

## TO THE RACES

**Purpose:** This multi-purpose, high energy activity helps students develop the skimming and scanning skills necessary for success on the Reading section of the TOEFL® iBT test. At the same time it also allows students practice their listening and speaking skills.

**Organization:** Pairs or groups of three

**Materials:** A different reading for each group. Prizes (optional).

**Time:** 60-90 minutes

**Procedure:**

**Reading...**

1. Choose a reading for each group from a magazine, newspaper, or book. Length and subject matter should be similar to TOEFL® iBT readings. (You could use a TOEFL® iBT reading, but students seem to appreciate the variation.)
2. Pass the readings out to groups (one for each pair), and give them 15 minutes to read and discuss it.
3. Instruct group members to work together to create two *Wh-* questions for the readings. Have students use their textbooks or a practice test to model their questions. Students should not write answers, but they should be sure that their questions can be answered in one or two sentences.
4. Walk around and check the students' questions.
5. Have groups write their questions on the board.

**Race...**

6. Tape copies of the readings on the wall, preferably in the hallway outside the room. (Note: This exercise involves a lot of movement, so readings should be well separated.)
7. Tell students that they're going to race to see which group can correctly answer all the questions first. They should not copy the questions from the board.
8. Assign a secretary and messenger(s) to each group. Inform students that you will have them switch roles part way through the exercise.

9. The messenger must read and then report the answers—in speaking only—to the secretary. **Emphasize:** Messengers can spell out loud, but they may not write. Part of the challenge is keeping the questions in their head.
10. A little more than half-way through the exercise, have students switch roles.
11. When a group thinks that they've correctly answered all the questions, quickly check their answers while the game is still in play. If they're all correct, they win and the race ends. If they're not all correct, tell the group to keep playing. (Keep the energy high by circulating and quickly checking throughout the game, letting the teams know when you see errors.)

**Review...**

12. Go over the questions together as a class.