

Name: _____

Date: _____

Unit 6**ACT PRACTICE TEST****English, Reading, and Writing****Practice Test Answer Sheet**

Fill in the circle completely for the answer choice you think is best.

English

1. (A) (B) (C) (D)
2. (F) (G) (H) (J)
3. (A) (B) (C) (D)
4. (F) (G) (H) (J)

5. (A) (B) (C) (D)

6. (F) (G) (H) (J)

Reading

1. (A) (B) (C) (D)

2. (F) (G) (H) (J)

3. (A) (B) (C) (D)

4. (F) (G) (H) (J)

5. (A) (B) (C) (D)

6. (F) (G) (H) (J)

English (6 Minutes—6 Questions)

DIRECTIONS: The following passage is divided into numbered sections. In each section, specific words and phrases are underlined. To the right of each section are several alternatives for the underlined text. In each case, choose the alternative that best expresses the idea that makes the text correct according to the conventions of standard written English, or that best fits the style and tone of the complete passage. If the original underlined text is better than any of the alternatives, choose "NO CHANGE."

For each question, choose the best alternative and fill in the corresponding circle on the Answer Sheet. Read through the entire passage once before you begin answering the questions. Also be sure to read each numbered section in full before answering the corresponding question. Consider each underlined word or phrase within the context of the complete section.

Sandra Cisneros

[1]

Sandra Cisneros was born in Chicago, in 1954, and was the only daughter in a family of seven children. Predictably domineering, her brothers¹ and young Sandra often found it difficult being

1. A. NO CHANGE
- B. Predictably domineering were her brothers
- C. Her brothers were predictably domineering,
- D. Predictably, her brothers domineered

a little girl. She would later state that she had²
sometimes felt as though she had grown up with
“seven fathers.”

[2]

Cisneros has spent³ much of her childhood going
between Chicago and Mexico, where her family
visited relatives. They settled briefly in numerous
ghettos and impoverished neighborhoods. Young
Sandra felt rootless and longed to express herself.⁴
Having no sisters or friends in whom to confide,
Sandra sought refuge in books. These books,
paired with her observations of poverty,
helped forge the basis and foundation for⁵

Cisneros adult writing.⁶

2. F. NO CHANGE
G. she has sometimes felt as though she grew
H. she sometimes felt as though she were growing
J. Sandra had sometimes felt as though Sandra had grown
3. A. NO CHANGE
B. has likely spent
C. has not spent
D. spent
4. F. NO CHANGE
G. of the ghettos and impoverished neighborhoods
H. impoverished neighborhoods
J. ghettos and in numerous impoverished neighborhoods
5. A. NO CHANGE
B. basis
C. basis and the foundation
D. basis of the foundation
6. F. NO CHANGE
G. Cisneroses' adult writing
H. Cisneros's adult writing
J. Cisneroses adult writing

Reading (6 Minutes—6 Questions)

DIRECTIONS: The passage in this section is followed by several questions. Read the passage and then choose the best answer to each question. Fill in the corresponding circle on the Answer Sheet. Refer to the passage as much as needed while answering the questions.

...A narrow bright red carpet was unrolled and stretched from the top of the marble steps to the curbstone, along the center of the black carpet. This red path cost the *portier*
5 more trouble than even the black one had done. But he patiently fixed and refixed it until it was exactly right and lay precisely in the middle of the black carpet...

Now came a waiting interval. The
10 landlord, in plain clothes, and bareheaded,

placed himself on the bottom marble step, abreast the *portier*, who stood on the other end of the same steps; six or eight waiters, gloved, bareheaded, and wearing their
15 whitest linen, their whitest cravats, and their finest swallow-tails, grouped themselves about these chiefs, but leaving the carpetway clear. Nobody moved or spoke any more but only waited.

20 In a short time the shrill piping of a
coming train was heard, and immediately
groups of people began to gather in the street.
Two or three open carriages arrived, and
deposited some maids of honor and some
25 male officials at the hotel. Presently another
open carriage brought the Grand Duke of
Baden, a stately man in uniform, who wore
the handsome brass-mounted, steel-spiked
helmet of the army on his head. Last came the
30 Empress of Germany and the Grand Duchess
of Baden in a closed carriage; these passed
through the low-bowing groups of servants
and disappeared in the hotel, exhibiting to
us only the backs of their heads, and then the
35 show was over.

It appears to be as difficult to land a
monarch as it is to launch a ship.

1. What might the word *shrill* mean in the following sentence: "In a short time the shrill piping of a coming train was heard, and immediately groups of people began to gather in the street."
A. high-pitched
B. dull
C. humming
D. garrulous
2. Which of the following best describes the mood, or atmosphere, of the excerpt?
F. energetic and humorous
G. pointed and somber
H. irreverent yet injurious
J. hurried and severe

3. Which statement best suggests the author's purpose in this passage?
A. The narrator intends to provide information to the reader.
B. The narrator is attempting to influence the reader's judgment of Baden.
C. The narrator is using descriptive language to illustrate the scene.
D. The narrator wants to depict the order in which the royal entourage arrives.
4. In the first two paragraphs, the behavior of the hotel staff indicates that
F. they are expecting to be censured.
G. they are preparing to greet and impress a guest of great significance.
H. the landlord will be joining the Empress for dinner.
J. the *portier* considers Baden's royalty a threat to the hotel's security.
5. Given the passage, what is a *portier*?
A. a hotel owner
B. a doorkeeper
C. a coach driver
D. a government official
6. What does Twain mean when he compares greeting a monarch to launching a ship?
F. At this time, ship launches were private events organized by the government.
G. Launching a ship was not difficult.
H. Ship launchings were events of great fanfare and preparation.
J. Twain implies that royalty are rude.

Writing (30 Minutes)

DIRECTIONS: Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and assignment below. You have 30 minutes to write your response to the prompt.

A city has initiated a recycling plan that provides blue bins to all residences at no direct cost to citizens. Waste management workers empty the bins along with regular trash. These bins help to alleviate the amount of recyclable materials buried in landfills and eliminate the need of individual citizens to haul recyclables to a recycling center. Many people favor the blue bin

plan to other forms of recycling as a simple way to "go green." Others believe a citywide recycling program is too expensive to operate and that the benefits are outweighed by the costs. In general, do you believe a citywide recycling program is a sound investment for a community and for future generations?

In your essay, take a position on this question. You may write about either of the two viewpoints given, or you may provide a different viewpoint on this question. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

15 Minutes – 15 Questions

Directions: Do not spend too much time on difficult questions. Calculators are permitted. Do not assume that figures are drawn to scale. The word *average* refers to the arithmetic *mean*.

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

- $5x^5 \times 3x^5y^4 \times 2y^3 + 10x^{11}y^7$ is equivalent to which of the following?
 - $30x^{10}y^7 + 10x^{11}y^7$
 - $30x^{25}y^{12} + 10x^{11}y^7$
 - $40x^{10}y^7$
 - $40x^{21}y^{14}$
 - $40x^{36}y^{19}$
- George decided to swim across a river to visit his one true love. If George swam at an average speed of $1 \frac{\text{mile}}{\text{hr}}$ and always swam perpendicular to the river's current, the river was 600 feet wide, and the river's current was $3 \frac{\text{miles}}{\text{hr}}$, how far away from his original position was George when he finished crossing the river?
 - 600 feet
 - $600\sqrt{10}$ feet
 - 1800 feet
 - $1800\sqrt{10}$ feet
 - 2400 feet
- In Question 2, how long did it take George to cross the river?
 - $\frac{1}{11}$ hour
 - $\frac{1}{10}$ hour
 - $\frac{5}{44}$ hour
 - $\frac{7\pi}{6}$ hour
 - 1 hour

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

4. If $a^2 = 9$ and $b^2 = 4$, what can $(a + b)$ not be equal to?

- F. -5
- G. -1
- H. 1
- J. 5
- K. None of the above.

5. $\left(\frac{4}{3}\right) \times \frac{3}{2} \times \frac{2}{3} + \left(\frac{1}{3}\right)^2 = ?$

- A. $\frac{4}{9}$
- B. $\frac{5}{9}$
- C. $\frac{35}{9}$
- D. $\frac{37}{9}$
- E. 4

Use the following matrices to answer questions 6 and 7

The number of people in the candy store is shown in the matrix below.

<u>Adolescents</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Senior Citizens</u>
50	75	100

The ratio of people from each age group who will purchase a product to the number of people in that age group in the store is shown in the following matrix:

Adolescents	0.50
Adults	0.20
Senior Citizens	0.35

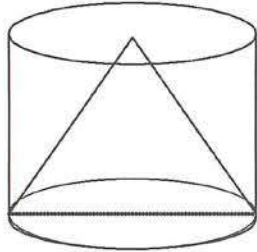
6. Based on the matrices, how many senior citizens will make purchases?

- F. 3.5
- G. 20
- H. 30
- J. 35
- K. 50

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

7. How many people in the store will make purchases?

- A. 60
- B. 67
- C. 75
- D. 85
- E. 90



8. If the above picture has a base diameter of 10 and the cone has a slant height of 10, what is the volume of the cylinder?

- F. $\sqrt{125\pi}$
- G. $\frac{125}{3}\pi\sqrt{5}$
- H. $125\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}$
- J. $125\pi\frac{\sqrt{3}}{3}$
- K. $125\pi\sqrt{3}$

9. Solve the following system of equations:

$$\begin{aligned}x + 3y &= 7 \\ 2x - 4y &= 5\end{aligned}$$

- A. $\left(0, \frac{7}{3}\right)$
- B. $\left(\frac{9}{10}, \frac{43}{10}\right)$
- C. (4, 1)
- D. $\left(\frac{43}{10}, \frac{9}{10}\right)$
- E. $\left(\frac{97}{10}, -\frac{9}{10}\right)$

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

10. There are 32 red marshmallows, 15 blue marshmallows, and 3 purple marshmallows left in a bowl of cereal. If a marshmallow is chosen at random from the bowl, what is the probability that the marshmallow is NOT purple?

F. 0
G. $\frac{3}{50}$
H. $\frac{15}{50}$
J. $\frac{47}{50}$
K. 1

11. If the sine of angle A is $\frac{3}{5}$, and the cosine of angle A is $\frac{4}{5}$, what is the tangent of angle A ?

A. 4
B. .55
C. .6
D. .75
E. .8

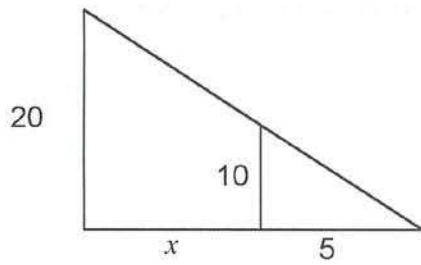
12. If I have 50 apples in a barrel but want to give 30% of them away, how many apples should I give away?

F. 10 apples
G. 14 apples
H. 15 apples
J. 16 apples
K. 30 apples

13. Point $M(-2, 3)$ and point $N(-4, 7)$ are points on the coordinate plane. What is the length of the segment MN ?

A. $-\sqrt{6}$ units
B. $\sqrt{2}$ units
C. $2\sqrt{5}$ units
D. 2 units
E. 4 units

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

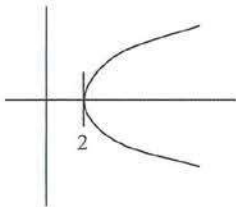


14. What is x ? Assume triangles are similar.

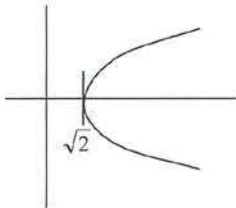
- F. 1
- G. 5
- H. 10
- J. 15
- K. $5\sqrt{11}$

15. Which is the graph of the equation $x = y^2 + 2$?

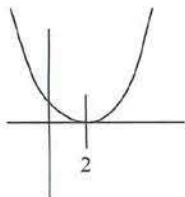
A.



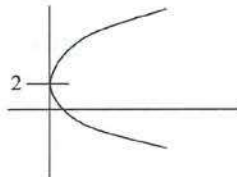
B.



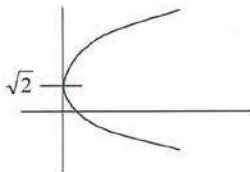
C.



D.



E.



END OF TEST.
DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL TOLD
TO DO SO.

Alternative Methods of Instruction

Day 1 Assignment

Science Grades 11-12

Name:

Directions:

After reading the passage, choose the best answer to each question. You may refer to the passage as often as necessary.

Passage 1

Researchers studied how diet and the ability to smell food can affect the life span of normal fruit flies (Strain N) and fruit flies unable to detect many odors (Strain X).

Study 1

Three tubes (Tubes 1–3), each with 15% sugar yeast (SY) medium (a diet with 15% sugar and 15% killed yeast), were prepared. Then, 200 virgin female Strain N fruit flies less than 24 hr old were added to each tube. No additional substance was added to Tube 1. Additional odors from live yeast were added to Tube 2, and live yeast was added to Tube 3. The percent of fruit flies alive was determined every 5 days for 75 days (see Figure 1).

Study 2

Three tubes (Tubes 4–6), each with 5% SY medium (a diet with 5% sugar and 5% killed yeast), were prepared. Then, 200 virgin female Strain N fruit flies less than 24 hr old were added to each tube. No additional substance was added to Tube 4. Additional odors from live yeast were added to Tube 5, and live yeast was added to Tube 6. The percent of fruit flies alive was determined every 5 days for 75 days (see Figure 2).

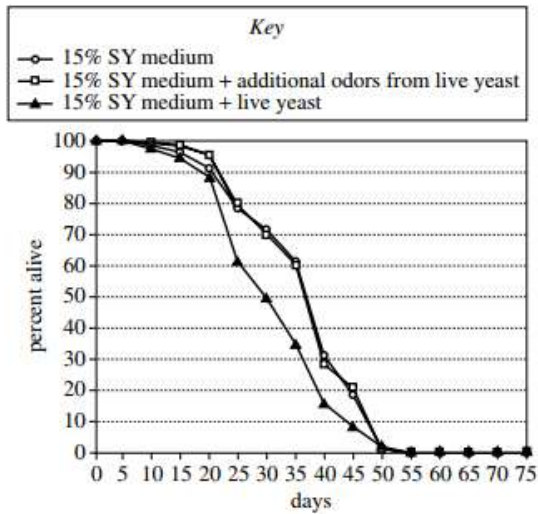


Figure 1

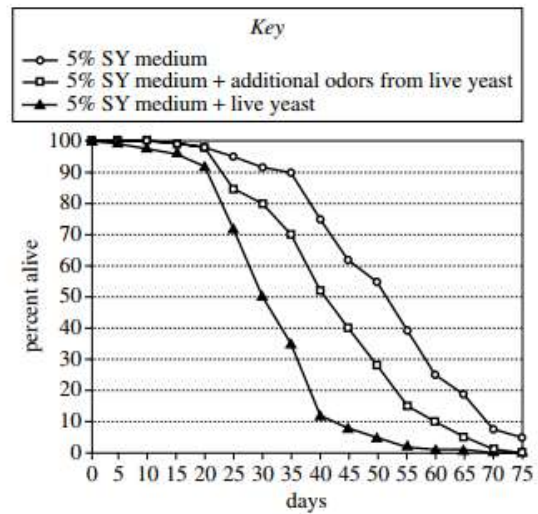


Figure 2

Study 3

Strain N fruit flies were modified to produce Strain X fruit flies. Strain X fruit flies lack *Or83b* (a protein required to detect a wide range of odors); therefore, they cannot detect many odors. The average life span was determined for virgin female Strain N and virgin female Strain X fruit flies fed with various SY media (see Table 1).

Strain	SY medium		Average life span (days)
	% sugar	% killed yeast	
Strain N	3	3	50.1
	5	5	50.1
	7.5	7.5	43.9
	10	10	44.8
	15	15	41.6
Strain X	3	3	61.6
	5	5	62.5
	7.5	7.5	58.9
	10	10	58.6
	15	15	55.6

Table and figures adapted from Sergiy Libert et al., "Regulation of *Drosophila* Life Span by Olfaction and Food-Derived Odors." ©2007 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

- In which of Studies 1 and 2 did some of the fruit flies live for more than 75 days, and what diet were those fruit flies fed?
 - Study 1; 5% SY medium
 - Study 1; 15% SY medium
 - Study 2; 5% SY medium
 - Study 2; 15% SY medium
- During Studies 1 and 2, why did the size of the fruit fly population in each tube decrease rather than increase?
 - The birthrate was 0, because the initial population contained only males.
 - The birthrate was 0, because the initial population contained only virgin females.
 - The death rate was 0, because the initial population contained only males.
 - The death rate was 0, because the initial population contained only virgin females.
- Study 1 differed from Study 2 in which of the following ways?
 - Female fruit flies were tested in Study 1, whereas male fruit flies were tested in Study 2.
 - Male fruit flies were tested in Study 1, whereas female fruit flies were tested in Study 2.
 - The SY medium tested in Study 1 contained a lower percent of sugar than did the SY medium tested in Study 2.
 - The SY medium tested in Study 1 contained a higher percent of sugar than did the SY medium tested in Study 2.
- Suppose that an additional trial in Study 3 had been performed using a 12% SY medium (a diet with 12% sugar and 12% killed yeast). The average life span of the Strain X fruit flies in this trial would most likely have been:
 - less than 55.6 days.
 - between 55.6 days and 58.6 days.
 - between 58.6 days and 61.6 days.
 - greater than 61.6 days.
- The researchers had predicted that decreasing a fruit fly's ability to detect odors would increase its life span. Are the results of Study 3 consistent with this prediction?
 - No; for each SY medium tested, the average life span of Strain X fruit flies was longer than the average life span of Strain N fruit flies.
 - No; for each SY medium tested, the average life span of Strain N fruit flies was longer than the average life span of Strain X fruit flies.
 - Yes; for each SY medium tested, the average life span of Strain X fruit flies was longer than the average life span of Strain N fruit flies.
 - Yes; for each SY medium tested, the average life span of Strain N fruit flies was longer than the average life span of Strain X fruit flies.
- Suppose the researchers wanted to determine whether a defect in the ability to detect odors would change the life span of fruit flies fed 15% SY medium when live yeast is added to the diet or when additional odors from live yeast are added to the diet. Which of the following experiments should be performed?
 - Repeat Study 1 except with Strain X fruit flies
 - Repeat Study 1 except with Strain N fruit flies
 - Repeat Study 2 except with Strain X fruit flies
 - Repeat Study 2 except with Strain N fruit flies
- The results for which 2 tubes should be compared to determine how a reduced calorie diet affects life span in the absence of live yeast and additional odors from live yeast?
 - Tube 1 and Tube 4
 - Tube 1 and Tube 2
 - Tube 2 and Tube 5
 - Tube 5 and Tube 6

SECTION

1



PLANNING THE ESSAY

While creativity and inspiration can play an important role in good essay writing, planning, drafting, and revision are critical. Whether you have to write an essay in class, during a test, or at home, getting down to the business of writing means focusing on these three things. They benefit your reader by showing him or her how the various points you make in your essay work together and how they support your thesis.

When you begin your essay with planning, you will have guidance and direction through the writing process, especially if you are in a timed situation. Planning lets you see how your many developing ideas fit within a framework and clearly maps out the type of essay you are trying to write.

In this section, you'll learn planning strategies that will not only improve the effectiveness and quality of your writing, but will also help eliminate many of the frustrations writers face.

1



THINKING ABOUT AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

LESSON SUMMARY

This lesson explains how knowing *why* and *for whom* you're writing helps improve its effectiveness.

There are few things in life students dread more than an essay assignment. But the essay prompt and the instructions to complete it are *critical* to your success: they are both the starting point for your ideas and your guide through the writing process. The more you've considered what is being asked of you, the clearer your task is—and the steps necessary to complete it. That first step is to understand *what* and *why* you are writing, and *for whom* you are being asked to write. Purpose and audience not only determine *how* you write; they shape your content.

For example, imagine you've just had this amazing experience: You were able to save someone's life by performing CPR. You want to share the experience with three people: your father, your best friend, and the admissions officer at your first-choice college. How will you describe what happened? Will that description be the same for each person? The likely answer is, probably not.

Although the subject remains a constant, each person is a different *audience*, requiring different word choices, levels of formality, and tone. Because you are sharing the experience with these three people for different reasons, the *purpose* of your description changes, too. You might tell your father to let him know that his advice about taking a CPR course was invaluable. To your friend, you might stress the emotions the experience evoked. In your college application essay, you place an emphasis on the experience's revelation of your competent and responsible nature.

Understanding Your Audience

The essay assignments found on college applications, AP exams, the SAT, and the ACT are designed to elicit essays that fulfill a specific need or purpose. In order to fulfill the assignment, you must understand exactly what the assignment is asking you to do. This may sound simple, but consider that many essay assignments aren't obvious. What does it mean, for example, to discuss an experience? How are you supposed to *analyze* an issue?

Breaking Down the Assignment

To understand an assignment, you first need to understand the following:

- What you need to respond to (the topic)
- How you are to respond to it

In some cases, there may be more than one topic and more than one way to respond. First, underline the words that *describe* the topic—look for keywords and phrases from your current course of study, or for repeated nouns and terms. Next, circle all of the verbs that tell you how to address the topic—e.g., *analyze, describe, discuss, explain, evaluate, identify, illustrate, and argue*.

For example, here is a writing assignment from an AP Biology exam:

Describe the chemical nature of genes. Discuss the replicative process of DNA in eukaryotic organisms. Be sure to include the various types of gene mutations that can occur during replication.

By breaking down the assignment, you can identify three subjects, each with its own direction word. The subjects are underlined and the direction words are circled:

Describe the chemical nature of genes. Discuss the replicative process of DNA in eukaryotic organisms. Be sure to include the various types of gene mutations that can occur during replication.

To help make the assignment even more manageable, break down the two parts (topic and direction words) into a simple chart:

Subject	Directions
1. The chemical nature of genes	describe
2. The replicative process of DNA in eukaryotic organisms	discuss
3. The various types of gene mutations that can occur during replication	include

To completely fulfill the assignment, you must cover all three of these subjects in the manner in which the assignment dictates.

Understanding Direction Words

You've broken down the assignment and isolated the direction words. But what do those direction words really mean? In the following table, you'll find the most common essay direction words and their explanations.

TERM	MEANING
Analyze	Divide the issue into its main parts and discuss each part. Consider how the parts interact and how they work together to form the whole.
Argue	Express your opinion about the subject, and support it with evidence, examples, and details.
Assess	See <i>evaluate</i> .
Classify	Organize the subject into groups and explain why the groupings make sense.
Compare	Point out similarities.
Contrast	Point out differences.
Define	Give the meaning of the subject.
Describe	Show readers what the subject is like; give an account of the subject.
Discuss	Point out the main issues or characteristics of the subject and elaborate.
Evaluate	Make a judgment about the effectiveness and success of the subject. What is good and bad about it? Why? Describe your criteria for your judgment.
Explain	Make your position, issue, process, etc. clear by analyzing, defining, comparing, contrasting, or illustrating.
Identify	Name and describe.
Illustrate	Provide examples of the subject.
Indicate	Explain what you think the subject means and how you came to that interpretation.
Relate	Point out and discuss any connections.
Summarize	Describe the main ideas or points.

Here are a few examples:

Compare and contrast prohibition and the current anti-tobacco movement.

This assignment gives you two direction words: *compare* and *contrast*. Therefore, you should locate and discuss the similarities and differences between the two subjects (prohibition and the anti-tobacco movement).

Rousseau offers judgments about the relative goodness and badness of life as a savage and of life in society. Assess the validity of these judgments. What arguments does he provide to support them? Are they sound arguments?

THINKING ABOUT AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

The explicit direction word in this assignment is *assess*. The implied direction word for the first question, “What arguments does he provide to support them?” is *identify*. The implied direction word for the second question, “Are they sound arguments?” is *evaluate*. For this assignment, you are expected to:

1. Assess the validity and soundness of Rousseau’s judgments
2. Identify the arguments he uses to support his judgments
3. Evaluate the strengths and/or weaknesses of his argument

Practice 1

Read the essay topic carefully. Use the subject and directions columns in the tables provided to break them down into parts. (Note: You may not need to fill each table.)

Describe the change in citizens’ attitudes toward the federal government in the last decade. Explain what you believe to be the causes of this change. Finally, assess the impact of this attitude on the power of the government.

SUBJECT	DIRECTIONS

When the Assignment is a Question

In some assignments, you are given questions instead of direction words. Here’s an example:

What were the issues, successes, and failures of the Civil Rights movement from the 1960s through the 1970s?

Notice that there are no direction words. For this type of essay prompt, you will need to determine the word(s) yourself. Reread the question, paying careful attention to each word. Notice it begins with *What were*. This is a good clue that you should *identify* the issues, successes, and failures.

Translating questions into directions can be tricky, but it’s a critical step in understanding the prompt. You need to determine exactly how you’re supposed to respond to the subject. The following chart lists common question words and corresponding direction words.

THINKING ABOUT AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

QUESTION WORDS	WHAT THEY USUALLY MEAN
What is/are . . .	define or identify
What caused . . .	identify or explain
How are/does . . .	explain or evaluate
How is X like . . .	compare
How is X different . . .	contrast
In what way . . .	illustrate
Do you agree?	argue
Why is/does . . .	explain
What do you think of X?	evaluate

Knowing Your Purpose

Analyzing an assignment task helps to not only clarify the requirements, but also helps you define your own goal(s) for what you hope to convey in writing. To help you clarify your purpose, you can try completing a simple fill-in-the-blank:

My goal in this essay is to _____

Try to find a verb or verbs that best describe what you want your essay to do; the “Understanding Direction Words” table on page 21 can help. Notice in the following example how the verb specifies purpose and subject matter:

My goal is to *prove* that Victor Frankenstein, rather than his creature, is the monster.

Think of a goal statement as a preliminary thesis: By indicating what you want to achieve and how you will go about doing so, you’ve articulated the main idea of your writing.

Practice 3

Review the instructions for an essay you have recently been assigned. How would you describe your purpose? Write a goal statement that expresses what purpose your essay will attempt to achieve and how.

Understanding Your Audience

At the beginning of the lesson, you were asked to consider how to communicate the experience of using CPR to save a life to three very different people—your father, your best friend, and an admissions officer. Now imagine that you’ve been asked to write about your experience for the local hospital newsletter. You expect your audience to be adults, so you’ll need to plan and draft your article in anticipation of that audience.

What are the likely characteristics, needs, and wants of the audience reading the hospital newsletter? Fill out the audience analysis chart below.

Audience Analysis: Hospital Newsletter	
Characteristics of Audience	Needs or Wants of Audience
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

When you submit it, you find that the hospital plans to use your article in a supplement for elementary school students. Can they print it as written? Perhaps not if they want their readers to understand what you’ve written. You’ll likely need to plan and draft your article to meet the needs of your young audience.

What are the likely characteristics and needs or wants of the audience reading the elementary school supplement to the hospital newsletter? Fill out the audience analysis chart below.

Audience Analysis: Elementary School Student Supplement to Hospital Newsletter	
Characteristics of Audience	Needs or Wants of Audience
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Knowing Your Audience

As the previous exercise illustrates, a writer cannot begin to achieve his or her purpose for writing until it is clear who the reader is and what his or her needs are. *Who* will read your essay, and *why* are they reading it? *What* do they know about your subject?

Here are some general guidelines:

WHO THEY ARE	WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR
Admission officer	an engaging essay that reveals your personality, goals, and values; evidence that you can organize your thoughts and communicate effectively
SAT and ACT scorers	a polished rough draft that responds to the topic, develops a point of view, and supports that point of view with examples and evidence
AP exam evaluators	a clear and cohesive essay that demonstrates mastery of the subject matter
High school teachers	a combination of the following: mastery of the material (do you understand the book, concept, issue?); a clear and original thesis; mastery of standard written English

Although they differ in many ways, these audiences share the same purpose for reading: to *evaluate*. Your writing is being used to assess your competency—your ability to demonstrate an understanding of coursework, your readiness for college-level work, etc. Given this purpose, what are they looking for when evaluating your writing? Think about it for a minute. This last question is especially important when writing an essay; you need to know the expectations in order to fulfill them.

What does your English teacher consider an A essay? How does a college admissions officer judge an essay? For the SAT and ACT, what are the differences between an essay that gets a 6, and one that gets a 2? Understanding your role as a writer and the role of the reader helps determine the style, tone, and format of your essay.

In this case, consider the essay evaluator: he or she likely knows a great deal about your subject, is looking for a fully developed and well-reasoned argument, and expects that the directions of the assignment and of formal writing in general are to be followed throughout the response. No text messaging language here; you'll need lots of clear, detailed, and specific evidence.

Consider what must be done to achieve the essay purpose and reach the intended audience—that is, what it will take to get an A, a 6, or accepted by a college—and use it to create the framework or map to guide your planning and drafting. In many cases, your reader has provided a guide that states his or her expectations—a scoring guide or rubric. In the case of college application essays, The College Board (the publishers of the SAT and AP exams) publishes sample essays at www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/essay-skills/. Review their rubrics carefully. With a clear purpose and an understanding of what is expected of you, you can know where you need to be!

Practice 4

Think about a class you are currently taking, one in which writing is an important part of the coursework. What are the essential characteristics of grade-A essay work in this class? What must you do in your writing to fulfill the expectations of the teacher? Write down your thoughts on the following lines.

In Short

Effective writing begins with a clear understanding of purpose and audience. Break down the writing assignment so you can clearly grasp your evaluator's expectations. As always, know your audience: *who* will read your essay? Consider your relationship to your readers, and be sure to carefully consider your purpose.

Skill Building Practice

Review sample ACT student essays at actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html, and SAT essays at sat.collegeboard.com/scores/sat-essay-scoring-guide, focusing on those that scored 6. What makes these exemplary essays? What will you need to work on in order to meet these expectations?