

Unit 4

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)

Reading

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

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

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

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

English (4 Minutes—4 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.

Bessie Coleman

[1]

The children of enslaved workers, Bessie Coleman's parents lived in Texas. They were poor and illiterate, and this at the time of Bessie's birth in 1892. Bessie's childhood was divided between work and study. A natural student, she proved adept at mathematics and

1. A. NO CHANGE
- B. They were poor and illiterate at the time of Bessie's birth
- C. Bessie Coleman's parents were poor and illiterate at the time of her birth
- D. they were poor and illiterate, this being the time of Bessie's birth

reading. Bessie worked as a laundress until 1915, when Bessie moved to Chicago to live with her brother.²

[2]

In Chicago, Bessie sought after a means by which³ she could become a pilot. Bessie befriended Robert Abbott, publisher of an African-

American newspaper. She told Abbott that her⁴ dream was to learn to fly. He encouraged Bessie to study aviation abroad, where she would not be stifled by prejudice. She took his advice and traveled to France, the world's leader in aviation. There, Bessie earned an international pilot's license in 1921—becoming the first African American to do so. Over the next several years, Bessie mastered aerobatics and made a living as an exhibition pilot, performing aerial stunts for amazed crowds.

Reading (4 Minutes—4 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.

FICTION: This passage is an excerpt from the novel *Nicholas Nickleby*, by Charles Dickens.

When you walk up this yard, you will see the booking-office on your left, and the tower of St Sepulchre's church, darting abruptly up into the sky, on your right, and a gallery of
5 bedrooms on both sides. Just before you, you will observe a long window with the words

2. F. NO CHANGE
G. Bessie moved to Chicago to live with Bessie's brother
H. she moved to Chicago to live with Bessie's brother
J. she moved to Chicago to live with her brother
3. A. NO CHANGE
B. In Chicago, Bessie looked after a means for which
C. In Chicago, Bessie sought a means by which
D. In Chicago, Bessie sought a way
4. F. NO CHANGE
G. She told Abbott her dream of flight.
H. She told Abbott that her dream was learning to fly.
J. She told Abbott that her dream of flying lessons.

“coffee-room” legibly painted above it; and looking out of that window, you would have seen in addition, if you had gone at the right
10 time, Mr Wackford Squeers with his hands in his pockets.

Mr Squeers's appearance was not prepossessing. He had but one eye, and the popular prejudice runs in favour of two. The

15 eye he had, was unquestionably useful, but
decidedly not ornamental: being of a greenish
grey, and in shape resembling the fan-light of
a street door. The blank side of his face was
much wrinkled and puckered up, which gave
20 him a very sinister appearance, especially
when he smiled... He was about two or three
and fifty, and a trifle below the middle size;
he wore a white neckerchief with long ends,
and a suit of scholastic black; but his coat
25 sleeves being a great deal too long, and his
trousers a great deal too short, he appeared ill
at ease in his clothes.

1. From what point of view is the passage told?
 - A. first-person
 - B. first-person and third-person
 - C. third-person limited
 - D. third-person omniscient
2. Which of the following best describes the mood, or atmosphere, of the excerpt?
 - F. brooding and haunting
 - G. casual and humorous
 - H. funny and daring
 - J. cautious and intimidating

3. Which statement best suggests the purpose of the first paragraph?
 - A. The narrator means to entertain the reader.
 - B. The narrator is trying to influence the reader's opinion about the story.
 - C. The narrator is providing details that describe the setting of the passage.
 - D. The narrator is establishing the traits of the main character.
4. Which might the word *prepossessing* mean in the following sentence: "Mr Squeers's appearance was not prepossessing."
 - F. humming
 - G. dull
 - H. attractive
 - J. garrulous

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.

Every year, more and more manatees are injured or killed by fast-moving boats in the shallow waters of Florida's rivers and coastal areas. Although laws do exist to protect the manatee from hunting or harassment, these laws do nothing to alleviate accidental deaths caused by collisions with watercraft. Some people contest that the manatees should have the right of way in certain waters—that zones should be

instituted in heavily populated areas to disallow boat traffic. Critics say that boating restrictions would have a terrible effect on the tourism and recreation industry, especially in the winter months when the manatee population is highest.

Should legislators set restrictions to promote welfare of the manatee or should they allow water vehicles to promote healthy local economies? 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.

1. What is $(x^2)^{-3}$?
 - A. $\frac{1}{x^6}$
 - B. $\frac{1}{x^5}$
 - C. $\frac{1}{x}$
 - D. $x^{\frac{2}{3}}$
 - E. $x^{\frac{3}{2}}$

2. Expand $(4x + 2)(2x - 4)$.
 - F. $8x^2 - 12x - 8$
 - G. $8x^2 - 12x + 8$
 - H. $8x^2 + 12x - 8$
 - J. $8x^2 + 12x + 8$
 - K. None of the above

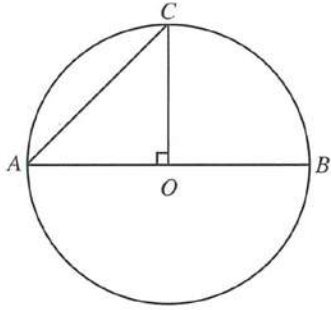
3. $9wy^4 \times 2yz \times 3$ is equivalent to
 - A. $18wyz$
 - B. $18wy^2z$
 - C. $18wy^3z$
 - D. $54wy^2z$
 - E. $54wy^5z$

4. If ship A is 13 miles north and 3 miles west of the lighthouse, and ship B is 8 miles north and 4 miles east of the lighthouse, how many miles apart are ship A and ship B?
 - F. $\sqrt{5} + \sqrt{7}$
 - G. $\sqrt{74}$
 - H. 12
 - J. $7\sqrt{10}$
 - K. 28

5. What is $36^{\frac{3}{2}}$?
- A. 10.9
B. 24
C. 54
D. 216
E. 23,328
6. If Robert bought $6\frac{3}{8}$ yards of fabric to make a curtain requiring 3 yards of fabric and a pillowcase requiring $2\frac{5}{8}$ yards, how much fabric does he have left over?
- F. $\frac{5}{8}$ yard
G. $\frac{3}{4}$ yard
H. $\frac{7}{8}$ yard
J. 1 yard
K. Robert does not have any fabric left over.
7. Find the volume of a cube that circumscribes a sphere of circumference 3π .
- A. $\frac{8}{27}$
B. $\frac{27}{8}$
C. 9
D. 12
E. 27
8. What is the probability of rolling a prime number on a standard 6-sided die?
- F. 0
G. $\frac{1}{6}$
H. $\frac{1}{2}$
J. $\frac{2}{3}$
K. 1

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

9. In the circle below, chord AB passes through the center of the circle O . If the radius OC is perpendicular to chord AB and has a length of 9 centimeters, what is the length of chord AC to the nearest tenth of a centimeter?



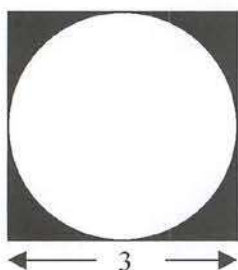
- A. 5.5
B. 9.0
C. 12.7
D. 15.6
E. 18.0
10. If $\tan x = \frac{3}{4}$, what is $\csc x$?
- F. $\frac{3}{5}$
G. $\frac{3}{4}$
H. 1
J. $\frac{4}{3}$
K. $\frac{5}{3}$
11. Mike is a fast typist. He can type 90 words per minute. How long would it take him to type 10 pages, assuming there are 540 words per page?
- A. 5 minutes
B. 17 minutes
C. 50 minutes
D. 54 minutes
E. 60 minutes

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

12. What is the length in meters of the diagonal of a rectangle whose dimensions are 5 meters by 10 meters?

- F. 10
- G. $5\sqrt{5}$
- H. $10\sqrt{5}$
- J. 95
- K. 125

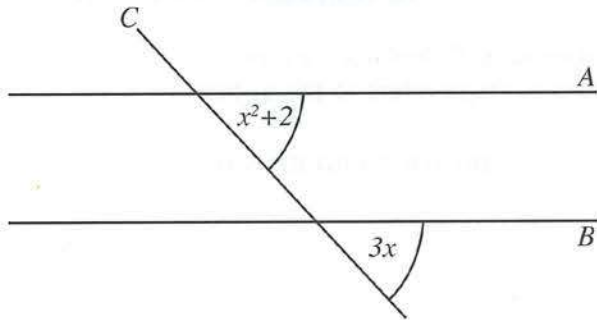
13. What is the area of the shaded region? Assume the circle is perfectly inscribed in the square.



- A. $\pi - 3$
 - B. $9 - \frac{9\pi}{4}$
 - C. π
 - D. 3π
 - E. $9\pi - 9$
14. Where does the parabola $y = -x^2 + 3$ achieve its maximum?
- F. (0,0)
 - G. (0,3)
 - H. (3,0)
 - J. (3,3)
 - K. Never reaches maximum

DO YOUR FIGURING HERE.

15. Let A and B be parallel lines cut by a transversal, C .
Find x .



- A. -2
- B. -1
- C. 1
- D. x can equal 2 or 1
- E. x can equal -1 or 1

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

Alternative Methods of Instruction

Day 2 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 II

In the fall, monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) in eastern North America migrate to Mexico, where they overwinter in high-altitude forests of *oyamel fir* (an evergreen conifer). The butterflies store (accumulate) body lipids to use as a source of energy at a later time. Consider the following 3 hypotheses pertaining to when the butterflies store lipids and when the energy from the stored lipids is used, with respect to migration and overwintering.

Hypothesis 1

Monarch butterflies require energy from stored lipids for migration and during the overwintering period. The butterflies first store lipids before they begin their migration. During migration, as stored lipids are converted to energy, lipid mass continuously decreases. When the butterflies reach the overwintering sites, ending their migration, they must store lipids again before beginning the overwintering period.

Hypothesis 2

Monarch butterflies require energy from stored lipids for migration but not during the overwintering period. The butterflies store lipids before they begin their migration. During migration, as stored lipids are converted to energy, lipid mass continuously decreases. Because energy from stored lipids is not required during the overwintering period, the butterflies do not store lipids while at the overwintering sites.

Hypothesis 3

Monarch butterflies require energy from stored lipids during the overwintering period but not for migration. The butterflies do not store lipids before they begin their migration. Instead, lipids are stored during migration; therefore, lipid mass continuously increases from the beginning of migration until the end of migration. The butterflies arrive at the overwintering sites with enough lipids to provide themselves with energy during the overwintering period, so they do not store lipids while at the overwintering sites.

8. Which hypothesis, if any, asserts that monarch butterflies store lipids during 2 distinct periods?

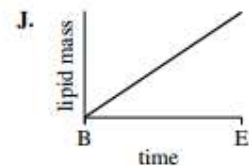
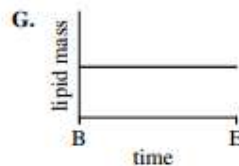
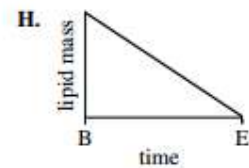
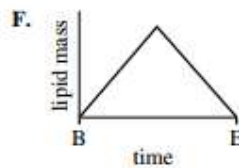
- F. Hypothesis 1
- G. Hypothesis 2
- H. Hypothesis 3
- J. None of the hypotheses

9. Which hypothesis, if any, asserts that monarch butterflies require energy from stored lipids neither for migration nor during the overwintering period?

- A. Hypothesis 1
- B. Hypothesis 2
- C. Hypothesis 3
- D. None of the hypotheses

10. Based on Hypothesis 3, which of the following figures best depicts the change in the lipid mass of a monarch butterfly from the beginning of migration to the end of migration?

(Note: In each figure, B represents the beginning of migration and E represents the end of migration.)



11. Assume that changes in the body mass of a monarch butterfly are caused only by changes in the mass of the butterfly's stored lipids. The statement "The percent of a monarch butterfly's body mass that is made up of lipids is greater at the beginning of migration than at the end of migration" is supported by which of the hypotheses?
- A. Hypothesis 1 only
 - B. Hypothesis 2 only
 - C. Hypotheses 1 and 2 only
 - D. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3
12. To store lipids, monarch butterflies convert sugar from nectar they have consumed into lipids. A supporter of which hypothesis, if any, would be likely to claim that to ensure the butterflies can store lipids for the overwintering period, nectar must be present at the butterflies' overwintering sites?
- F. Hypothesis 1
 - G. Hypothesis 2
 - H. Hypothesis 3
 - J. None of the hypotheses
13. Which of the following statements about lipids in monarch butterflies is consistent with all 3 hypotheses?
- A. The butterflies' lipid masses do not change during the overwintering period.
 - B. The butterflies' lipid masses change during migration.
 - C. The butterflies use energy from stored lipids during the overwintering period.
 - D. The butterflies use energy from stored lipids for migration.
14. When the monarch butterflies use their stored lipids, the lipids must be broken down to produce energy-rich molecules that can be readily used by cells. Which of the following molecules is produced as a direct result of the breakdown of the lipids?
- F. ATP
 - G. Starch
 - H. DNA
 - J. Amino acids

LESSON

5



DEVELOPING A THESIS

LESSON SUMMARY

This lesson explains how to develop a strong thesis for your essay.

As with the other pre-drafting lessons in this guide, crafting an effective thesis statement provides and ensures focus. It not only articulates your main idea but also serves as a constant reminder of the goal and purpose of your essay. With an effective thesis statement, every decision you make while drafting can be determined by the answer to a simple question: *Does it support my thesis?* Think of it as your goal, your reminder of what it will take to turn a thesis into an effective essay. But how do you write one? This is the focus of this lesson.

The Role of the Thesis Statement

Suppose you were asked to write an essay in which you argued whether or not the United States was losing its superpower status. Setting aside your personal beliefs on the question, which of these examples best reflects what you believe a strong thesis is?

- **Example #1:** I do not agree that America is in decline.
- **Example #2:** The fact that America represents 25% of the world's entire economy yet only has 5% of its population is proof that it is hardly in decline.
- **Example #3:** If America is in decline, it is not because of a loss of economic or military power, but because our nation no longer represents and reflects the values that the world's people once believed we championed.
- **Example #4:** On one hand, some writers believe that America still commands the world's attention and respect; other writers argue that the country is facing a political and moral decline.

The best choice is Example #3. It is argumentative, focused, and detailed. Let's consider why these traits are critical to a strong thesis.

An Argumentative Thesis

Your **thesis** is the main idea of your essay—and your main idea is the primary point you are trying to convince others of. Think of your thesis in terms of persuasion—a good thesis makes a strong, clear statement about your beliefs and attitude about the essay subject. Consider these examples:

No argument: *The School of Rock* is about a substitute teacher.

Mild argument: *The School of Rock* is an entertaining film about an influential substitute teacher.

Strong argument: *The School of Rock* derives much of its charm from the way it both parodies and reveres rock musicians.

Let's suppose this is a movie review. Given the purpose of such a piece of writing (to evaluate), the first statement is merely a fact from the movie; it's hardly a main idea, and hardly a full essay on the film. The second does state an opinion (*entertaining*) but gives us little else—the writer is entitled to his/her enjoyment, but what is there to discuss? What about the third statement? A reader could question it, believing the characterization of the school-children or Jack Black's unbridled performance to be the driving force of the movie. It is the strongest argument because it takes a firm position regarding an idea that can hold multiple points of view.

A Focused Thesis

The previous example illustrates the need for a good thesis statement to strike the right balance between too broad and too narrow. When a thesis statement is too broad, it often fails to capture the actual focus in the body paragraphs, or it isn't an argument at all. If it is too narrow, the writer might not be able to fully address the assignment.

Consider the following examples:

Too broad: Animals have developed many strategies for survival.

Some focus: Animals have developed many strategies to protect themselves.

Focused: Animals with well-developed physical properties are most protected from predators.

Too narrow: In "The Open Boat," the repetition of "If I am going to be drowned" conveys Crane's theme of the indifference of nature.

Balanced: In "The Open Boat," Crane uses repetition and figurative language to convey his theme of the indifference of nature.

In the first examples, the term *many strategies* is so vague as to make the statement incontestable; the too narrow version using "The Open Boat" is merely a specific example of the author's use of language, and would be difficult to discuss extensively.

A Detailed Thesis

No discussion of thesis statements is complete without the following mantra: *show, don't tell*. Earlier, we said that the thesis statement is your guide to your paper; it is not, however, simply an announcement of the subject matter. Consider this example:

This paper will discuss some of the erroneous theories about the causes of the Great Depression.

What's wrong with this picture? It's a table of contents, really, not an indication of what matters. The only thing that could be proved is whether or not the writer did discuss the theories—but we know that's not what she meant. A better thesis would surely show the fundamental idea behind the writer's thinking:

The Great Depression was caused neither by the stock market crash of 1929 nor the Smoot Hawley Tariff Act.

An effective thesis statement also cannot be a question. Remember, you are taking a position on the essay topic, not deflecting that decision to the reader. Devising the question your essay will answer is a helpful early step, but it is your answer to that question, not the question itself, that is your thesis. Consider the following example:

Question: Why did Kafka choose to turn Gregor into a giant beetle?

Thesis statement: Gregor's transformation into a giant beetle is a powerful symbol, representing his industrious nature and his role in his family, both before and after his transformation.

Practice 1

Revise and improve the following weak thesis statements.

1. The death penalty is a controversial issue.

2. What would the consequences of censorship on the Internet be?

Drafting a Thesis Statement

There's no single magic formula for creating a thesis; a thesis arises from the purpose, audience, and topic of your essay, and that always changes. However, you know what a good thesis statement is, and this section will work with you to articulate it just right.

Try gathering the essentials of what you know, and form a one-paragraph mini-essay regarding where you currently stand. The following template can help:

My goal with this essay is to _____. My own view is that _____ because _____. Though I concede that _____, I still maintain that _____. For example, _____. Although some might object that _____, I reply that _____. The issue is important because _____.

Using this template will help you generate a main idea, some reasons in support or concession of your position, and an understanding of what's at stake. The next step is to extract from this articulation the principal idea and rationale that is likely to guide your writing. For example, suppose the essay topic was on whether his/her school should require students to wear uniforms

My goal with this essay is to *convince the school board that a uniform code won't solve our school's problems*. My own view is that *school dress codes should not be a priority to change because clothing does not impact our ability to learn*. Though I concede that *certain clothing items can be inappropriate, distracting, and controversial*, I still maintain that *the number of instances where clothes caused serious problems at our school is minimal*. For example, *the principal is very quick to catch students who dress inappropriately; he makes them change clothes immediately, and very few students are exposed to the problem*. Although some might object that *I am too easily excusing the behaviors of young people*, I reply that *the school administrators are focusing on an issue that won't improve the school academically*. The issue is important because *it defines whether our school prioritizes learning and growth or whether it is merely interested in discipline*.

A quick review of the writing reveals an emerging main idea: requiring students to wear uniforms wouldn't improve the school's ability to help its students learn; therefore, it is a proposal that should not be enacted. The

Summary

As the frame or guide for your writing, a thesis statement must be argumentative, focused, and detailed to be effective. Experiment with the ideas and structure of your thesis by using templates to help shape your ideas.

Skill Building Practice

Read a couple of essays and look for their thesis statements. How do the authors convey their main ideas? Where are the thesis statements located?