perish** from a number of “unnatural causes”; e.g., it can be killed by hunters, most probably for the valuable ivory in its tusks; it can die from diseases that spread throughout an elephant herd; or it can die from **drought** or from the lack of food that almost certainly accompanies the inadequate supply of water.

Line  
(5)

If, however, an elephant survives these disasters, it falls prey to old age in its mid-sixties. Around this age, the cause of death is attributed to the loss of the final set of **molars**. When this last set of teeth is gone, the elephant dies from malnutrition because it is unable to obtain adequate nourishment. In old age, elephants tend to search out **a final home** where there is shade for comfort from the sun and soft vegetation for cushioning; the bones of many old elephants have been found in such places.

(10)

6. Look at the word **perish** in paragraph 1. Click on another word in paragraph 1 that is close in meaning to **perish**.
7. The word “unnatural” in line 2 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) wild
  - (B) violent
  - (C) domesticated
  - (D) abnormal
8. Look at the word **drought** in paragraph 1. A **drought** means
  - a drowning
  - a lack of food
  - an inadequate supply of water
  - an overabundance of animals
9. Which of the following could be used to replace the word “survives” in line 6?
  - (A) Rises to
  - (B) Succumbs to
  - (C) Denies
  - (D) Lives through
10. Look at the word **molars** in paragraph 2. Click on the word in paragraph 2 that is close in meaning to **molars**.
11. In line 8, “malnutrition” is used to describe a condition related to
  - (A) good health
  - (B) illness
  - (C) poor eating
  - (D) dental problems

12. Look at the expression **a final home** in paragraph 2. This expression is closest in meaning to

- a place to die
- a comfortable house
- a place for sale
- the only remaining place to live

13. The word “shade” in line 10 is closest in meaning to

- (A) color
- (B) heat
- (C) diminished light
- (D) a front porch

*PASSAGE THREE (Questions 14–21)*

The American flag is the end product of a long evolution. Each of its component parts has its own history.

*Line* The very first American flag was **hoisted** in the skies over Boston on January 1, 1776, by the  
*(5)* American forces there. This first flag consisted of thirteen red and white stripes representing the number of American colonies. It also included the British Cross of St. George and Cross of St. Andrew. It could be considered rather ironic that these symbols of British rule were included on the American flag in that the American colonists were fighting for independence from the British.

*(10)* The origin of the stars on the current flag is **obscure**; that is, the stars could possibly have been taken from the flag of Rhode Island, or they could have been taken from the coat of arms of the Washington family. According to legend, this first flag with stars was sewn by Betsy Ross, a Philadelphia seamstress who was famous for her clever needlework. This version of the flag contained thirteen stars and thirteen stripes, one for each of the thirteen colonies battling for independence.

*(15)* The original idea was to add one star and one stripe for each state that joined the new, young country. However, by 1818, the number of states had grown to twenty, and it did not work well to keep adding stripes to the flag. As a result, Congress made the decision to revert to the original thirteen stripes representing the thirteen original colonies and adding a star each time a new state was admitted. This has been the policy ever since.

14. The word “product” in line 1 is closest in meaning to

- (A) goods
- (B) merchandise
- (C) banner
- (D) result

16. The word “ironic” in line 6 could most easily be replaced by

- (A) steellike
- (B) normal
- (C) unexpected
- (D) nationalistic

15. Look at the word **hoisted** in paragraph 2. Something that is **hoisted** is

- created
- found
- raised
- made

17. Look at the word **obscure** in paragraph 3. Click on another word in paragraph 3 that is opposite in meaning to **obscure**.

18. In line 12, the word “seamstress” is used to describe someone who

- (A) works at home
- (B) sews
- (C) is a part of high society
- (D) practices medicine

19. Click on the word in paragraph 4 that could best be replaced by “function.”
20. Click on the word in paragraph 4 that could best be replaced by “continue.”

21. The expression “revert to” in line 17 means
- (A) return to  
(B) add to  
(C) rejoice over  
(D) forget about

**TOEFL REVIEW EXERCISE (Skills 1–11):** Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

*PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–9)*

*Line* Bigfoot is a humanlike creature reportedly living in the Pacific Northwest. Bigfoot sightings have been noted most often in the mountainous areas of Northern California, Oregon, and Washington in the United States. The creature has also been spotted numerous times in British Columbia in Canada, where it is known as Sasquatch.

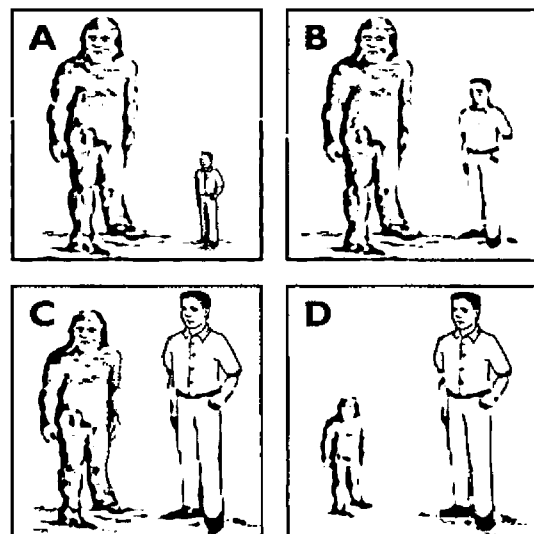
*(5)* The creature described by witnesses is tall by human standards, measuring 7 to 10 feet (2 to 3 meters) in height. It resembles an ape with its thick, powerful, fur-covered arms and short, strong neck; however, its manner of walking erect is more like that of *Homo sapiens*.

*(10)* Although there have been hundreds of reported sightings of Bigfoot, most experts have not seen enough evidence to be convinced of its existence. The fact that some purported evidence has been proven fake may have served to discredit other more credible information.

1. Which of the following best states the topic of the passage?
- (A) Differences between Bigfoot and Sasquatch  
(B) A description of Bigfoot  
(C) Where Bigfoot, or Sasquatch, can be found  
(D) The creature Bigfoot and its questionable existence
2. The word “noted” in line 2 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
- (A) Reported  
(B) Written in a letter  
(C) Refuted  
(D) Discussed

3. It is implied in the passage that Bigfoot would probably NOT like to live
- (A) in Oregon  
(B) in the Pacific Northwest  
(C) on coastal plains  
(D) in mountainous areas

4. Which of the following is NOT true about the appearance of Bigfoot?
- (A) Its arms and neck look like those of an ape.  
(B) Its arms are covered with fur.  
(C) It is short-necked.  
(D) It walks like an ape.
5. Click on the drawing that shows how Bigfoot compares in height to an average man.



6. Look at the word **that** in paragraph 2. Click on the word or phrase that **that** refers to.
7. The expression “Homo sapiens” in line 8 is closest in meaning to
- (A) apes
  - (B) creatures
  - (C) humans
  - (D) furry animals

8. According to the passage, how do experts feel about the evidence concerning Bigfoot’s existence?
- (A) They feel certain as to its existence.
  - (B) They are not yet certain.
  - (C) They are sure that it does not exist.
  - (D) They feel that all the evidence is fake.
9. Click on the paragraph that explains how knowledgeable people feel about the existence of Bigfoot.

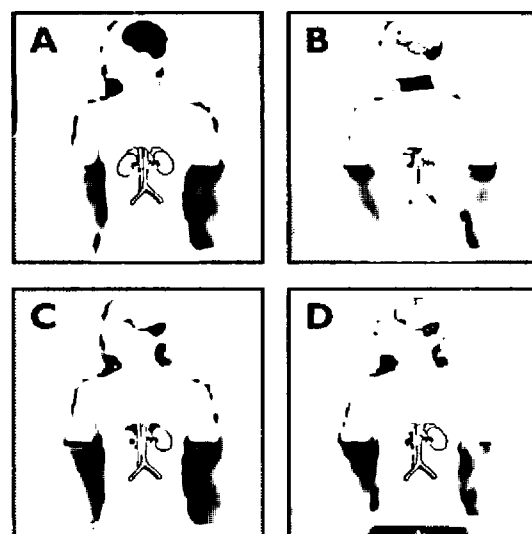
*PASSAGE TWO (Questions 10–18)*

*Line*  
*(5)* The next hormone is epinephrine, or adrenaline. This hormone is a natural secretion of the adrenal glands, which are located just above the kidneys in the human body. Its primary function in the human body is to help the body to **cope** with sudden surges of stress. When a person unexpectedly finds himself in a stressful situation filled with fear or anger, a large amount of epinephrine is released into the blood and the body responds with an increased heartbeat, higher blood pressure, and conversion of glycogen into glucose for energy to enable the body to deal with the stress.

*(10)* It is possible to extract epinephrine from the adrenal glands of animals or to synthesize it chemically in order to put it to further use. It is used in the treatment of severe asthma, where it relaxes the large muscles of the **bronchi**, the large air passages leading into the lungs. It is also used in cases of severe allergic reaction or cardiac arrest.

10. The paragraph preceding the passage most probably discusses
- (A) further uses of epinephrine
  - (B) the treatment of cardiac arrest
  - (C) a different hormone
  - (D) the secretions of the adrenal glands
11. What is another name for epinephrine?
- (A) Adrenal glands
  - (B) Stressful situation
  - (C) Bronchi
  - (D) Adrenaline

12. Click on the drawing that shows where epinephrine is produced in the human body.



13. Look at the word **cope** in paragraph 1. Click on another word or phrase in paragraph 1 that is close in meaning to **cope**.

14. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a result of the release of epinephrine in the blood?
- (A) Severe asthma  
 (B) An increase in blood pressure  
 (C) Higher heartbeat  
 (D) Increased energy
15. It is implied in the passage that increased heartbeat
- (A) harms the body  
 (B) causes the release of epinephrine into the body  
 (C) is helpful in combating the stressful situation  
 (D) is useful in treating asthma
16. The passage indicates that epinephrine is used in the treatment of all of the following EXCEPT
- (A) asthma  
 (B) high blood pressure  
 (C) serious allergic reactions  
 (D) heart problems
17. Look at the word **bronchi** in paragraph 2. **Bronchi** are
- large muscles  
 air passages  
 part of the lungs  
 part of the heart
18. Which of the following best expresses the organization of the information in the passage?
- (A) Epinephrine and adrenaline  
 (B) Various effects of epinephrine on the body  
 (C) Causes of sudden stress  
 (D) Epinephrine's natural functions and further applications

*PASSAGE THREE (Questions 19–25)*

*Line* A massive banking crisis occurred in the United States in 1933. In the two preceding years, a  
 large number of banks had **failed**, and fear of lost savings had prompted many depositors to  
 remove their funds from banks. Problems became so serious in the state of Michigan that  
 (5) Governor William A. Comstock was forced to declare a moratorium on all banking activities in  
 the state on February 14, 1933. The panic in Michigan quickly spread to other states, and on  
 March 6, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared a banking moratorium throughout the United  
 States that left the entire country without banking services.

(10) Congress immediately met in a special session to solve the banking crisis, and on March 9 it  
 passed the Emergency Banking Act of 1933 to assist financially healthy banks to reopen. By March  
 15, banks controlling 90 percent of the country's financial reserves were again open for business.

19. The passage states that all the following occurred prior to 1933 EXCEPT that
- (A) many banks went under  
 (B) many bank patrons were afraid of losing their deposits  
 (C) a lot of money was withdrawn from accounts  
 (D) Governor Comstock canceled all banking activities in Michigan
20. Look at the word **failed** in paragraph 1. This word could best be replaced by which expression?
- Not passed a test  
 Forgotten something important  
 Gone out of business  
 Paid little interest

21. The word “moratorium” in line 4 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
- (A) Death
  - (B) Temporary cessation
  - (C) Murder
  - (D) Slow decline
22. The passage indicates that the moratorium declared by Roosevelt affected
- (A) the banks in Michigan
  - (B) the banks in most of the U.S.
  - (C) only the financially unhealthy banks
  - (D) all the banks in the U.S.
23. Look at the word **it** in paragraph 2. Click on the word or phrase that **it** refers to.
24. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?
- (A) Congress did not give any special priority to the banking situation.
  - (B) The Emergency Banking Act helped all banks to reopen.
  - (C) Ten percent of the country’s money was in financially unhealthy banks.
  - (D) Ninety percent of the banks reopened by the middle of March.
25. Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage?
- (A) A theme followed by an example
  - (B) A problem and a solution
  - (C) Opposing viewpoints of an issue
  - (D) A problem and its causes

## OVERALL REVIEW QUESTIONS

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Often in the reading section of both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test, the last question or two for a particular reading passage are overall questions that ask about the passage as a whole rather than one small detail. The most common type of overall review questions are questions that ask where in the passage something is found, questions about the tone of the passage, questions about the author’s purpose in writing the passage, questions about which course the passage might be a part of, or questions about where a particular piece of information might be inserted into the passage.

### SKILL 12: DETERMINE WHERE SPECIFIC INFORMATION IS FOUND

Sometimes the final question accompanying a reading passage (or one paragraph of a passage) will ask you to determine where in the passage a piece of information is found. This type of question is worded differently on the paper TOEFL test and on the computer TOEFL test. On the paper test, there will be a multiple-choice question that asks where certain information is found. The answer choices will list possible locations for that information. On the computer test, the question asks you to click on the sentence that contains certain information. Look at a multiple-choice example from the paper TOEFL that asks you to identify where certain information is found.