

TOEFL Writing Sample Paper 10

Task 1: Integrated Writing Task

Time: 20 Minutes — Recommended Length: at least 150-225 words

Task Instructions:

- Read the passage below and take notes on the main points.
- Listen (or read the summary) of the lecture provided in the box.
- Write a response explaining how the lecture's points specifically challenge the arguments made in the reading passage.

Reading Passage: (Read for 3 minutes)

The Case for De-extinction

Advances in genetic engineering have brought the concept of "de-extinction"—bringing back extinct species like the woolly mammoth—closer to reality. Proponents argue that this technology should be actively pursued for several reasons.

First, de-extinction could help restore damaged ecosystems. For example, woolly mammoths once maintained the "mammoth steppe" grasslands. By reintroducing them, we could turn the current Arctic tundra back into a rich grassland, which would help trap carbon and mitigate climate change.

Second, the process itself represents a significant scientific breakthrough. The techniques developed during de-extinction projects can be applied to save currently endangered species. By learning how to manipulate ancient DNA, scientists can improve the genetic diversity of living animals that are at risk of extinction.

Finally, some argue we have a moral obligation. Many species, like the dodo or the passenger pigeon, went extinct due to human hunting and habitat destruction. Bringing them back is a way to correct the mistakes of the past and restore the natural balance we destroyed.

Listening Lecture: (Read for 2 minutes)

Lecture Highlights (Audio Summary)

The professor argues that de-extinction is a misguided use of scientific resources:

- **Habitat Change:** The environments these animals once lived in have changed drastically. Even if we brought mammoths back, the Arctic tundra no longer provides the specific plants they need to survive. They would likely starve or be forced to live in artificial, controlled environments.
- **Funding Diversion:** Financial resources for conservation are limited. The millions of dollars spent on a single de-extinction project would be much better used to protect thousands of species that are currently alive but on the verge of disappearing forever.
- **Animal Welfare:** Many extinct species were highly social. A "cloned" mammoth would have no parents or social group to learn from. It would be a lonely, confused creature kept in a lab for human curiosity, which raises serious ethical concerns about the quality of life for these animals.

Question:

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they cast doubt on the specific points made in the reading passage.

Task 2: Academic Discussion Task

Time: 10 Minutes — Recommended Length: at least 100 words

Professor Miller: "This week, we are looking at changes in consumer habits. Nowadays, many people prefer to shop for their groceries and household items in large supermarkets or online giants. However, others continue to support nearby local shops and small community markets. Why do you think this shift is happening, and is this a positive or negative trend for society?"

Alice: "I believe the move toward large supermarkets is a positive development. They offer much lower prices because they buy in bulk, which helps families save money. Also, the convenience of finding everything—from bread to electronics—in one place saves people a lot of time in their busy lives."

Mark: "I disagree with Alice. The decline of local shops is a tragedy for communities. Small stores often sell produce from local farmers, which is fresher and better for the environment. When we shop at small businesses, the money stays in the neighborhood rather than going to a distant corporate headquarters. Local shops are what give a community its unique character."

Question:

Write a response to the professor's question. In your response, you should express and support your personal opinion, contributing to the discussion in your own words.

Solutions-

Task 1: Integrated Writing

The reading passage presents several arguments in favor of de-extinction, focusing on ecosystem restoration, scientific progress, and moral duty. However, the professor in the lecture disputes these points, arguing that the practice is impractical, financially wasteful, and ethically problematic.

First, while the reading suggests that reintroducing extinct animals like mammoths could restore Arctic grasslands, the professor points out that these habitats have changed too much. She explains that the modern tundra does not support the dietary needs of ancient mammoths. Consequently, these animals would not be able to survive in the wild and would likely end up confined to artificial settings.

Second, the passage claims that de-extinction research helps save currently endangered species. The professor counters this by focusing on the misallocation of funds. She argues that conservation budgets are limited, and the massive amounts of money required to bring back one extinct species would be much more effective if used to protect the thousands of living species that are currently threatened.

Finally, the professor challenges the "moral obligation" mentioned in the reading. She argues that bringing back a social animal like a mammoth through cloning would be cruel. Without a natural social structure or parents to guide them, these animals would suffer from isolation. Therefore, instead of correcting a past mistake, de-extinction would simply create a new ethical problem regarding animal welfare.

Task 2: Academic Discussion Task

In my opinion, the shift toward large supermarkets is an inevitable but largely negative trend for our social fabric. While Alice makes a valid point regarding the cost-effectiveness and convenience for the individual consumer, the hidden costs to the community are significant.

As Mark suggested, local shops are the backbone of a neighborhood's identity and economy. When we choose a large supermarket over a local butcher or grocer, we are contributing to the homogenization of our cities, where every street begins to look the same. Furthermore, I would like to add that local shops provide a level of social interaction that supermarkets cannot replicate. In a small shop, the owner often knows their customers, which fosters a sense of trust and belonging that is vital for mental well-being in an increasingly anonymous world. While supermarkets are efficient, they lack the "human touch" that keeps a community together. Therefore, we should make a conscious effort to support small businesses to ensure our neighborhoods remain vibrant and socially connected.