

SKILL 5: LISTEN FOR WHO AND WHAT IN PASSIVES

It is sometimes difficult to understand *who* or *what* is doing the action in a passive sentence. This problem is often tested in the short dialogues.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *Did Sally go to the bank this morning?*
 (woman) *Yes, she did. She got a new checking account.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman imply?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) Sally wrote several checks.
 (B) Sally wanted to check up on the bank.
 (C) A new checking account was opened.
 (D) Sally checked on the balance in her account.

In this dialogue, the woman uses the active statement *She got a new checking account*, which means that *Sally opened a checking account*. The correct answer uses the passive structure that *a new checking account was opened* to express the same idea. Therefore, the best answer to the question above is answer (C).

You should note the following about passive sentences in the short dialogues:

PASSIVE STATEMENTS

1. If the dialogue contains a *passive* statement, the answer to the question is often an *active* statement.
2. If the dialogue contains an *active* statement, the answer to the question is often a *passive* statement.

NOTE: Check carefully *who* or *what* is doing the action in these questions.

EXERCISE 5: In this exercise each of the correct answers is either a passive restatement of an active sentence or an active restatement of a passive sentence. Read each short dialogue and underline the key active or passive statement. Then read the question and choose the best answer to the question. Be careful about *who* and *what* with these passives.

1. (woman) *Alice needs to pay her tuition today.*
 (man) *But her tuition has already been paid.*
 (narrator) *What does the man imply?*
- (A) Alice's education has paid off.
 (B) Alice's tuition needs to be paid.
 (C) Alice has already paid her fees.
 (D) Alice has already received the money.

2. (man) *Have you been taking good care of the lawn?*
 (woman) *I watered it only this morning.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman mean?*
- (A) She drank some water on the lawn this morning.
 (B) She waited for him on the lawn this morning.
 (C) The lawn has already been watered today.
 (D) She wanted a new lawn this morning.
3. (man) *Did you hear the news about the child who was lost in the park?*
 (woman) *Yes, and I heard that she was just found!*
 (narrator) *What does the woman mean?*
- (A) Someone located the girl.
 (B) She heard about the new park from the child.
 (C) The child found her lost pet.
 (D) The child was the last one in the park.

TOEFL EXERCISE 5: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of passives.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 5.

1. (A) If the restaurant is on the corner
 (B) If the man would like to go to the restaurant
 (C) If the vegetables are fresh
 (D) If vegetarian food can be obtained
2. (A) He admitted that he wanted to go to law school in the fall.
 (B) The law school accepted him as a student.
 (C) The law professor admitted that he would be a student in the fall semester.
 (D) He would be admitted to law school after the fall semester.
3. (A) Mark's plants were cared for in his absence.
 (B) Mark's plan was to be out of town.
 (C) Mark was careful about his plans for the out-of-town trip.
 (D) She was careful while Mark was gone.
4. (A) The lights in the trees were destroyed in the storm.
 (B) The storm damaged the trees.
 (C) The falling trees destroyed a store.
 (D) In the light the destruction of the storm could be seen.
5. (A) She was broke from skiing.
 (B) She went skiing in spite of her accident.
 (C) Her leg was hurt on a skiing trip.
 (D) Her skis were broken in the mountains.
6. (A) The road the horses took was long and hard.
 (B) It was hard to find the hidden houses.
 (C) The riders worked the horses too much.
 (D) It was hard for people to ride the horses for long.
7. (A) He didn't want the coffee that the woman ordered.
 (B) He wasn't sure if the woman wanted coffee.
 (C) He assumed the woman had ordered coffee.
 (D) He was unaware that coffee had already been ordered.
8. (A) The car was in the left parking lot at the airport.
 (B) The friends parked their car at the airport.
 (C) The airport couldn't hold a lot of cars.
 (D) There were a lot of cars to the left of the parking lot.

9. (A) The students pointed at Mac.
 (B) Mac was present when the other students made the appointment.
 (C) The class representative suggested Mac to the other students.
 (D) Mac was chosen by his classmates to represent them.
10. (A) After the earthquake, the insurance company came out to inspect the damage.
 (B) The insurance company insisted that the building be repaired to meet earthquake safety standards.
 (C) The inhabitants paid their premiums after the earthquake.
 (D) The insurance company paid for the earthquake damage.

SKILL 6: LISTEN FOR WHO AND WHAT WITH MULTIPLE NOUNS

When there is more than one noun in a sentence in the short dialogues, it is common for the answers to confuse which noun does what.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *Do you know who is in the band now?*
 (woman) *I heard that Mara replaced Robert in the band.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman say about the band?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) Robert became a new member of the band.
 (B) Robert took Mara's place in the band.
 (C) Mara didn't have a place in the band.
 (D) Mara took Robert's place in the band.

In the woman's response to the man's question, she talks about two people (*Mara* and *Robert*), and these two people are confused in the answers. Because *Mara replaced Robert*, this means that *Mara took Robert's place* in the band. The best answer is therefore answer (D).

The following chart outlines the key point that you should remember about questions with multiple nouns:

WHO AND WHAT WITH MULTIPLE NOUNS

When there are multiple nouns in a sentence, it is common for the answers to confuse which noun does what.