

## SKILL 4: FIND “UNSTATED” DETAILS

You will sometimes be asked in the reading section of both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test to find an answer that is *not stated* or *not mentioned* or *not true* in the passage. This type of question really means that three of the answers are *stated*, *mentioned*, or *true* in the passage, while one answer is not.

You should note that there are two kinds of answers to this type of question: (1) there are three true answers and one that is not *true* according to the passage, or (2) there are three true answers and one that is not *mentioned* in the passage. Look at a multiple-choice example from the paper TOEFL test that asks you to find the one answer that is not *true*.

### Example from the Paper TOEFL Test

#### The passage:

In English, there are many different kinds of expressions that people use to give a name to anything whose name is unknown or momentarily forgotten. The word *gadget* is one such word. It was first used by British sailors in the 1850s and probably came from the French word *gachette*, which was a small hook. In everyday use, the word has a more general meaning. Other words are also used to give a name to something unnamed or unknown, and these words tend to be somewhat imaginative. Some of the more commonly used expressions are a *what-d’ye-call-it*, a *whatsis*, a *thingamabob*, a *thingamajig*, a *doodad*, or a *doohickey*.


#### The question:

Which of the following is **NOT true** about the word *gadget*?

- (A) It is used to name something when the name is not known.
- (B) It was used at the beginning of the nineteenth century.
- (C) It most likely came from a word in the French language.
- (D) Its first known use was by British sailors.

This question asks for the one answer that is *not true* about the word “*gadget*,” so three of the answers are true and one answer is *not*. You should look for the word *gadget* in the passage and find information that is untrue. Answers (A), (C), and (D) are all true according to the passage, so these answers are not correct. Answer (B) is the one answer that is *not true*: the passage states that *the word “gadget”... was first used by British sailors in the 1850s*, which is in the middle of the nineteenth century, so answer (B) is the best answer to this question.

Now, look at a multiple-choice example from the computer TOEFL test that asks you to find the one answer that is not mentioned.

**Example from the Computer TOEFL Test** 

Reading

In English, there are many different kinds of expressions that people use to give a name to anything whose name is unknown or momentarily forgotten. The word gadget is one such word. It was first used by British sailors in the 1850s and probably came from the French word gachette, which was a small hook. In everyday use, the word has a more general meaning. Other words are also used to give a name to something unnamed or unknown, and these words tend to be somewhat imaginative. Some of the more commonly used expressions are a what-d'ye-call-it, a whatsis, a thingamabob, a thingamajig, a doodad, or a doohickey.

Which of the following is **NOT mentioned** in the passage as an expression for something that is not known?

A what-is-it





A gadget

A thingamabob

A doohickey

This question asks for the one answer that is not mentioned, so three of the answers are listed in the passage and one is not. You should look for the three answers that are mentioned. Since *gadget*, *thingamabob*, and *doohickey* are listed in the passage, the second, third and fourth answers are incorrect. A *what-is-it* is not listed in the passage, so the first answer is the best answer to this question. You should click on the first answer to answer this question.

The following chart outlines the key information that you should remember about “unstated” detail questions:

“UNSTATED” DETAIL QUESTIONS  		
<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	on both paper and computer tests  	<p><i>Which of the following is <b>not stated</b>...?</i></p> <p><i>Which of the following is <b>not mentioned</b>...?</i></p> <p><i>Which of the following is <b>not discussed</b>...?</i></p> <p><i>All of the following are true <b>except</b>....</i></p>
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	The answers to these questions are found in order in the passage.	
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a key word in the question.</li> <li>2. Scan the appropriate place in the passage for the key word (or related idea).</li> <li>3. Read the sentence that contains the key word or idea carefully.</li> <li>4. Look for answers that are definitely true according to the passage. Eliminate those answers.</li> <li>5. Choose the answer that is not true or not discussed in the passage.</li> </ol>	

**TOEFL EXERCISE 4:** Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

*PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)*

Blood plasma is a clear, almost colorless liquid. It consists of blood from which the red and white blood cells have been removed. It is often used in transfusions because a patient generally needs the plasma portion of the blood more than the other components.

Line (5) Plasma differs in several important ways from whole blood. First of all, plasma can be mixed for all donors and does not have to be from the right blood group, as whole blood does. In addition, plasma can be dried and stored, while whole blood cannot.

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| <p>1. All of the following are true about blood plasma EXCEPT that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) it is a deeply colored liquid</li> <li>(B) blood cells have been taken out of it</li> <li>(C) patients are often transfused with it</li> <li>(D) it is generally more important to the patient than other parts of whole blood</li> </ul> | <p>2. Which of the following is NOT stated about whole blood?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) It is different from plasma.</li> <li>(B) It cannot be dried.</li> <li>(C) It is impossible to keep it in storage for a long time.</li> <li>(D) It is a clear, colorless liquid.</li> </ul> |
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*PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3–4)*

Line Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman was an American journalist at the turn of the century who (5) wrote for the newspaper *New York World* under the pen name Nellie Bly, a name which was taken from the Stephen Foster song *Nelly Bly*. She achieved fame for her exposés and in particular for the bold and adventuresome way that she obtained her stories.

(5) She felt that the best way to get the real story was from the inside rather than as an outside observer who could be treated to a prettified version of reality. On one occasion she pretended to be a thief so that she would get arrested and see for herself how female prisoners were really treated. On another occasion she faked mental illness in order to be admitted to a mental hospital to get the real picture on the treatment of mental patients.

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| <p>3. Which of the following is NOT true about Nellie Bly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Nellie Bly's real name was Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman.</li> <li>(B) Nellie Bly was mentally ill.</li> <li>(C) The name Nellie Bly came from a song.</li> <li>(D) The name Nellie Bly was used on articles that Seaman wrote.</li> </ul> | <p>4. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as something that Nellie Bly did to get a good story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) She acted like a thief.</li> <li>(B) She got arrested by the police.</li> <li>(C) She pretended to be ill.</li> <li>(D) She worked as a doctor in a mental hospital.</li> </ul> |
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## PASSAGE THREE (Questions 5–6)

Dekanawida's role as a supreme lawgiver in the Iroquois tribe has given him the status of demigod within the Indian nation. Born into the Huron tribe, Dekanawida caused great fear in his parents, who tried to drown him in his youth after a prophecy was made indicating that he would bring great sorrow to the Huron nation. Dekanawida was to survive this attempted drowning but later left his parents' home and tribe to live among the Iroquois.

One of his achievements with the Iroquois was the institution of a law among the Iroquois that virtually ended blood feuds among the nation's families. Wampum, strings of beads made of polished shells, was a valued commodity in the Iroquois culture; according to policies established by Dekanawida, wampum had to be paid to the family of a murder victim by the family of the killer. Since the killer was also put to death, the family of the killer had to pay the victim's family in wampum for two deaths, the death of the murder victim and the death of the killer. These strict policies implemented by Dekanawida helped to establish him as a wise lawgiver and leader of the Iroquois nation.

5. According to the passage, Dekanawida was NOT

- (A) a lawmaker
- (B) a Huron by birth
- (C) a near deity
- (D) drowned when he was young

6. Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the passage about wampum?

- (A) It was used extensively by the Huron.
- (B) It had a high value to the Iroquois.
- (C) It was given to a murder victim's family.
- (D) It was made of polished shells.

**SKILL 5: FIND PRONOUN REFERENTS**

In the reading section of both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test, you will sometimes be asked to determine to which noun a pronoun refers. Pronoun reference questions are worded a bit differently on the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test; on the paper test, pronoun reference questions are multiple-choice questions, while on the computer test, pronoun reference questions are click-on questions.

Either type of pronoun reference question tests the same language skill. In a pronoun reference question, it is important to understand that a noun is generally used first in a passage, and the pronoun that refers to it comes after. Whenever you are asked which noun a pronoun refers to, you should look *before* the pronoun to find the noun.

Look at a multiple-choice example of a pronoun reference question from the paper TOEFL test.