



**PART 1:**

*Below is a sample answer to the following TOEFL Independent Writing Task 2 question (taken from [the official ETS website](#)):*

*“Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Always telling the truth is the most important consideration in any relationship. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.”*

*I have removed all articles (“a,” “an,” and “the”) from the writing sample. Mark this writing to indicate where the missing articles should go. Then check your answers on the answer key on page 5.*

Relationships make world go round. All of us have relationships that are important to us. Typical personal relationships include friendship, romantic relationship, or relationship you have with your family members. There are less personal relationships too. Business relationship can be very important. Alliance between teacher and student is also important relationship. Relationships have power. They require certain level of trust to work. Because of this, some people say relationship must be built on absolute honesty. Kind of honesty you find in relationship must be pure and always involve truth, these people would say. I disagree however. I think relationships can be good and useful, but still have certain amount of lying.

This can be true in personal relationships. For example, in family relationship, as children get older they need to feel more independent from their parents. They need to learn to be independent. But it is also natural for loving parents to worry about their growing child. Typical adolescent does disobedient thing here, dangerous thing there. Adolescent sometimes needs to grow without being constantly watched by their parent. Adolescent may lie about where he or she is going or what he or she is doing, to gain sense of independence they need. Also, parent needs to sometimes watch their child and make sure they are making good decisions. But to know what their child is really doing, parents may need to watch in secret. Their child will behave differently or try harder to hide things if child knows he or she is being watched. So parents may lie to child about how closely they are watching them. Parental lie like this is forgivable, just as typical adolescent lie is understandable.

Romantic relationships and friendships can have some healthy lies too. For example, husband may lie to his wife or wife may lie to her husband to avoid hurting spouse's feelings. Wife may tell husband

that shirt he is wearing looks good, even if it doesn't. Or husband who is late for meeting his wife may lie and say he had trouble at work. Maybe he just forgot about meeting her. But saying he just forgot would be hurtful. Friends tell may each other lie or two like this as well.

Less personal relationships can have healthy lies too. In alliance between two businesses, managers of each business may need to lie to protect reputation of their company. For example, if one manager asks other if his business is losing money, other may say "no," even if answer is lie. Business can lose their reputation and customers if they are not making profit. As long as struggling business meets its obligations, I think it's OK for business to lie about internal problems, even to partner business. Similarly, student does not have to admit how much he or she is struggling in class. And if teacher is angry or disappointed in student, that teacher may lie and say he or she feels OK. After all, hurting student's feelings will not help relationship.

In conclusion, it is OK to be dishonest in relationship. What matters is kind of lies you tell, and intention behind lie.

## **PART 2:**

*Now, answer the following question*

“Some people have many friendships, and like to see people in large group settings, such as parties or public gatherings. Other people prefer to have a few close friends and meet with just one person or small groups of people. Which of these situations do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.”

*This question is written in the style of TOEFL Independent Writing Task 2. Time yourself to answer this question in 30 minutes. Then go back and check your answer for use of articles. Consult David’s Magoosh tutorials on “the,” “a,” and “an.” How often did you use articles? Did you make any mistakes? Make corrections as needed.*

## **PART 1 ANSWER KEY:**

Relationships make **the** world go round. All of us have relationships that are important to us. Typical personal relationships include **the** friendship, **the** romantic relationship, or **the** relationship you have with your family members. There are less personal relationships too. **A** business relationship can be very important. **An** alliance between **a** teacher and student is also **an** important relationship. Relationships have power. They require **a** certain level of trust to work. Because of this, some people say **a** relationship must be built on absolute honesty. **The** kind of honesty you find in **a** relationship must be pure and always involve **the** truth, these people would say. I disagree however. I think relationships can be good and useful, but still have **a** certain amount of lying.

This can be true in personal relationships. For example, in **a** family relationship, as children get older they need to feel more independent from their parents. They need to learn to be independent. But it is also natural for loving parents to worry about their growing child. **The** typical adolescent does **a** disobedient thing here, **a** dangerous thing there. **An** adolescent sometimes needs to grow without being constantly watched by their parent. **An** adolescent may lie about where he or she is going or what he or she is doing, to gain **the** sense of independence they need. Also, **a** parent needs to sometimes watch their child and make sure they are making good decisions. But to know what their child is really doing, parents may need to watch in secret. Their child will behave differently or try harder to hide things if **the** child knows he or she is being watched. So parents may lie to **a** child about how closely they are watching them. **A** parental lie like this is forgivable, just as **a** typical adolescent lie is understandable.

Romantic relationships and friendships can have some healthy lies too. For example, **a** husband may lie to his wife or **a** wife may lie to her husband to avoid hurting **a** spouse's feelings. **A** wife may tell **a** husband that **the** shirt he is wearing looks good, even if it doesn't. Or **a** husband who is late for meeting his wife may lie and say he had trouble at work. Maybe he just forgot about meeting her. But saying he just forgot would be hurtful. Friends tell may each other **a** lie or two like this as well.

Less personal relationships can have healthy lies too. In **an** alliance between two businesses, **the** managers of each business may need to lie to protect **the** reputation of their company. For example, if one manager asks **the** other if his business is losing money, **the** other may say "no," even if **the** answer is **a** lie. Business can lose their reputation and customers if they are not making **a** profit. As long as **a** struggling business meets its obligations, I think it's OK for **the** business to lie about internal problems, even to **a** partner business. Similarly, **a** student does not have to admit how much he or she is struggling in **a** class. And if **a** teacher is angry or disappointed in **a** student, that teacher may lie and say he or she feels OK. After all, hurting **the** student's feelings will not help **the** relationship.

In conclusion, it is OK to be dishonest in **a** relationship. What matters is **the** kind of lies you tell, and **the** intention behind **a** lie.