

5. One difference between mathematics and language is that mathematics is precise _____.
 (A) language is not
 (B) while language is not
 (C) but language not
 (D) while is language
6. Your criticism of the three short stories should not be less than 2,000 words, nor _____ more than 3,000.
 (A) should it be
 (B) it should be
 (C) it is
 (D) should be it

Choose the letter of the underlined word or group of words that is not correct.

- _____ 7. In 1870, the attorney general was made head of the Department of Justice, given an enlarged staff, and endow with clear-cut law-enforcement functions.
 A B C D
- _____ 8. The General Sherman Tree, the largest of all the giant sequoias, are reputed to be the world's largest living thing.
 A B C D
- _____ 9. The skeleton of a shark is made of cartilage rather than having bone.
 A B C D
- _____ 10. At least one sample of each of the brands contains measurable amounts of aflatoxin, and there is three which exceed the maximum.
 A B C D

PROBLEMS WITH COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES _____

Sentences with incorrect comparatives and superlatives can appear on the TOEFL test. It is therefore important for you to know how to do the following: (1) form the comparative and superlative correctly; (2) use the comparative and superlative correctly; and (3) use the irregular *-er*, *-er* structure that has been appearing frequently on the TOEFL test.

SKILL 27: FORM COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES CORRECTLY

The problem with some of the comparative and superlative sentences on the TOEFL test is that the comparative or superlative is formed incorrectly. You should therefore understand how to form the comparative and superlative to answer such questions correctly.

The comparative is formed with either *-er* or *more* and *than*. In the comparative, *-er* is used with short adjectives such as *tall*, and *more* is used with longer adjectives such as *beautiful*.

Bob is taller *than* Ron.

Sally is *more* beautiful *than* Sharon.

The superlative is formed with *the*, either *-est* or *most*, and sometimes *in*, *of*, or a *that*-clause. In the superlative, *-est* is used with short adjectives such as *tall*, and *most* is used with longer adjectives such as *beautiful*.

Bob is *the tallest* man *in* the room.

Sally is *the most beautiful* *of* all the women at the party.

The spider over there is *the largest* one *that* I have ever seen.

The fastest runner wins the race. (no *in*, *of*, or *that*)

The following chart outlines the possible forms of comparatives and superlatives:

THE FORM OF COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES		
COMPARATIVE	[<i>more</i> (long adjective) (short adjective) + <i>er</i>]	<i>than</i>
SUPERLATIVE	<i>the</i> [<i>most</i> (long adjective) (short adjective) + <i>est</i>]	<i>maybe in, of, that</i>

EXERCISE 27: Each of the following sentences contains a comparative or superlative. Circle the comparative or superlative. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- I 1. Oxygen is abundanter than nitrogen.
- C 2. The directions to the exercise say to choose the most appropriate response.
- ___ 3. The lesson you are studying now is the most importantest lesson that you will have.
- ___ 4. Fashions this year are shorter and more colorful than they were last year.
- ___ 5. The professor indicated that Anthony's research paper was more long than the other students' papers.
- ___ 6. Alaska is the coldest than all the states in the United States.
- ___ 7. The workers on the day shift are more rested than the workers on the night shift.
- ___ 8. She was more happier this morning than she had been yesterday.
- ___ 9. The quarterback on this year's football team is more versatile than the quarterback on last year's team.
- ___ 10. She always tries to do the best and most efficient job that she can do.