

TASK: Read the target words. Practice using them by means of the exercises presented here.

## LESSON

## 5

# Time Efficiency

## Target Words

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. adjust        | 6. maximize   |
| 2. arbitrary     | 7. parallel   |
| 3. denominator   | 8. proportion |
| 4. exponentially | 9. rate       |
| 5. infinitesimal | 10. sequence  |

## Definitions and Samples

1. **adjust** *v.* To change; to get accustomed to something

Travelers are advised to **adjust** their watches before arriving in the new time zone.

*Parts of speech* adjustment *n*, adjustable *adj*

2. **arbitrary** *adj.* Chosen simply by whim or chance, not for any specific reason

The decision to build a school in Blackberry Township was **arbitrary**, without any thought to future housing patterns.

*Parts of speech* arbitrate *v*, arbitrator *n*, arbitrarily *adv*

3. **denominator** *n.* The number written below the line in a fraction

In the fraction  $\frac{1}{2}$ , the number 2 is the **denominator**.

*Usage tips* The phrase *lowest common denominator* means “the most basic and unsophisticated things that most people share.”

*Parts of speech* denominate *v*, denomination *n*, denominational *adj*

4. **exponentially** *adv.* At a very fast rate

In Turkey, the value of the lira has decreased **exponentially** in the last several decades.

*Usage tips* *Exponentially* is taken from mathematics, where an exponent is a number indicating how many times something is multiplied by itself. For example,  $4^3$  contains the exponent "3," indicating  $4 \times 4 \times 4$ .

*Parts of speech* exponent *n*, exponential *adj*

5. **infinitesimal** *adj.* Immeasurably small

The number of contaminants in the water was **infinitesimal**, so the water was safe to drink.

*Parts of speech* infinitesimally *adv*

6. **maximize** *v.* To increase or make as great as possible

A coach helps each athlete **maximize** his or her potential.

*Parts of speech* maximum *n*, maximum *adj*

7. **parallel** *adj.* Being an equal distance apart everywhere

The street where I live runs **parallel** to the main road through town.

*Usage tips* *Parallel* is often followed by *to*.

*Parts of speech* parallel *n*, parallel *adv*

8. **proportion** *n.* A part in relation to the whole

The average employee spends a large **proportion** of each workday answering e-mails.

*Usage tips* *Proportion* is often followed by *of*.

*Parts of speech* proportionate *adj*, proportionally *adv*

9. **rate** *n.* The cost per unit of a good or service; the motion or change that happens in a certain time.

Postal **rates** in Japan are among the highest in the world.

Some grasses grow at the **rate** of one inch per day.

*Parts of speech* rate *v*, rating *n*

10. **sequence** *v*. To organize or arrange in succession

Volunteers have been asked to **sequence** the files and organize the boxes.

*Parts of speech* sequence *n*, sequentially *adv*

**TOEFL Prep I** Complete each sentence by filling in the blank with the best word from the list. Change the form of the word if necessary. Use each word only once.

*adjust* *arbitrary* *denominator* *infinitesimal* *rate*

1. Students felt that the exam was unfair and the grading system was rather \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of increase in prices made it difficult for people to afford basic goods.
3. Politicians promised great changes in the coming year, but any improvement in people's lives was \_\_\_\_\_.
4. She quickly overcame her culture shock and found it easy to \_\_\_\_\_ to the new country.
5. You can add two fractions that have the same \_\_\_\_\_.

**TOEFL Prep II** Find the word or phrase that is closest in meaning to the opposite of each word in the left-hand column. Write the letter in the blank.

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| _____ 1. arbitrary     | (a) mix up       |
| _____ 2. maximize      | (b) intersecting |
| _____ 3. sequence      | (c) minimize     |
| _____ 4. infinitesimal | (d) huge         |
| _____ 5. parallel      | (e) planned out  |

**TOEFL Success** Read the passage to review the vocabulary you have learned. Answer the questions that follow.

*Bonus Structure—  
As we all know  
is a writer's device  
for appealing to  
common knowledge.*

Time is, as we all know, money. Such valuation of time leads people to extreme efforts to *maximize* their use of time. Some people obsess over knowing the exact time. They buy clocks and watches that automatically *adjust* themselves over the Internet or by radio waves. These measurements allow them *infinitesimal* accuracy in dealing with time. Regardless of how one tracks time, most people share a common goal: They want to use time effectively. Since about 1982, this efficiency has increased *exponentially* each year, thanks to computers and their ability to multitask. In multitasking, a computer executes several different tasks in *parallel*. Rather than being set *arbitrarily*, each task is given a priority in the computer's operating system, and time is spent in *proportion* to the priority of the task. The computer executes different *sequences* of tasks at different clock cycles, thereby increasing the *rate* of output from a process.

1. Why does the author mention computer multitasking in this article?
  - a. because it is new
  - b. because it measures time better than any clock
  - c. because it helps people to arrange their activities sequentially
  - d. because it is a good example of the efficient use of time
2. The underlined word *sequences* in the passage is closest in meaning to
  - a. styles
  - b. lengths
  - c. orderings
  - d. difficulty levels