

新TOEFL 口述・応答演習

(「統合」型／読→聴→話)

設問

Narrator:

Now read the following passage about how the measurement evolved. You have 45 seconds to read the passage. Start to read it now.

(黙読時間：45秒)

(↑画面表示)

Evolution of Measurement

From ancient times, human beings have had a need to measure things. The oldest of all measurements were those of length, and the shortest measurements were originally derived from the length of various parts of the human body.

The smallest of these was the *digit*, which was the width of a man's forefinger. It was the ancestor of the modern inch, the basic unit of measurement even today in the United States.

The *hand*, the widest distance of a man's palm, was the next largest unit. It measured about four inches. The *foot*, taken from the length of an adult male foot, was used in the construction of early buildings and structures, dating back to Stonehenge in ancient England.

For longer distances, the most common measurement used was the *yard*, which was the distance from the tip of a man's nose to the end of his thumb when his arm was outstretched.

(↑画面表示)

Now listen to part of the lecture in a mathematics class.

Lecturer:

As you can imagine, there were difficulties in standardizing measurements which were based on the human body. I mean, whose foot do you use, right? But there were attempts at standardization, even from early times. For example, because the size of people's fingers varied widely, the digit was discarded and the inch evolved. One inch was determined to be the length of three barleycorns taken from the center of the plant and laid end to end. It seems pretty unscientific, given what we are capable of today, huh? Nonetheless, many of these traditional measurements were standardized and are now in common usage.

The hand, for instance, was fixed at four inches and is still used today throughout the world to measure the height of horses. The foot, still the standard in the United States and used unofficially in all English-speaking countries, is now 12 inches and one yard became 3 feet or 36 inches. Of course, the ultimate standardization system, the metric system, is now in place in all nations of the world, except the United States. And to think — it all evolved from barleycorns!

The professor discusses measurement systems. Explain how the information in the lecture augments the information given in the reading.

Preparation Time: 30 seconds

Response Time: 60 seconds

(↑ 画面表示)

<解答例>

The author of the reading introduced several early ways of measuring length that were based on parts of the human body. The professor went on to talk about the need to standardize these lengths, how they became standardized, even from early times, and how they are still used in the world today.

For example, because the width of a human finger differed so much from person to person, the digit couldn't be used reliably. So the smallest unit was standardized as the inch, which was the length of three barleycorns laid end to end. Several modern measurements, including the inch, are based on that. The hand, which is four inches, is still used to measure the height of horses. And the foot and yard are still commonly in usage, too — officially in the United States, unofficially in other English-speaking countries.

The professor points to the metric system as the ultimate attempt at standardization, since all countries use it, except the United States.

(135 words)