

SKILL 7: ANSWER TRANSITION QUESTIONS CORRECTLY

You will sometimes be asked on both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test to answer a multiple-choice question about what probably came before the reading passage (in the *preceding* paragraph) or what probably comes after the reading passage (in the *following* paragraph). Of course, the topic of the *preceding* or *following* paragraph is not directly stated, and you must draw a conclusion to determine what is probably in these paragraphs.

This type of question is a *transition* question. It asks you to demonstrate that you understand that good writing contains *transitions* from one paragraph to the next. A paragraph may start out with the idea of the previous paragraph as a way of linking the ideas in the two paragraphs. A paragraph may also end with an idea that will be further developed in the following paragraph. Look at a multiple-choice example of a transition question from the paper TOEFL test that asks you to identify what was probably in the *preceding* paragraph.

Example from the Paper TOEFL Test

The passage:

Line Another myth of the oceans concerns Davy Jones, who in
 (5) folklore is a mean-spirited sovereign of the ocean's depths.
 The name "Jones" is thought by some etymologists to have
 been derived from the name "Jonah," the Hebrew prophet
 who spent three days in a whale's belly.

(10) According to tradition, any object that goes overboard
 and sinks to the bottom of the ocean is said to have gone to
 Davy Jones's locker, the ocean-sized, mythical receptacle for
 anything that falls into the water. Needless to say, any sailor on
 the seas is not so eager to take a tour of Davy Jones's locker,
 although it might be a rather interesting trip considering all
 the treasures located there.


The question:

The paragraph *preceding* this passage most probably discusses

- (A) the youth of Davy Jones
- (B) Davy Jones's career as a sailor
- (C) a different traditional story from the sea
- (D) preparing to travel on the ocean

This question asks about the topic of the *preceding* paragraph, so you must look at the beginning of the passage and draw a conclusion about what probably came before. Since the passage begins with the expression *another myth of the oceans*, you should understand that the new passage is going to present a *second* myth of the oceans and the previous passage probably presented the *first* myth of the oceans. A myth is a traditional story, so the best answer to this question is answer (C), which discusses *a different traditional story from the sea*.

Now look at a multiple-choice example from the computer TOEFL test that asks you to identify what is probably in the *following* paragraph.

Example from the Computer TOEFL Test 

Reading

Another myth of the oceans concerns Davy Jones, who in folklore is a mean-spirited sovereign of the ocean's depths. The name "Jones" is thought by some etymologists to have been derived from the name "Jonah," the Hebrew prophet who spent three days in a whale's belly.





According to tradition, any object that goes overboard and sinks to the bottom of the ocean is said to have gone to Davy Jones's locker, the ocean-sized, mythical receptacle for anything that falls into the water. Needless to say, any sailor on the seas is not so eager to take a tour of Davy Jones's locker, although it might be a rather interesting trip considering all the treasures located there.

The topic of the paragraph **following** the passage most likely is

- valuable items located at the bottom of the ocean
- where Davy Jones is found today
- Jonah and the whale
- preventing objects from falling overboard

This question asks about the topic of the *following* paragraph, so you must look at the end of the passage and draw a conclusion about what probably comes after. The passage ends with the mention of *all the treasures located there*, and *there* is in Davy Jones's locker, or at the bottom of the ocean; this is probably going to be the topic of the next paragraph. The first answer, which discusses *valuable items located at the bottom of the ocean* is therefore the best answer, so you should click on the first answer to this question.

The following chart outlines the key information that you should remember about transition questions:

TRANSITION QUESTIONS  		
HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION	on both paper and computer tests  	<i>The paragraph preceding the passage probably... What is most likely in the paragraph following the passage?</i>
WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER	The answer can generally be found <i>in the first line</i> of the passage for a <i>preceding</i> question. The answer can generally be found <i>in the last line</i> for a <i>following</i> question.	
HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the <i>first line</i> for a <i>preceding</i> question. 2. Read the <i>last line</i> for a <i>following</i> question. 3. Draw a conclusion about what comes <i>before</i> or <i>after</i>. 4. Choose the answer that is reflected in the <i>first</i> or <i>last</i> line of the passage. 	

TOEFL EXERCISE 7: Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Another program instrumental in the popularization of science was *Cosmos*. This series, broadcast on public television, dealt with topics and issues from varied fields of science. The principal writer and narrator of the program was Carl Sagan, a noted astronomer and Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

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| <p>1. The paragraph preceding this passage most probably discusses</p> <p>(A) a different scientific television series</p> <p>(B) Carl Sagan's scientific achievements</p> <p>(C) the Pulitzer Prize won by Carl Sagan</p> <p>(D) public television</p> | <p>2. The paragraph following this passage most likely contains information on what?</p> <p>(A) The popularity of science</p> <p>(B) The program <i>Cosmos</i></p> <p>(C) The astronomer Carl Sagan</p> <p>(D) Topics and issues from various fields of science</p> |
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PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3–4)

Line (5) When a strong earthquake occurs on the ocean floor rather than on land, a tremendous force is exerted on the seawater and one or more large, destructive waves called *tsunamis* can be formed. *Tsunamis* are commonly called tidal waves in the United States, but this is really an inappropriate name in that the cause of the *tsunami* is an underground earthquake rather than the ocean's tides.

Far from land, a *tsunami* can move through the wide open vastness of the ocean at a speed of 600 miles (900 kilometers) per hour and often can travel tremendous distances without losing height and strength. When a *tsunami* reaches shallow coastal water, it can reach a height of 100 feet (30 meters) or more and can cause tremendous flooding and damage to coastal areas.

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| <p>3. The paragraph preceding the passage most probably discusses</p> <p>(A) <i>tsunamis</i> in various parts of the world</p> <p>(B) the negative effects of <i>tsunamis</i></p> <p>(C) land-based earthquakes</p> <p>(D) the effect of tides on <i>tsunamis</i></p> | <p>4. Which of the following is most likely the topic of the paragraph following the passage?</p> <p>(A) The causes of <i>tsunamis</i></p> <p>(B) The destructive effects of <i>tsunamis</i> on the coast</p> <p>(C) The differences between <i>tsunamis</i> and tidal waves</p> <p>(D) The distances covered by <i>tsunamis</i></p> |
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PASSAGE THREE (Questions 5–6)

While draft laws are federal laws, marriage laws are state laws rather than federal; marriage regulations are therefore not uniform throughout the country. The legal marriage age serves as an example of this lack of conformity. In most states, both the man and the woman must be at least eighteen years old to marry without parental consent; however, the states of Nebraska and Wyoming require the couple to be at least nineteen, while the minimum age in Mississippi is twenty-one. If parental permission is given, then a couple can marry at sixteen in some states, and a few states even allow marriage before the age of sixteen, though a judge's permission, in addition to the permission of the parents, is sometimes required in this situation. Some states which allow couples to marry at such a young age are now considering doing away with such early marriages because of the numerous negative effects of these young marriages.

5. The paragraph preceding the passage most probably discusses
- (A) state marriage laws
 - (B) the lack of uniformity in marriage laws
 - (C) federal draft laws
 - (D) the minimum legal marriage age

6. The topic of the paragraph following the passage is most likely to be
- (A) disadvantages of youthful marriages
 - (B) reasons why young people decide to marry
 - (C) the age when parental consent for marriage is required
 - (D) a discussion of why some states allow marriages before the age of sixteen

TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 6–7): Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–4)

The most conservative sect of the Mennonite Church is the Old Order Amish, with 33,000 members living mainly today in the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. Their lifestyle reflects their belief in the doctrines of separation from the world and simplicity of life. The Amish have steadfastly rejected the societal changes that have occurred in the previous three hundred years, preferring instead to remain securely rooted in a seventeenth-century lifestyle. They live on farms without radios, televisions, telephones, electric lights, and cars; they dress in plainly styled and colored old-fashioned clothes; and they farm their lands with horses and tools rather than modern farm equipment. They have a highly communal form of living, with barn raisings and quilting bees as commonplace activities.

1. The paragraph preceding this passage most probably discusses
- (A) other, more liberal sects of Mennonites
 - (B) where Mennonites live
 - (C) the communal Amish lifestyle
 - (D) the most conservative Mennonites

2. Which of the following would probably NOT be found on an Amish farm?
- (A) A hammer
 - (B) A cart
 - (C) A long dress
 - (D) A refrigerator

3. It can be inferred from the passage that a quilting bee
- (A) involves a group of people
 - (B) is necessary when raising bees
 - (C) always follows a barn raising
 - (D) provides needed solitude
4. Which of the following is most likely the topic of the paragraph following the passage?
- (A) The effects of the communal lifestyle on the Old Order Amish
 - (B) How the Old Order Amish differ from the Mennonites
 - (C) The effect of modern technology on the Old Order Amish
 - (D) The doctrines of the Old Order Amish

PASSAGE TWO (Questions 5–8)

Line (5) Various other Native American tribes also lived on the Great Plains. The Sioux, a group of seven Native American tribes, are best known for the fiercely combative posture against encroaching White civilization in the 1800s. Although they are popularly referred to as Sioux, these Native American tribes did not call themselves Sioux; the name was given to them by an enemy tribe. The seven Sioux tribes called themselves by some variation of the word *Dakota*, which means “allies” in their language. Four tribes of the eastern Sioux community living in Minnesota were known by the name *Dakota*. The Nakota included two tribes that left the eastern woodlands and moved out onto the plains. The Teton Sioux, or Lakota, moved even farther west to the plains of the present-day states of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

5. The paragraph preceding this passage most probably discusses
- (A) how the Sioux battled the white man
 - (B) one of the tribes of the plains
 - (C) where the Sioux lived
 - (D) Native American tribes on the East Coast
6. Which of the following represents a likely reaction of the Sioux in the 1800s to the encroaching white civilization?
- (A) The Sioux would probably help the whites to settle in the West.
 - (B) The Sioux would probably attack the white settlers.
 - (C) The Sioux would probably invite the whites to smoke a peace pipe.
 - (D) The Sioux would probably join together in hunting parties with the white settlers.
7. It is implied in the passage that the seven Sioux tribes called each other by some form of the word *Dakota* because they were
- (A) united in a cause
 - (B) all living in North Dakota
 - (C) fiercely combative
 - (D) enemies
8. It can be inferred from the passage that the present-day states of North and South Dakota
- (A) are east of Minnesota
 - (B) are home to the four tribes known by the name *Dakota*
 - (C) received their names from the tribes living there
 - (D) are part of the eastern woodlands

PASSAGE THREE (Questions 9–12)

The extinction of many species of birds has undoubtedly been hastened by modern man; since 1600 it has been estimated that approximately 100 bird species have become extinct over the world. In North America, the first species known to be annihilated was the great auk, a flightless bird that served as an easy source of food and bait for Atlantic fishermen through the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Shortly after the great auk's extinction, two other North American species, the Carolina parakeet and the passenger pigeon, began dwindling noticeably in numbers. The last Carolina parakeet and the last passenger pigeon in captivity both died in September 1914. In addition to these extinct species, several others such as the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon, and the California condor are today recognized as endangered; steps are being taken to prevent their extinction.

9. The number of bird species that have become extinct in the United States since 1600 most probably is
- (A) more than 100
(B) exactly 100
(C) less than 100
(D) exactly three
10. The passage implies that the great auk disappeared
- (A) before 1600
(B) in the 1600s
(C) in the 1800s
(D) in the last fifty years
11. It can be inferred from the passage that the great auk was killed because
- (A) it was eating the fishermen's catch
(B) fishermen wanted to eat it
(C) it flew over fishing areas
(D) it baited fishermen
12. The paragraph following this passage most probably discusses
- (A) what is being done to save endangered birds
(B) what the bald eagle symbolizes to Americans
(C) how several bird species became endangered
(D) other extinct species

TOEFL REVIEW EXERCISE (Skills 1–7): Study each of the passages and choose the best answers to the questions that follow.

PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–8)

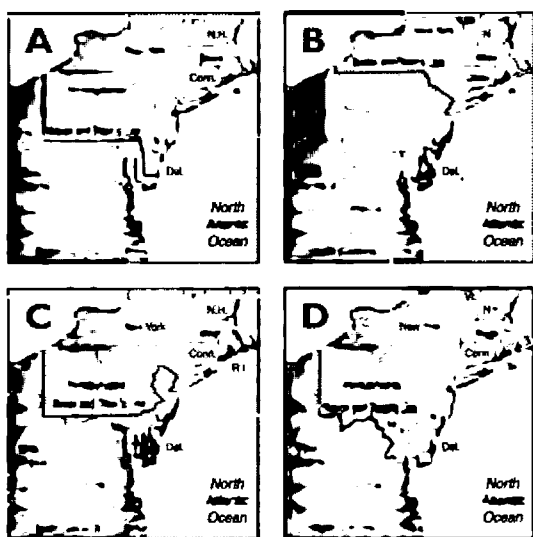
The Mason-Dixon Line is often considered by Americans to be the demarcation between the North and the South. It is in reality the boundary that separates the state of Pennsylvania from Maryland and parts of West Virginia. Prior to the Civil War, this southern boundary of Pennsylvania separated the nonslave states to the north from the slave states to the south.

The Mason-Dixon Line was established well before the Civil War, as a result of a boundary dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland. Two English astronomers, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, were called in to survey the area and officially mark the boundary between the two states. The survey was completed in 1767, and the boundary was marked with stones, many of which remain to this day.

- The best title for this passage would be
 - Dividing the North and the South
 - The Meaning of the Mason-Dixon Line
 - Two English Astronomers
 - The History of the Mason-Dixon Line

2. Look at the word *It* in paragraph 1. Click on the word or phrase that *It* refers to.

3. Click on the drawing that shows the location of the Mason-Dixon Line.



- It can be inferred from the passage that before the Civil War
 - Pennsylvania was south of the Mason-Dixon Line
 - Pennsylvania was a nonslave state
 - the states south of the Mason-Dixon Line had the same opinion about slavery as Pennsylvania
 - the slave states were not divided from the nonslave states

- The passage states all of the following about Mason and Dixon EXCEPT that
 - they came from England
 - they worked as astronomers
 - they caused the boundary dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland
 - they surveyed the area of the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland

- The passage indicates that the Mason-Dixon Line was identified with
 - pieces of rock
 - fences
 - a stone wall
 - a border crossing

7. Click on the paragraph that explains why the Mason-Dixon Line was established.

8. The paragraph following the passage most probably discusses

- where the Mason-Dixon Line is located
- the Mason-Dixon Line today
- the effect of the Civil War on slavery
- what happened to Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon

PASSAGE TWO (Questions 9–14)

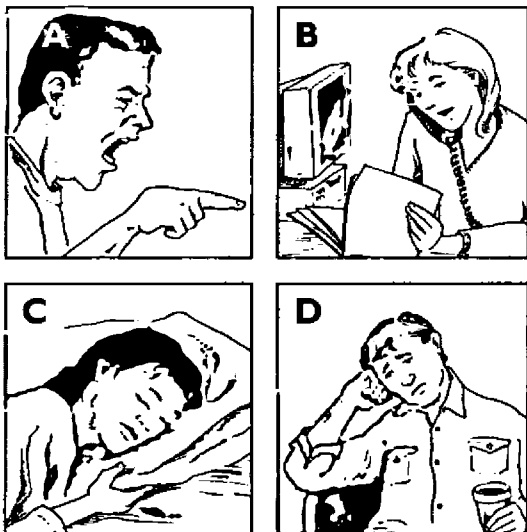
Manic depression is another psychiatric illness that mainly affects the mood. A patient suffering from this disease will alternate between periods of manic excitement and extreme depression, with or without relatively normal periods in between. The changes in mood suffered by a manic-depressive patient go far beyond the day-to-day mood changes experienced by the general population. In the period of manic excitement, the mood elevation can become so intense that it can result in extended insomnia, extreme irritability, and heightened aggressiveness. In the period of depression, which may last for several weeks or months, a patient experiences feelings of general fatigue, uselessness, and hopelessness, and, in serious cases, may contemplate suicide.

Line
(5)

9. The paragraph preceding this passage most probably discusses
- (A) when manic depression develops
 - (B) a different type of mental disease
 - (C) how moods are determined
 - (D) how manic depression can result in suicide

10. The topic of this passage is
- (A) various psychiatric illnesses
 - (B) how depression affects the mood
 - (C) the intense period of manic excitement
 - (D) the mood changes of manic depression

11. Click on the drawing of the person who is most likely a manic-depressive patient in a manic phase.



12. The passage indicates that most people
- (A) never undergo mood changes
 - (B) experience occasional shifts in mood
 - (C) switch wildly from highs to lows
 - (D) become highly depressed
13. Look at the word *it* in the passage. Click on the word or phrase it refers to.
14. The passage implies that
- (A) changes from excitement to depression occur frequently and often
 - (B) only manic-depressive patients experience aggression
 - (C) the depressive phase of this disease can be more harmful than the manic phase
 - (D) suicide is inevitable in cases of manic depression

PASSAGE THREE (Questions 15–23)

Line (5) Unlike earlier campaigns, the 1960 presidential campaign featured a politically innovative and highly influential series of televised debates in the contest between the Republicans and the Democrats. Debates that could be viewed by such a wide audience had never before been part of the presidential campaigns, and through these debates, the far-reaching medium of television showed how effective it could be in influencing the outcome of an election.

(10) The two parties to face off in the election selected very different candidates. John Kennedy, a young senator from Massachusetts without much experience and recognition in national politics, established an early lead among democratic hopefuls, and was nominated on the first ballot at the Los Angeles convention to be the representative of the Democratic party in the presidential elections. The older and more experienced Richard Nixon, then serving as vice president of the United States under Eisenhower, received the nomination of the Republican party. Both Nixon and Kennedy campaigned vigorously throughout the country and then took the unprecedented step of appearing in face-to-face debates on television.

(15) Experts in the politics of presidential elections contend that the debates were a pivotal force in the elections. In front of a viewership of more than 100 million citizens, Kennedy masterfully overcame Nixon's advantage as the better-known and more experienced candidate and reversed the public perception of him as too inexperienced and immature for the presidency. In an election that was extremely close, it was perhaps these debates that brought victory to Kennedy.

15. The paragraph preceding the passage most likely discussed
- (A) presidential elections prior to 1960
 - (B) planning for the 1960 election
 - (C) the history of television prior to 1960
 - (D) the outcome of the 1960 presidential election
16. Which of the following best expresses the main idea of the passage?
- (A) Kennedy defeated Nixon in the 1960 presidential election.
 - (B) Television debates were instrumental in the outcome of the 1960 presidential election.
 - (C) Television debates have long been a part of campaigning.
 - (D) Kennedy was the leading Democratic candidate in the 1960 presidential election.
17. Look at the word it in paragraph 1. Click on the word or phrase that it refers to.
18. The passage implies that Kennedy
- (A) was a long shot to receive the Democratic presidential nomination
 - (B) won the Democratic presidential nomination fairly easily
 - (C) was not a front runner in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination
 - (D) came from behind to win the Democratic presidential nomination
19. The passage states that the television debates between presidential candidates in 1960
- (A) did not influence the selection of the president
 - (B) were the final televised debates
 - (C) were fairly usual in the history of presidential campaigns
 - (D) were the first presidential campaign debates to be televised
20. Which of the following is NOT mentioned about Richard Nixon?
- (A) He was serving as vice president.
 - (B) He was the Republican party's candidate for president.
 - (C) He campaigned strongly all over the country.
 - (D) He was nominated on the first ballot.
21. The passage states that in the debates with Nixon, Kennedy demonstrated to the American people that he was
- (A) old enough to be president
 - (B) more experienced than Nixon
 - (C) better known than Nixon
 - (D) too inexperienced to serve as president
22. The pronoun "him" in line 17 refers to
- (A) John Kennedy
 - (B) Richard Nixon
 - (C) Eisenhower
 - (D) the better-known and more experienced candidate
23. Click on the paragraph that describes the two candidates in the election.

VOCABULARY QUESTIONS

In the reading section of both the paper TOEFL test and the computer TOEFL test, there will be a number of vocabulary questions. On the paper test, the vocabulary questions will always be multiple-choice questions. On the computer test, vocabulary questions may be multiple-choice questions, or they may be click-on questions: you may be asked to look at one word in a passage and click on another word with a similar or opposite meaning, or you may be asked to click on a word with a given meaning.

To answer a vocabulary question, it is, of course, helpful if you know the meaning of the word that is being tested. However, it is not always *necessary* for you to know the meaning of the word; often there are skills that you can use to help you find the correct answer to the question: (1) finding definitions from structural clues, (2) determining meanings from word parts, and (3) using context clues to determine meanings.

SKILL 8: FIND DEFINITIONS FROM STRUCTURAL CLUES

When you are asked to determine the meaning of a word in the reading section of either the paper TOEFL test or the computer TOEFL test, it is possible (1) that the passage provides information about the meaning of the word, and (2) that there are structural clues to tell you that the definition of a word is included in the passage. Look at a multiple-choice example from the paper TOEFL test where a structural clue to the meaning of the tested word is included in the passage.

Example from the Paper TOEFL Test

The passage:

One of the leading schools of psychological thought in the twentieth century is **behaviorism**—the belief that the role of the psychologist is to study behavior, which is observable, rather than conscious or unconscious thought, which is not.

Line (5) Probably the best-known proponent of behaviorism is B.F. Skinner, who is famous for his research on how positive and negative reinforcement influence behavior. He came to believe that positive reinforcement such as praise, food, or money were more effective in promoting good behavior than

(10) negative reinforcement, or punishment.

The question:

In “**behaviorism**” in line 2, a psychologist is concerned with

- (A) conscious thought patterns
- (B) unconscious thought patterns
- (C) observable actions
- (D) unobservable actions