

What is the Compass placement assessment?

- The Compass placement assessment has sections in writing, reading, basic numerical skills, and elementary algebra.
- Assessment results determine the type math, reading, and English courses you should take when enrolled in long certificate or associate degree curricula.

Must I take the Compass assessment before I register for classes?

If you wish to enroll as a full-time or part-time student, you must complete the entire Compass placement assessment unless you are exempt because:

- Your SAT scores equal or exceed 480 verbal and 256 math and are no more than 3 years old.
- Your Act composite, math, and English scores equal or exceed 20.
- You already have an associate degree or higher.
- You will transfer degree creditable college level math or English courses here. Your transcripts must arrive prior to the beginning of the term in which you plan to enroll. However, you still must take the Reading section of the assessment.
- You listed No Collegiate Award as your educational goal on your admission application.
- You chose a short certificate program having no English or math requirements in a major not leading to an associate degree.
- You completed developmental courses at another college within three years of your enrollment here.
- You wish to audit a class.
- You already took the Compass placement assessment within the last 3 years.
- You will enroll as a transient student.
- You will be dually enrolled here and in high school while taking English or math courses.
- All RN / LPN applicants must, at a minimum, take the Compass Reading assessment (without exception).
- Please schedule your assessment session at least one day before visiting a counselor to register for classes..

Is there a fee for taking this assessment a second time?

- Compass assessments are free unless you re-test. You may re-test once.
- The re-test fee is \$8, payable by check, cash, money order, or major credit cards.

Are other resources available to help me prepare?

- Expanded Compass subject area study guides and other resources are available.
www.act.org/compass/sample/index.html

Must I take the Compass assessment if I only want to take courses under the occupational enhancement or personal enrichment admission status?

- You may enroll in 1-4 credit hours during your first semester.
- You must take the placement assessment if you enroll the following term if you enter a program of study leading to an associate degree.

When may I get my results and how do I interpret what they mean?

- Compass results are provided to you when you complete the exam.
- You are encouraged to visit a counselor after receiving your results.
- A counselor will help you understand the meaning of your placement scores.

Revised 9/16/05



Compass Assessment Content by Section

The Compass assessment is divided into three parts: Reading comprehension, Writing skills, and Pre-algebra skills.

The pre-algebra section consists of problems in the following content areas: basic operations with integers, fractions and decimals, exponents, square roots, scientific notation, ratios, percentages, proportions, conversion between fractions and decimals, and averages (mean, median, mode). You should focus your attention on these topics while preparing for the pre-algebra section.

The reading section consists of reading a passage from social sciences, prose fiction, or humanities. Five reading comprehension items that accompany each passage are of two general categories: referring and reasoning. Referring items are things such as recognizing the explicitly stated main idea of the passages, locating explicit information in a passage, recognizing sequential relationships, cause and effect relationships, comparative relationships, and stated assumptions. You should focus your attention on these topics while preparing for the reading section.

The writing section consists of assessing your abilities in the categories of usage / mechanics (punctuation, basic grammar and usage, sentence structure), and rhetorical skills (strategy, organization, style). About 70% of the items will be usage / mechanics and about 30% will be rhetorical skills. You should focus your attention on these topics while preparing for the writing section.

Mathematics Placement Measures

SAMPLE SCREEN SHOT

The figure below shows a sample item similar to those in the Algebra Placement Test and illustrates how a mathematics test item would appear on the computer screen. Students use the mouse to select an answer and then click on the “Go On” button to proceed to the next computer-selected question. The sample items on the following pages provide examples of the contents of each of the five mathematics placement test pools and several of the mathematics diagnostic test pools.

NOTE: The mathematics pools for COMPASS/ESL have been calibrated to accommodate calculator-permitted administrations. The estimated effect of calculator use has been accounted for in the item calibrations in a manner that allows scores to be interpreted the same as were scores produced in earlier versions of COMPASS.

Clicking on the “Calculator” button from any COMPASS mathematics test screen will bring up the default Windows® calculator.

The screenshot shows a computer window titled "COMPASS Math Test". In the top right corner of the window, there are two buttons: "Calculator" and "HELP". The main content area contains a math problem: "A student has earned scores of 87, 81, and 88 on the first 3 of 4 tests. If the student wants an average (arithmetic mean) of exactly 87, what score must she earn on the fourth test?". Below the problem are five multiple-choice options, each with a radio button: A. 85, B. 86, C. 87, D. 92, and E. 93. In the bottom right corner of the window, there is a "Go On" button.

COMPASS Math Test

Calculator HELP

A student has earned scores of 87, 81, and 88 on the first 3 of 4 tests. If the student wants an average (arithmetic mean) of exactly 87, what score must she earn on the fourth test?

A. 85
 B. 86
 C. 87
 D. 92
 E. 93

Go On

NUMERICAL SKILLS/PREALGEBRA PLACEMENT

<u>Content Areas</u>	<u>Percentage of Items in Pool</u>
Basic operations with integers	16
Basic operations with fractions	17
Basic operations with decimals	14
Exponents, square roots, and scientific notation	13
Ratios and proportions	8
Percentages	15
Conversions between fractions and decimals	<1
Multiples and factors of integers	2
Absolute values of numbers	2
Averages (means, medians, and modes)	9
Order concepts (greater than; less than)	<1
Estimation skills	<1
Number theory	<1
Counting problems and simple probability	1
Range	1

(Averages: Means, Medians, and Modes)

1. What is the average (arithmetic mean) of 8, 7, 7, 5, 3, 2, and 2 ?
- A. $3\frac{4}{7}$
 - B. $4\frac{5}{6}$
 - C. $4\frac{6}{7}$
 - D. 5
 - E. $6\frac{4}{5}$

(Basic Operations with Decimals)

- 2.** Ben is making wooden toys for the next arts and crafts sale. Each toy costs Ben \$1.80 to make. If he sells the toys for \$3.00 each, how many will he have to sell to make a profit of exactly \$36.00 ?
- A.** 12
 - B.** 20
 - C.** 30
 - D.** 60
 - E.** 108

(Basic Operations with Fractions)

- 3.** How many yards of material from a 24-yard length of cloth remain after 3 pieces, each $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards long, and 5 pieces, each $2\frac{1}{4}$ yards long, are removed?
- A.** $2\frac{1}{4}$
 - B.** $4\frac{1}{4}$
 - C.** $4\frac{5}{6}$
 - D.** $10\frac{1}{4}$
 - E.** $10\frac{5}{6}$

(Percentages)

- 4.** Phillip charged \$400 worth of goods on his credit card. On his first bill, he was not charged any interest, and he made a payment of \$20. He then charged another \$18 worth of goods. On his second bill a month later, he was charged 2% interest on his entire unpaid balance. How much interest was Phillip charged on his second bill?
- A.** \$8.76
 - B.** \$7.96
 - C.** \$7.60
 - D.** \$7.24
 - E.** \$6.63

ALGEBRA PLACEMENT

The Algebra Placement Test comprises topics from three major mathematics curricular areas, as follows:

<u>Curricular Area</u>	<u>Content Areas</u>	<u>Percentage of Items in Pool</u>
Elementary Algebra		57
	Substituting values into algebraic equations	7
	Setting up equations for given situations	7
	Basic operations with polynomials	7
	Factoring of polynomials	7
	Solving polynomial equations by factoring	3
	Formula manipulation and field axioms	2
	Linear equations in one variable	16
	Exponents and radicals	5
	Linear inequalities in one variable	1
Intermediate Algebra		15
	Rational expressions	7
	Exponents and radicals	5
	Systems of linear equations in two variables	2
	Quadratic formulas	<1
	Absolute value equations and inequalities	<1
Coordinate Geometry		27
	Linear equations in two variables	13
	Distance formulas in the plane	3
	Graphing conics (circle, parabola, etc.)	3
	Graphing parallel lines	1
	Graphing perpendicular lines	1
	Graphing relations in the plane	4
	Graphing systems of equations and rational functions	1
	Midpoint formulas	<1

(Elementary Algebra: Linear Equations in One Variable)

1. A student has earned scores of 87, 81, and 88 on the first 3 of 4 tests. If the student wants an average (arithmetic mean) of exactly 87, what score must she earn on the fourth test?
- A. 85
 - B. 86
 - C. 87
 - D. 92
 - E. 93

(Elementary Algebra: Basic Operations with Polynomials)

2. Which of the following expressions represents the product of 3 less than twice x and 2 more than the quantity 3 times x ?
- A. $-6x^2 + 25x + 6$
 - B. $6x^2 + 5x + 6$
 - C. $6x^2 - 5x + 6$
 - D. $6x^2 - 5x - 6$
 - E. $6x^2 - 13x - 6$

(Elementary Algebra: Substituting Values into Algebraic Expressions)

3. If $x = -1$ and $y = 2$, what is the value of the expression $2x^3 - 3xy$?
- A. 8
 - B. 4
 - C. -1
 - D. -4
 - E. -8

(Intermediate Algebra: Rational Expressions)

4. For all $r \neq \pm 2$, $\frac{r^2 - 5r + 6}{r^2 - 4} = ?$

A. $\frac{r-3}{r+2}$

B. $\frac{r-2}{r+2}$

C. $\frac{r-2}{r+3}$

D. $\frac{r+3}{r-2}$

E. $\frac{r+3}{r+2}$

(Coordinate Geometry: Linear Equations in Two Variables)

5. What is the equation of the line that contains the points with (x,y) coordinates $(-3,7)$ and $(5,-1)$?

A. $y = 3x - 2$

B. $y = x + 10$

C. $y = -\frac{1}{3}x + 8$

D. $y = -\frac{3}{2}x + \frac{11}{4}$

E. $y = -x + 4$

COLLEGE ALGEBRA PLACEMENT

<u>Content Areas</u>	<u>Percentage of Items in Pool</u>
Functions	40
Exponents	25
Complex numbers	15
Arithmetic and geometric sequences and series	7
Factorials	6
Matrices (basic operations, equations, and determinants)	3
Systems of linear equations in three or more variables	1
Logic and proof techniques	1
Roots of polynomials	2

(Complex Numbers)

1. For $i = \sqrt{-1}$, if $3i(2 + 5i) = x + 6i$, then $x = ?$
- A. -15
 - B. 5
 - C. $5i$
 - D. $15i$
 - E. $27i$

(Functions)

2. If $f(4) = 0$ and $f(6) = 6$, which of the following could represent $f(x)$?
- A. $\frac{2}{3}x - 4$
 - B. $x + 2$
 - C. $x - 4$
 - D. $\frac{3}{2}x + 6$
 - E. $3x - 12$

GEOMETRY PLACEMENT

Content Areas

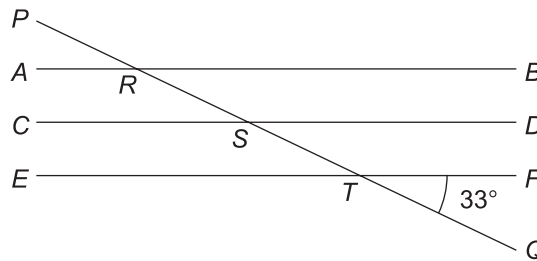
Percentage of Items in Pool

Triangles (perimeter, area, Pythagorean theorem, etc.)	58
Circles (perimeter, area, arcs, etc.)	15
Angles (supplementary, complementary, adjacent, vertical, etc.)	12
Rectangles (perimeter, area, etc.)	4
Three-dimensional concepts	4
Hybrid (composite) shapes	4
Trapezoids	2
Parallelograms	<1
Logic and proof techniques	<1

(Angles)

1. In the figure below \overline{AB} , \overline{CD} , and \overline{EF} are parallel, and \overline{PQ} intersects all 3 lines at points R , S , and T , respectively. If the measure of $\angle QTF$ is 33° , what is the measure of $\angle PRB$?

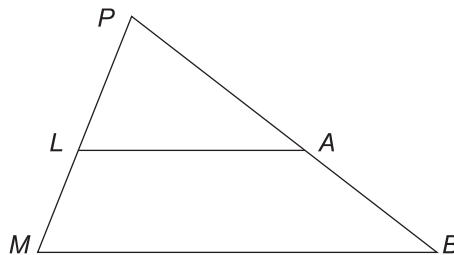
- A. 33°
- B. 57°
- C. 66°
- D. 123°
- E. 147°



(Triangles)

2. In $\triangle MPB$ below, $\overline{LA} \parallel \overline{MB}$. If $\frac{PL}{LM} = \frac{5}{3}$, then $\frac{PB}{PA} = ?$

- A. $\frac{5}{8}$
- B. $\frac{2}{3}$
- C. $\frac{8}{5}$
- D. $\frac{3}{5}$
- E. $\frac{8}{3}$



TRIGONOMETRY PLACEMENT

<u>Content Areas</u>	<u>Percentage of Items in Pool</u>
Trigonometric functions and identities	35
Right-triangle trigonometry	27
Trigonometric equations and inequalities	10
Graphs of trigonometric functions	20
Special angles (multiples of 30 and 45 degrees)	8
Polar coordinates	<1

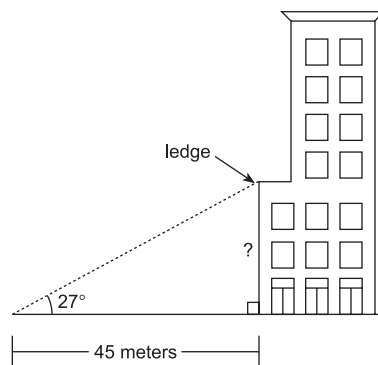
(Trigonometric Functions and Identities)

1. Which of the following is equivalent to $\frac{1 - \cos^2 \theta}{\cos^2 \theta}$?
- A. $\sec^2 \theta$
 - B. $(\csc^2 \theta) - 1$
 - C. $\tan^2 \theta$
 - D. $\sin^2 \theta$
 - E. $-\frac{1}{\sin^2 \theta}$

(Right-Triangle Trigonometry)

2. From a point on the ground the angle of elevation to a ledge on a building is 27° , and the distance to the base of the building is 45 meters. How many meters high is the ledge?

- A. $\frac{45}{\sin 27^\circ}$
- B. $\frac{45}{\tan 27^\circ}$
- C. $45 \sin 27^\circ$
- D. $45 \cos 27^\circ$
- E. $45 \tan 27^\circ$



Mathematics Diagnostics Measures

NUMERICAL SKILLS/PREALGEBRA

The Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Diagnostic Test can be customized to include assessment of any or all of the following content areas, each of which consists of a pool of at least 20 items:

Content Areas

Basic operations with integers
Basic operations with fractions
Basic operations with decimals
Exponents, square roots,
and scientific notation

Ratios and proportions
Percentages
Averages (means, medians, and modes)

(Ratios and Proportions)

1. A boy in a fashion design contest made a shirt for himself and a proportional one for a small doll. The boy was 5 feet 5 inches tall, and the doll was 13 inches tall. If the boy's shirt sleeve was 30 inches long, how long, in inches, was the sleeve of the doll's shirt?
- A.** $28\frac{1}{6}$
B. 17
C. 15
D. $7\frac{1}{11}$
E. 6

(Basic Operations with Fractions)

2. Erin wants to reduce both the length and width of a picture by $\frac{1}{3}$. If the original picture is 12 inches by 6 inches, what will be the dimensions, in inches, of the reduced picture?
- A.** 18 by 9
B. 12 by 4
C. 9 by 4
D. 8 by 6
E. 8 by 4

(Percentages)

- 3.** Carmen earned \$1,600 last summer. She spent \$224 on a new bicycle, invested \$1,000 in a savings certificate, and put the remaining money in her savings account. What percentage of her earnings did she put in her savings account?
- A.** 14.0
 - B.** 20.6
 - C.** 23.5
 - D.** 30.7
 - E.** 37.6

ALGEBRA

The Algebra Diagnostic Test can be customized to include assessment of any or all of the following content areas, each of which consists of a pool of at least 20 items:

Content Areas

Substituting values into
algebraic expressions

Setting up equations for given situations

Basic operations with polynomials

Factoring polynomials

Linear equations in one variable

Exponents and radicals

Rational expressions

Linear equations in two variables

(Linear Equations in One Variable)

- 1.** A certain school's enrollment increased 5% this year over last year's enrollment. If the school now has 1,260 students enrolled, how many students were enrolled last year?
- A.** 1,020
 - B.** 1,155
 - C.** 1,200
 - D.** 1,255
 - E.** 1,323

(Setting up Equations for Given Situations)

2. A person travels x miles in y hours and then 10 miles in 2 hours. Which expression represents the person's average rate, in miles per hour, for the entire distance traveled?

A. $\frac{x+10}{y+2}$

B. $\frac{x+10}{2y}$

C. $\frac{x+10}{2}$

D. $\frac{x+y}{20}$

E. $\frac{10x}{2y}$

(Rational Expressions)

3. A rectangle has an area of $(21s^2 + 18st)$ square meters. If its width is $3s$ meters, what is its length in meters?

A. $7s + 6t$

B. $7s + 18st$

C. $18s + 15t$

D. $24s^3 + 21s^2t$

E. $36s^3 + 54s^2t$

Answers to Sample Items

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Placement Test

1. C 2. C 3. A 4. B

Algebra Placement Test

1. D 2. D 3. B 4. A 5. E

College Algebra Placement Test

1. A 2. E

Geometry Placement Test

1. E 2. C

Trigonometry Placement Test

1. C 2. E

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Diagnostic Test

1. E 2. E 3. C

Algebra Diagnostic Test

1. C 2. A 3. A

Reading Placement Test: Sample Passage 1—Humanities

1. D 2. B

Reading Placement Test: Sample Passage 2—Practical Reading

1. A 2. C

Vocabulary Diagnostic Test

1. B 2. D 3. E 4. C

Reading Comprehension Diagnostic Test

1. B 2. D

Writing Skills Placement Test

1. A 2. B 3. D 4. E

Writing Skills Diagnostic Test

1. D 2. C 3. B 4. B 5. spring 6. A 7. D 8. B 9. C 10. D

Writing Skills Placement Measure

SAMPLE SCREEN SHOT

The figure below shows a sample essay and test item similar to those in the Writing Skills Placement Test and illustrates how these materials would appear on the computer screen. Students are instructed to read the essay and to use the mouse to click on each section of the essay that they believe to be problematic. After a student clicks on a section of text, that section is highlighted, and four alternative text selections are shown in the right half of the screen. Students then select the section they believe best fixes the problem in the text, and then continue in this fashion until they believe they have identified all problems in the essay. They then click on the “Finished editing essay” button and are presented with several questions that address strategy, organization, and style. Students then click on the “Go On” button to proceed to the next computer-selected essay. The sample items on the following pages provide examples of the contents of the Writing Skills Placement and Diagnostic Tests.

The screenshot displays the COMPASS/ESL Writing Test interface. At the top left, the title "COMPASS/ESL Writing Test" is visible, and at the top right, there is a "HELP" button. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains an essay with two paragraphs. The first paragraph reads: "An increasing number of lakes and rivers in the northern United States invaded are being by a mussel no larger than a fingernail." The second paragraph reads: "The zebra mussel probably steamed aboard a transatlantic ship sometime in the mid-1980s from the Caspian Sea into U.S. waters. Despite its growth was explosive, partly because the species was preyed upon by very few native predators in its new environment. As a consequence, the zebra mussels did find a plentiful food supply. They eat huge amounts of phytoplankton, which tiny free-floating sea organisms that dwell in water. Scientists are concerned when the mussels may compete aggressively with other species that depend on the same food supply." A mouse cursor is positioned over the text "Scientists are concerned when the mussels may compete". Above and below the essay text are "MORE" buttons. The right column is titled "Question 1" and contains five multiple-choice options, each with a checkbox:

- A. Scientists are concerned when the mussels
- B. Scientists are concerned that if the mussels
- C. Scientists are concerned wherein the mussels
- D. Scientists are concerned that the mussels
- E. Scientists are concerned as if the mussels

At the bottom right of the interface is a "Finished editing essay" button.

SAMPLE ESSAY (PLACEMENT)

Examinees are presented with an essay similar to the one below and are asked to look for errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and style. When examinees find what they believe to be errors, they move the mouse pointer to the appropriate part of the text and click the mouse. On the right side of the screen five options appear for revising that area of text. Note that the first option is always identical to the original wording in the text, and thus represents a NO CHANGE option. Examinees can choose to revise any section of the essay. After revising the essay, examinees are routed to two items focusing on rhetorical strategies.

The essay below contains the same number and types of errors that an actual Writing Skills Test unit would contain; however, for demonstration purposes, only a handful of the segments below have been selected for revision. These segments are indicated by bold type, and the items associated with them are shown on the next page. (Note: There are additional errors below that are not in bold that a student in an actual testing situation would need to respond to.)

An increasing number of lakes and rivers in the northern United States invaded are being by a mussel no larger than a fingernail.

The zebra mussel probably steamed aboard a transatlantic ship sometime in the mid-1980s from the Caspian Sea into U.S. waters. Despite its growth was explosive, partly because the species **was preyed upon by very few native predators in its new environment**. As a consequence, the zebra mussels did find a plentiful food supply. They eat huge amounts of phytoplankton, which tiny free-floating sea organisms that dwell in water. **Scientists are concerned when the mussels** may compete aggressively with other species that depend on the same food supply.

Others concerned by the invading species are industry, public utilities, and boat owners. Zebra mussels cluster in huge colonies, being anchored themselves to any hard surface. These colonies can clog your water intake pipes of electric and water treatment plants. Fishery specialists are currently casting about and baiting their hooks to gun down control methods that will cause the lowest amount of damage to water supplies and other aquatic species. Two of the alternatives exploring are interrupting the species reproductive cycle and finding a bacterium harmful only to zebra mussels.

-----End of Essay-----

(Basic Grammar and Usage: Ensuring Grammatical Agreement)

Segment 1

- A. An increasing number of lakes and rivers
- B. An increasingly number of lakes and rivers
- C. A number increasing of lakes and rivers
- D. A number increasingly of lakes and rivers
- E. An increasing of lakes and rivers

(Style: Avoiding Redundancy)

Segment 2

- A.** was preyed upon by very few native predators in its new environment.
- B.** found very few predators in its new environment.
- C.** found very few native predators and was seldom eaten in its new environment.
- D.** was preyed on by very few native predator species in its new environment.
- E.** was seldom eaten or preyed on by native predator species in its new environment.

(Sentence Structure: Relating Clauses)

Segment 3

- A.** Scientists are concerned when the mussels
- B.** Scientists are concerned that if the mussels
- C.** Scientists are concerned wherein the mussels
- D.** Scientists are concerned that the mussels
- E.** Scientists are concerned as if the mussels

(Strategy: Making Decisions about Cohesive Devices)

Item 4 (end-of-passage)

The writer wishes to add a sentence at the end of Paragraph 1 that will serve as a transition between Paragraphs 1 and 2 and will establish the main focus of the essay. Which of the following sentences most effectively fulfills that purpose?

- A.** The zebra mussel will provide a difficult challenge for public utility managers.
- B.** The zebra mussel is only the latest in a series of newly introduced species to thrive in the U.S.
- C.** No one knows how far south and west the zebra mussel is likely to spread, but scientists think they may be on the trail of important clues.
- D.** Although small in size, the zebra mussel may become a huge problem for pleasure boat owners in North American waterways.
- E.** Despite its size, however, the zebra mussel may have a dramatic effect on North American waterways.

Writing Skills Diagnostic Measure

(Punctuation: Punctuating Breaks in Thought)

1. What time is it I am afraid we are going to be late.
- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. it, I
 - C. it. I
 - D. it? I

(Organization: Establishing Logical Order of Sentences)

2. Which of the alternatives places the following group of sentences in the most logical order?

(1) When I arrived, fifty customers were waiting outside. (2) I read in the newspaper that Bill's Furniture Mart was having a big sale. (3) "The store hasn't opened yet," one of them said. (4) I got in my car and drove to the store.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. 1, 4, 3, 2
- C. 2, 4, 1, 3
- D. 4, 3, 2, 1

(Relationships of Clauses: Avoiding Squinting Modifiers)

3. In which of the following sentences is the meaning most clear?
- A. Hiking in the mountains, thunder was heard in the distance.
 - B. While hiking in the mountains, we heard thunder in the distance.
 - C. In the mountains while hiking, thunder could be heard in the distance.
 - D. When on a hike in the mountains, in the distance sounded a clap of thunder.

(Spelling: Recognizing the Correct Spelling of Commonly Misspelled Words)

4. Insert the correctly spelled word in the following sentence:

Alicia _____ the proper way to install the software.

- A. demmonstrated
- B. demonstrated
- C. demmenstrated
- D. demenstrated

(Capitalization: Finding Errors in Capitalization)

5. Find the capitalization error in this sentence:

For my science project last Spring, I made a scale model of the planet Saturn.

(Examinees move the mouse pointer to the incorrect word and click the mouse to change the word from lowercase to uppercase, or vice versa.)

(Verb Formation and Agreement: Forming Tenses of Regular and Irregular Verbs)

6. Which of the sentences below is NOT grammatically correct?

- A. The curtain had just rose, and the play was supposed to begin, but Danny could not remember his lines.
- B. The curtain had just risen; the play was supposed to begin, but Danny could not remember his lines.
- C. The play was about to begin; the curtain rose, but Danny forgot his lines.
- D. As the curtain was rising and the play was about to begin, Danny panicked and forgot his lines.

(Style: Avoiding Ambiguity, Wordiness, and Redundancy)

- 7.** In which of the following sentences is the meaning expressed most clearly and effectively?
- A.** Because the day seemed to be a good one for these activities, Tracy and Chris went to the park, which was a long walk from downtown, for an outdoor picnic lunch and an afternoon of going to fly kites, which Tracy liked, and which Chris liked, too.
 - B.** An outdoor repast, or picnic, and an afternoon of recreation was experienced approvingly by Chris as well as her younger sibling, or brother, Tracy.
 - C.** Chris and Tracy, who is her younger brother, equally enjoyed the food and the fun outdoors, which was a fun and enjoyable event.
 - D.** Both Chris and her younger brother Tracy enjoyed their walk to the park for a picnic and an afternoon of kite flying.

(Punctuation and Usage: Forming Possessives, Using Pronouns, and Observing Usage Conventions)

- 8.** We will have to make more food because _____ are coming to dinner.
- A.** Toms brothers son's
 - B.** Tom's brother's sons
 - C.** Toms' brother's sons'
 - D.** Tom's brothers sons
- 9.** Amy thought that _____ should study together.
- A.** her and Sarah
 - B.** herself and Sarah
 - C.** she and Sarah
 - D.** themselves
- 10.** After working so hard on the project, she was pleased _____ the results.
- A.** on
 - B.** to
 - C.** for
 - D.** with

Answers to Sample Items

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Placement Test

1. C 2. C 3. A 4. B

Algebra Placement Test

1. D 2. D 3. B 4. A 5. E

College Algebra Placement Test

1. A 2. E

Geometry Placement Test

1. E 2. C

Trigonometry Placement Test

1. C 2. E

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Diagnostic Test

1. E 2. E 3. C

Algebra Diagnostic Test

1. C 2. A 3. A

Reading Placement Test: Sample Passage 1—Humanities

1. D 2. B

Reading Placement Test: Sample Passage 2—Practical Reading

1. A 2. C

Vocabulary Diagnostic Test

1. B 2. D 3. E 4. C

Reading Comprehension Diagnostic Test

1. B 2. D

Writing Skills Placement Test

1. A 2. B 3. D 4. E

Writing Skills Diagnostic Test

1. D 2. C 3. B 4. B 5. spring 6. A 7. D 8. B 9. C 10. D

Reading Placement Measure

SAMPLE SCREEN SHOT

The figure below shows a sample item similar to those in the Reading Placement Test and illustrates how a reading test passage and items would appear on the computer screen. Students use the “More” buttons on the left half of the screen to move toward the beginning or the end of the passage. The numbered boxes in the lower right of the screen correspond to the questions associated with the current passage. The student can click on the boxes in any sequence, but must be sure to click on all boxes in order to respond to all relevant test questions. After the student answers all questions, the “Go On” button is enabled and the student clicks on it to proceed to the next computer-selected passage and its associated test questions. The sample items on the following pages illustrate the types of passages and test questions in the reading placement and diagnostic test pools.

The screenshot displays the COMPASS/ESL Reading Test interface. At the top left, the title "COMPASS/ESL Reading Test" is visible. In the top right corner, there is a "HELP" button. The main content area is divided into two sections. On the left, a reading passage is presented within a box, with a "MORE" button above it and another "MORE" button below it. The passage discusses the author's observations of cowboy posters in a New York subway and their own experiences with cowboy culture. On the right, "Question 1" is displayed, asking why cowboys are described as "strong and silent" based on the passage. Below the question are five multiple-choice options (A through E). At the bottom of the question area, there are four numbered boxes (1, 2, 3, 4) for navigation. In the bottom right corner of the interface, there is a "Go On" button.

COMPASS/ESL Reading Test HELP

MORE

When I'm in New York but feeling lonely for Wyoming I look for the Western movie ads in the subway. But the men I see in those posters with their stern, humorless looks remind me of no one I know in the West. In our earnestness to romanticize the cowboy we've ironically disesteemed his true character. If he's "strong and silent" it's because there's probably no one to talk to. If he "rides away into the sunset" it's because he's been on horseback since four in the morning moving cattle and he's trying, fifteen hours later, to get home to his family. If he's "a rugged individualist" he's also part of a team: ranch work is teamwork and even the glorified open-range cowboys of the 1880s rode up and down the Chisholm Trail in the company of twenty or thirty other riders. It's not toughness but "toughing it out" that counts.

MORE

Question 1

According to the passage, cowboys are probably "strong and silent" because:

- A. their work leaves them no time for conversation.
- B. they have been cautioned not to complain.
- C. they are stern and humorless.
- D. there is no one nearby to listen to them.
- E. their work makes them too tired to talk.

1 2 3 4

Go On

SAMPLE HUMANITIES PASSAGE (PLACEMENT)

When I'm in New York but feeling lonely for Wyoming I look for the Western movie ads in the subway. But the men I see in those posters with their stern, humorless looks remind me of no one I know in the West. In our earnestness to romanticize the cowboy we've ironically disesteemed his true character. If he's "strong and silent" it's because there's probably no one to talk to. If he "rides away into the sunset" it's because he's been on horseback since four in the morning moving cattle and he's trying, fifteen hours later, to get home to his family. If he's "a rugged individualist" he's also part of a team: ranch work is teamwork and even the glorified open-range cowboys of the 1880s rode up and down the Chisholm Trail in the company of twenty or thirty other riders. It's not toughness but "toughing it out" that counts. In other words, this macho, cultural artifact the cowboy has become is simply a man who possesses resilience, patience, and an instinct for survival. "Cowboys are just like a pile of rocks—everything happens to them. They get climbed on, kicked, rained and snowed on, scuffed up by the wind. Their job is 'just to take it,'" one old-timer told me.

Adapted from Gretel Ehrlich, *The Solace of Open Spaces*. ©1985 by Gretel Ehrlich.

(Referring)

- 1.** According to the passage, cowboys are probably "strong and silent" because:
 - A.** their work leaves them no time for conversation.
 - B.** they have been cautioned not to complain.
 - C.** they are stern and humorless.
 - D.** there is no one nearby to listen to them.
 - E.** their work makes them too tired to talk.

(Reasoning)

- 2.** For which of the following statements does the passage give apparently contradictory evidence?
 - A.** The cowboy's work takes endurance.
 - B.** Cowboys work alone.
 - C.** Cowboys are adequately paid.
 - D.** The cowboy's image has become romanticized in American culture.
 - E.** Cowboys think of themselves as humorless.

SAMPLE PRACTICAL READING PASSAGE (PLACEMENT)

Regular tune-ups of your heating system will cut heating costs and will most likely increase the lifetime and safety of the system. When a service technician performs a tune-up, he or she should test the efficiency of your heating system.

The technician should measure the efficiency of your system both before and after servicing it and provide you with a copy of the results. Combustion efficiency is determined indirectly, based on some of the following tests: 1) temperature of the flue (or chimney); 2) percent carbon dioxide or percent oxygen in the atmosphere; 3) presence of carbon monoxide in the atmosphere; and 4) draft. Incomplete combustion of fuel is the main contributor to low efficiency. If the technician cannot raise the combustion efficiency up to at least 75% after tuning your heating system, you should consider installing a new system or at least modifying your present system to increase its efficiency.

Adapted from Alex Wilson and John Morrill, *Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings*.
©1993 by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.

(Reasoning)

1. The passage suggests that the presence of carbon monoxide in the atmosphere:
 - A. can provide information regarding combustion efficiency.
 - B. is found in 75% of heating systems tested.
 - C. can be reduced by decreasing heating system draft.
 - D. is the main cause of low efficiency in heating systems.
 - E. is more reliable than flue temperature as an indicator of combustion efficiency.

(Referring)

2. According to the passage, when performing a tune-up of a heating system, the service technician should:
 - A. ensure that the combustion efficiency is at least 25%.
 - B. modify the heating system before initially measuring efficiency.
 - C. measure combustion efficiency both before and after servicing the system.
 - D. provide his or her supervisor with a written report of the system's efficiency.
 - E. ignore the age of the heating system.

Reading Diagnostic Measures

VOCABULARY

(Noun: Moderate Difficulty)

1. The two old friends had not seen each other for years, but a lucky _____ brought them together.
- A. enclosure
 - B. encounter
 - C. justification
 - D. visibility
 - E. installment

(Adjective: High Difficulty)

2. Painting the house was an _____ task. It was not surprising that they were exhausted when they finished the job.
- A. estranged
 - B. opportune
 - C. enviable
 - D. arduous
 - E. insensitive

(Adverb: Low Difficulty)

- 3.** The teacher asked Todd to speak more _____ so that everyone in the class would be able to hear him.
- A.** fondly
 - B.** hurriedly
 - C.** thoroughly
 - D.** conveniently
 - E.** loudly

(Verb: Low Difficulty)

- 4.** The artisan used a knife to _____ the block of wood into the shape of a bird.
- A.** grind
 - B.** twist
 - C.** whittle
 - D.** whisk
 - E.** issue

READING COMPREHENSION DIAGNOSTIC

Scented geraniums, which provide a wide variety of enticing fragrances—strawberry, coconut, peppermint, chocolate, apple, orange, and lemon—are not really geraniums but their distant cousins the pelargoniums. The two look very much alike and belong to the same plant family.

Originally grown in South Africa, scented geraniums were brought to Europe in 1634 by seamen who had stopped to trade while sailing around the Cape of Good Hope. Grown as popular herbs in specialty gardens and as houseplants, scented geraniums were used for spicy teas and potpourris, in bath water, as cosmetics, and even as insect repellents. When they were brought to America in early Colonial days, their usefulness in medicines, foods, beverages, and crafts made them quite popular.

Today you can find a selection of scented geraniums for sale at most garden centers or nurseries. In South Africa, they are grown outside many people's doors and in herb gardens. The rose, nutmeg, and apricot geraniums, for example, are most popular as insect repellents and food flavorings.

Scented geranium blossoms come in a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes. Rubbing or gently stroking the leaves releases their fragrant oils.

Adapted from E. Barrie Kavasch, "Fragrant Gifts." ©1991 by Cobblestone Publishing, Inc.

(Explicit Detail)

1. According to the passage, where were scented geraniums first grown?
 - A. Europe
 - B. South Africa
 - C. South America
 - D. North American Colonies
 - E. Modern garden centers

(Implicit Information)

2. According to the information in the passage, which of the following statements is true?
 - A. All geraniums are pelargoniums.
 - B. Some pelargoniums are really geraniums.
 - C. Geraniums and pelargoniums are identical plants.
 - D. Pelargoniums are often referred to as scented geraniums.
 - E. Most scented geraniums are not pelargoniums.

READER PROFILE

The COMPASS Reader Profile (shown below) is a short survey designed to provide information about the amount and type of reading the individual student is engaged in. A report can be generated that indicates student responses to each survey question. The Reader Profile is part of the COMPASS “Success Planning” concept to link student information to available campus resources to ensure student success.

- 1.** Do you enjoy reading?
 - A.** Always
 - B.** Sometimes
 - C.** Never

- 2.** What is your main reason for reading?
 - A.** Pleasure
 - B.** Job-related
 - C.** School

- 3.** About how many hours per week do you spend reading for all purposes?
 - A.** 0–2
 - B.** 3–5
 - C.** 6–10
 - D.** 11 or more

- 4.** Do you read newspapers?
 - A.** Yes
 - B.** No

- 4a.** How many hours per week do you spend reading newspapers?
 - A.** 0–2
 - B.** 3–5
 - C.** 6–10
 - D.** 11 or more

- 5.** If you had more free time, would you choose to spend more time reading?
 - A.** Yes
 - B.** No

- 6.** How would you rate your ability as a reader?
 - A.** Excellent
 - B.** Good
 - C.** Average
 - D.** Poor

Answers to Sample Items

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Placement Test

1. C 2. C 3. A 4. B

Algebra Placement Test

1. D 2. D 3. B 4. A 5. E

College Algebra Placement Test

1. A 2. E

Geometry Placement Test

1. E 2. C

Trigonometry Placement Test

1. C 2. E

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Diagnostic Test

1. E 2. E 3. C

Algebra Diagnostic Test

1. C 2. A 3. A

Reading Placement Test: Sample Passage 1—Humanities

1. D 2. B

Reading Placement Test: Sample Passage 2—Practical Reading

1. A 2. C

Vocabulary Diagnostic Test

1. B 2. D 3. E 4. C

Reading Comprehension Diagnostic Test

1. B 2. D

Writing Skills Placement Test

1. A 2. B 3. D 4. E

Writing Skills Diagnostic Test

1. D 2. C 3. B 4. B 5. spring 6. A 7. D 8. B 9. C 10. D