

Writing Practice: Sentences, Discussion and Correction

An original classroom supplement for the TOEFL Writing tasks; every task here is invented for practice.

How this practice works

Build four sentences from fixed parts and word chunks.



Write your answer before you read each explanation.



Study one complete discussion reply, then compare it with yours.



Fix two weak sentences and read the reasons.

The parts of every task

Part	What you must do
Fixed start	Copy it exactly as given.
Chunks	Small word groups: use each once, in the correct order.
Fixed end	Copy it exactly as given.
Finished sentence	Real written English: a question or a statement .

Notice

Put nothing between the fixed parts except the chunks.

Task 1: a polite question

Build one written English question

Fixed start: *Could you tell me where*

Chunks, in a mixed order:

is

the library

Fixed end: ?

Requirement

One ordinary written English question.

Task 2: which notice?

Build one written English statement

Fixed start: *The notice*

Chunks, in a mixed order:

posted

that

the tutor

Fixed end: *explains the new room rules.*

Requirement

One ordinary written English statement.

Task 3: a reason with because

Build one written English statement

Fixed start: *The class moved to Room 12 because*

Chunks, in a mixed order:

was broken

the projector

Fixed end: .

Requirement

One ordinary written English statement that keeps the stated cause.

Task 4: a required action

Build one written English statement

Fixed start: *The draft*

Chunks, in a mixed order:

be

must

submitted

Fixed end: *by Friday.*

Requirement

One ordinary written English statement. This is normal English, not a rule made only for tests.

Task 1 answer: a polite question

The finished question

Could you tell me where the library is?

Why this order

By itself, the question would put the **verb** first: *Where is the library?* Inside this polite request, the order changes. After the **question word** *where*, the **subject** comes before the verb: *the library is*. This subject-before-verb order is the normal one inside a polite request. Each chunk is used once, and nothing else is added.

Task 2 answer: which notice?

The finished statement

The notice that the tutor posted explains the new room rules.

Why this order

The word *that* opens a **relative clause** . This clause **modifies** the given **noun** *notice*: it tells you which notice the sentence is about. Inside the clause, the subject comes before the verb: *the tutor posted*. After the clause, the fixed **predicate** *explains the new room rules* completes the sentence.

Task 3 answer: a reason with because

The finished statement

The class moved to Room 12 because the projector was broken.

Why this order

Because introduces the cause of the action in the **main clause** . The cause keeps its own subject before its verb: *the projector was broken*. The stated cause stays complete, and no extra word is added between the fixed parts.

Task 4 answer: a required action

The finished statement

The draft must be submitted by Friday.

Why this order

Must is a **modal verb** . After it, *be* and the **past participle** *submitted* build the **passive voice** : must + be + submitted. This order is fixed. The sentence is ordinary written English, and the fixed parts, the subject and the deadline *by Friday*, stay unchanged.

The discussion: the professor's question

Professor

Our campus must choose one plan: keep the library open longer, or buy more e-books. For this discussion, imagine two invented details: the library now closes at 9 p.m., and each e-book licence might allow only one reader at a time. These details are made up for practice; your real campus may differ. Which plan would help students more, and why?

Notice

Your task: add your own reply to this discussion.

Two classmates reply

Mei

I support longer library hours. Many of us study best at night in a quiet place. If the library closed at midnight, students could work there after evening classes instead of going back to a noisy flat.

Daniel

I prefer more e-books. Students can read them anywhere, at any hour, even when the building is closed. An e-book collection can also grow without new rooms, and printed books can only sit on one shelf.

A complete model reply, part one

The model begins

I support longer library hours, and I agree with Mei that a quiet place at night matters when you revise. Suppose the library stayed open until midnight during exam weeks. Students who share a noisy flat could revise there, and those who finish classes late would still find time to study.

Notice

The model continues on the next two frames; nothing is left out.

A complete model reply, part two

The model answers Daniel

Daniel's point about reading anywhere is a real strength of e-books, but a screen is not a desk: long hours of reading tire my eyes, and a licence might allow only one reader at a time.

A complete model reply, part three

The model ends

If the campus could do both, that would be best; choosing one plan, I would pick the hours, because a quiet desk in the building solves a problem a download cannot. For students who need that desk late at night, the hours matter more.

Why this model works: position and classmates

The moves in this reply

The model states its position first, then agrees with Mei and develops the point with its own example and reason. *Suppose* marks the example as **hypothetical**, so the model claims nothing about how busy the real library is, or about real costs. It admits Daniel's point is partly right before answering it, so the model answers a classmate as well as stating its own view. These are choices in this one reply, not rules for every answer: a different reply may agree with Daniel instead, or speak to only one classmate.

Why this model works: careful claims

Keep every claim inside the evidence

The licence point keeps *might*, so the one-reader limit stays a possibility, not a fact. The last sentence names one clear group, students who need a quiet desk late at night, instead of claiming that longer hours help every reader. The model reply is in English, and it states no official timing, minimum or scale.

Correction 1: your turn

Weak sentence

 She will attend an university interview next week.

Your turn

Something in this sentence is wrong. Write your own correction on paper now, and say what you changed and why. The improved sentence and the reason appear on the next frame.

Correction 1: a or an?

Weak sentence

✗ She will attend an university interview next week.

Improved sentence

✓ She will attend a university interview next week.

Reason

Choose *a* or *an* by the first sound, not the first letter. *University* begins with a /j/ sound, like the word *you*. So the **article** before it is *a*, not *an*. The meaning of the sentence does not change.

Correction 2: your turn

Weak sentence

 Although the email was short, but it answered both requests.

Your turn

One word in this sentence is not needed. Write your own correction on paper now, and be ready to say which word you removed. The improved sentence and the reason appear on the next frame.

Correction 2: although and but

Weak sentence

 Although the email was short, but it answered both requests.

Improved sentence

 Although the email was short, it answered both requests.

Reason

One **contrast** word is enough here. *Although* already marks the contrast, so *but* is not needed as well. Keep *although* and drop *but*, or drop *although* and keep *but*: *The email was short, but it answered both requests.* The meaning stays the same.

Check yourself

- 1 Sentences** Rebuild each sentence and say why the order is correct.
- 2 Discussion** Find the position, the agreement with Mei, the marked example and the answer to Daniel.
- 3 Corrections** Explain both corrections without looking back.