

# Toefl iBT Practice Test TPO 5 Reading Section 2

No. of Questions: 28

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## The Origin of the Pacific Island People

The greater Pacific region, traditionally called Oceania, consists of three cultural areas Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Melanesia, in the southwest Pacific, contains the large islands of New Guinea, the Solomons, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia. Micronesia, the area north of Melanesia, consists primarily of small scattered islands. Polynesia is the central Pacific area in the great triangle defined by Hawaii, Easter Island, and New Zealand. Before the arrival of Europeans, the islands in the two largest cultural areas Polynesia and Micronesia, together contained a population estimated at 700,000.

Speculation on the origin of these Pacific islanders began as soon as outsiders encountered them, in the absence of solid linguistic, archaeological, and biological data many fanciful and mutually exclusive theories were devised. Pacific islanders were variously thought to have come from North America, South America, Egypt, Israel, and India, as well as Southeast Asia. Many older theories implicitly deprecated the navigational abilities and overall cultural creativity of the Pacific islanders. For example, British anthropologists G. Elliot Smith and W. J. Perry assumed that only Egyptians would have been skilled enough to navigate and colonize the Pacific. They inferred that the Egyptians even crossed the Pacific to found the great civilizations of the New World (North and South America). In 1947 Norwegian adventurer Thor Heyerdahl drifted on a balsa-log raft westward with the winds and currents across the Pacific from South America to prove his theory that Pacific islanders were Native Americans (also called American Indians). Later Heyerdahl suggested that the Pacific was peopled by three migrations: by Native Americans from the Pacific Northwest of North America drifting to Hawaii, by Peruvians drifting to Easter Island, and by Melanesians. In 1969 he crossed the Atlantic in an Egyptian-style reed boat to prove Egyptian influences in the Americas. Contrary to these theorists, the overwhelming evidence of physical anthropology, linguistics, and archaeology shows that the Pacific islanders came from Southeast Asia and were skilled enough as navigators to sail against the prevailing winds and currents.

According to paragraph 1, all of the following are true statements about Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia EXCEPT:

- Collectively, these regions are traditionally known as Oceania.
- The islands of Micronesia are small and spread out.
- Hawaii, Easter Island, and New Zealand mark the boundaries of Polynesia.
- Melanesia is situated to the north of Micronesia.

Paragraph 1 is marked with 

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By stating that the theories are 【mutually exclusive】 the author means that

- if one of the theories is true, then all the others must be false
- the differences between the theories are unimportant
- taken together, the theories cover all possibilities
- the theories support each other

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The word 【overwhelming】 in the passage is closest in meaning to

- powerful
- favorable
- current
- reasonable


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According to paragraph 2, which of the following led some early researchers to believe that the Pacific islanders originally came from Egypt?

- Egyptians were known to have founded other great civilizations.
- Sailors from other parts of the world were believed to lack the skills needed to travel across the ocean.
- Linguistic, archaeological, and biological data connected the islands to Egypt.
- Egyptian accounts claimed responsibility for colonizing the Pacific as well as the Americas.

Paragraph 2 is marked with 


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Which of the following can be inferred from paragraph 2 about early theories of where the first inhabitants of the Pacific islands came from?

- They were generally based on solid evidence.
- They tried to account for the origin of the characteristic features of the languages spoken by Pacific islanders
- They assumed that the peoples living in Southeast Asia did not have the skills needed to sail to the Pacific islands.
- They questioned the ideas of G. Elliot Smith and W. J. Perry.

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The word **implements** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- skills
- tools
- opportunities
- practices

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All of the following are mentioned in paragraph 3 as required for successful colonization of the Pacific islands EXCEPT

- knowledge of various Austronesian languages
- a variety of fishing techniques
- navigational skills
- knowledge of plant cultivation

Paragraph 3 is marked with 


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In paragraph 3, why does the author provide information about the types of crops grown and boats used in Southeast Asia during the period around 5000 B. C. E.?

- To evaluate the relative importance of agriculture and fishing to early Austronesian peoples
- To illustrate the effectiveness of archaeological and linguistic methods in discovering details about life in ancient times
- To contrast living conditions on the continent of Asia with living conditions on the Pacific islands
- To demonstrate that people from this region had the skills and resources necessary to travel to and survive on the Pacific islands

Paragraph 3 is marked with 

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Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the 【highlighted sentence】 in the passage? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information

- Some people have argued that the Pacific was settled by traders who became lost while transporting domesticated plants and animals
- The original Polynesian settlers were probably marooned on the islands, but they may have been joined later by carefully prepared colonization expeditions.
- Although it seems reasonable to believe that colonization expeditions would set out fully stocked, this is contradicted by much of the evidence.
- The settlement of the Pacific islands was probably intentional and well planned rather than accidental as some people have proposed

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The word **【undisputed】** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- mysterious
- unexpected
- acknowledged
- significant


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According to paragraph 4, which of the following is NOT an explanation for why a group of people might have wanted to colonize the Pacific islands?

- As their numbers increased, they needed additional territory.
- The winds and currents made the islands easy to reach.
- The political situation at home made emigration desirable
- They found exploration challenging and exciting.

Paragraph 4 is marked with 

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Why does the author mention the views of 【 Patrick Kirch 】 ?

- To present evidence in favor of Heyerdahl's idea about American Indians reaching Oceania
- To emphasize the familiarity of Pacific islanders with crops from many different regions of the world
- To indicate that a supposed proof for Heyerdahl's theory has an alternative explanation
- To demonstrate that some of the same crops were cultivated in both South America and Oceania

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Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

Later theories concentrated on journeys in the other direction.

Where would the sentence best fit?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

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**Directions:** An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. *This question is worth 2 points.*

To review passage. Click **View Text**

**Together, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia make up the region described as the Pacific islands, or Oceania.**

- 
- 
- 

### Answer Choices

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The first Europeans to reach the area assumed that the islands' original inhabitants must have drifted to Oceania, perhaps from Egypt or the Americas.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Although early colonizers of the islands probably came from agriculture-based societies, they were obliged to adopt an economy based on fishing.             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New evidence suggests that, rather than being isolated, Pacific islanders engaged in trade and social interaction with peoples living in Southeast Asia. | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer simulations of the winds and currents in the Pacific have shown that reaching the Pacific islands was probably much easier than previously thought. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It is now believed that the process of colonization required a great deal of skill, determination, and planning and could not have happened by chance.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Using linguistic and archaeological evidence, anthropologists have determined that the first Pacific islanders were Austronesian people from Southeast Asia. |



## The Origin of the Pacific Island People

The greater Pacific region, traditionally called Oceania, consists of three cultural areas Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Melanesia, in the southwest Pacific, contains the large islands of New Guinea, the Solomons, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia. Micronesia, the area north of Melanesia, consists primarily of small scattered islands. Polynesia is the central Pacific area in the great triangle defined by Hawaii, Easter Island, and New Zealand. Before the arrival of Europeans, the islands in the two largest cultural areas Polynesia and Micronesia, together contained a population estimated at 700,000.

Speculation on the origin of these Pacific islanders began as soon as outsiders encountered them, in the absence of solid linguistic, archaeological, and biological data many fanciful and mutually exclusive theories were devised. Pacific islanders were variously thought to have come from North America, South America, Egypt, Israel, and India, as well as Southeast Asia. Many older theories implicitly deprecated the navigational abilities and overall cultural creativity of the Pacific islanders. For example, British anthropologists G. Elliot Smith and W. J. Perry assumed that only Egyptians would have been skilled enough to navigate and colonize the Pacific. They inferred that the Egyptians even crossed the Pacific to found the great civilizations of the New World (North and South America). In 1947 Norwegian adventurer Thor Heyerdahl drifted on a balsa-log raft westward with the winds and currents across the Pacific from South America to prove his theory that Pacific islanders were Native Americans (also called American Indians). Later Heyerdahl suggested that the Pacific was peopled by three migrations by Native Americans from the Pacific Northwest of North America drifting to Hawaii, by Peruvians drifting to Easter Island, and by Melanesians. In 1969 he crossed the Atlantic in an Egyptian-style reed boat to prove Egyptian influences in the Americas. Contrary to these theorists, the overwhelming evidence of physical anthropology, linguistics, and archaeology shows that the Pacific islanders came from Southeast Asia and were skilled enough as navigators to sail against the prevailing winds and currents.

## The Cambrian Explosion

The geologic timescale is marked by significant geologic and biological events, including the origin of Earth about 4.6 billion years ago, the origin of life about 3.5 billion years ago, the origin of eukaryotic life-forms (living things that have cells with true nuclei) about 1.5 billion years ago, and the origin of animals about 0.6 billion years ago. The last event marks the beginning of the Cambrian period. Animals originated relatively late in the history of Earth; in only the last 10 percent of Earth's history. During a geologically brief 100-million-year period, all modern animal groups (along with other animals that are now extinct) evolved. This rapid origin and diversification of animals is often referred to as "the Cambrian explosion."

Scientists have asked important questions about this explosion for more than a century. Why did it occur so late in the history of Earth? The origin of multicellular forms of life seems a relatively simple step compared to the origin of life itself. Why does the fossil record not document the series of evolutionary changes during the evolution of animals? Why did animal life evolve so quickly? Paleontologists continue to search the fossil record for answers to these questions.

One interpretation regarding the absence of fossils during this important 100-million-year period is that early animals were soft bodied and simply did not fossilize. Fossilization of soft-bodied animals is less likely than fossilization of hard-bodied animals, but it does occur. Conditions that promote fossilization of soft-bodied animals include very rapid covering by sediments that create an environment that discourages decomposition. In fact, fossil beds containing soft-bodied animals have been known for many years.

The Ediacara fossil formation, which contains the oldest known animal fossils, consists exclusively of soft-bodied forms. Although named after a site in Australia, the Ediacara formation is worldwide in distribution and dates to Precambrian times. This 700-million-year-old formation gives few clues to the origins of modern animals. however. because

The word **【significant】** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- Numerous
- important
- unexplained
- sudden

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