

## Mr. Brubaker's 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Blizzard Bag Activities



### 1. Day #1

- a. Complete ACT Practice Questions
- b. Passages 1&2

### 2. Day #2

- a. Complete ACT Practice Questions
- b. Passages 3&4

### 3. Day #3

- a. Sparknotes ACT Practice
- b. Go to <http://www.sparknotes.com/testprep/books/act/>
- c. Review the English & Reading Sections
- d. Write 5-7 pieces of information about each section (10-14 total) about what useful information you learned about taking this college entrance exam.

## Sample English Test Questions: Passage I

Click on the letter choices to determine if you have the correct answer and for question explanations. An actual ACT English Test contains 75 questions to be answered in 45 minutes.

**DIRECTIONS:** In the passage that follows, certain words and phrases are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for the underlined part. In most cases, you are to choose the one that best expresses the idea, makes the statement appropriate for standard written English, or is worded most consistently with the style and tone of the passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE." In some cases, you will find in the right-hand column a question about the underlined part. You are to choose the best answer to the question.

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For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. Read the passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

### Passage I

#### A Microscope in the Kitchen

I grew up with buckets, shovels, and nets waiting by the back door; hip-waders hanging in the closet; tide table charts covering the refrigerator door; and a microscope was sitting on the kitchen table. Having studied, my mother is a marine biologist. Our household might have been described as uncooperative. Our meals weren't always served in the expected order of breakfast, lunch, and supper. Everything was subservient to the disposal of the tides. When the tide was low, Mom could be found down on the mudflats. When the tide was high, she would be standing on the inlet bridge with her plankton net. I have great respect for my mother. I learned early that the moon affected the tides. Mom was always waiting for a full moon, when low tide would be much lower than usual and high tide much higher. The moon being closer to the earth when full, so its gravitational pull is stronger. I knew that it took about eight hours for the tides to change from high to low, sixteen hours for a complete cycle of tides. 9 I didn't have to wait to learn these things in school. In our house they were everyday knowledge.

[1] Often, my brother and I, joined our mother on her adventures into tidal lands. [2] At the very low tides of the full moon, when almost all the water was sucked away, we found the hideaways where crabs, snails, starfish, and sea urchins hid in order not to be seen. [3] Sometimes we would dig with shovels in the mud, where yellow and white worms lived in their leathery tunnels. 13

For plankton tows, we would stand on the bridge while Mom lowered a cone-shaped net that is often used by marine biologists. Then we would patiently wait. After a while, she would pull up the net, and we would go home. Later, we would see her sitting at the kitchen table, peering at a drop of water through the lenses of her microscope from the bottle—watching the thousands of tiny swimming organisms.

1.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** waiting, by the back door,
3. **C.** waiting by the back door,
4. **D.** waiting by the back door

2.

1. **F.** NO CHANGE
2. **G.** would sit
3. **H.** sitting
4. **J.** sat

3.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** As my mother's interest is science, she is
3. **C.** My mother's occupation is that of

4. **D.** My mother is
4. Which choice would most effectively introduce the rest of this paragraph?
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** There seemed to be no explanation for why Mom ran our household the way she did.
  3. **H.** Our household didn't run according to a typical schedule.
  4. **J.** Mom ran our household in a most spectacular manner.
- 5.
1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** was defenseless in the face of
  3. **C.** depended on
  4. **D.** trusted in
6. Which choice most effectively signals the shift from the preceding paragraph to this paragraph?
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** Our lives were likewise affected by the phases of the moon.
  3. **H.** A relationship exists between the moon and the tides.
  4. **J.** The moon is a mysterious orb afloat in the sky.
- 7.
1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** Since the moon is
  3. **C.** The moon is
  4. **D.** The moon,
- 8.
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** one's
  3. **H.** it's
  4. **J.** its'
9. If the writer were to delete the phrase "sixteen hours for a complete cycle of tides" from the preceding sentence (ending the sentence with a period), the essay would primarily lose a detail that:
1. **A.** shows how the narrator's interests are different from the mother's interests.
  2. **B.** contradicts a point made earlier in the paragraph.
  3. **C.** helps establish the setting for the essay.
  4. **D.** displays the narrator's knowledge of tides.
- 10.
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** brother, and I,
  3. **H.** brother, and I
  4. **J.** brother and I
- 11.
1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** away. Then we
  3. **C.** away. We
  4. **D.** away; we
- 12.
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** hideouts where crabs, snails, starfish, and sea urchins concealed and hid themselves.
  3. **H.** places where crabs, snails, starfish, and sea urchins were stashed away.
  4. **J.** hiding places of crabs, snails, starfish, and sea urchins.
13. Which of the following sequences of sentences makes this paragraph most logical?

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** 2, 1, 3
  3. **C.** 2, 3, 1
  4. **D.** 3, 1, 2
14. Given that all of the choices are true, which one provides information that is relevant and that makes the rest of this paragraph understandable?
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** had a specimen bottle attached to its smaller end.
  3. **H.** was woven from cotton and nylon material.
  4. **J.** was shaped like a geometric figure.
15. The best placement for the underlined portion would be:
1. **A.** where it is now.
  2. **B.** after the word *lenses*.
  3. **C.** after the word *microscope*.
  4. **D.** after the word *bottle* (but before the dash).

## Sample English Test Questions: Passage 2

Click on the letter choices to determine if you have the correct answer and for question explanations. An actual ACT English Test contains 75 questions to be answered in 45 minutes.

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You will also find questions about a section of the passage, or about the passage as a whole. These questions do not refer to an underlined portion of the passage, but rather are identified by a number or numbers in a box.

For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. Read the passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

### Passage II

The following paragraphs may or may not be in the most logical order. Each paragraph is numbered in brackets, and question 14 will ask you to choose where Paragraph 2 should most logically be placed.

#### My Father's Garden

[1]

When I was a boy growing up in Delhi, India, we had a kitchen garden behind our downstairs apartment. My father was an avid gardener, he still is: and every Saturday morning he would put on his work clothes, pick up his hoe and trowel, and would head out the back door. 3

[2]

As a ten-year-old, I was supremely unenthusiastic about swinging a hoe in the garden when I could be out playing with my friends. Having tried and failed, my father was unable to make a gardener of me. I had no qualms, of course, about enjoying the results of his labor: the potatoes, squash, cucumbers, and cauliflower that he pursued out of the earth. I would even help him dig out the potatoes or cut a cucumber from its vine. To me, it was much more fun to reap than sowing.

[3]

Many years later, living in an upstairs apartment, I am more often sorry I didn't follow my father out to the garden. I have several indoor plants, but the experience is not the same. The few times that I've helped a friend with yard work has given me the joy of touching the soil with an open palm, to get the earth under my fingernails, of patting down the berm around a newly transplanted sapling. Now that I live far from my father (I live in Iowa on the other side of the world), I wish I'd spend more time with him in the garden.

[4]

My favorite photograph of my father shows him squatting on his heels, trowel in hand, behind a golden heap of onions freshly pulled from the ground. 12

His glowing smile are evidence of his pride in the onions—the proof of his labor and love—and in me, the photographer, his son. In that photo, his love of the land and his love for me are somehow intertwined, indivisible. It is that same love—love of kin, love of land—that pushes under my fingernails, pushes against my skin, when I thrust my hand into the yielding earth and think that on its far side my father might be doing the same.

1.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** gardener—he still is—
  3. **C.** gardener, he still is—
  4. **D.** gardener and he still is
2.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** picked up his hoe and trowel, and headed
  3. **H.** pick up his hoe and trowel, and head
  4. **J.** picking up his hoe and trowel, and headed
3. If the word *Saturday* were deleted from the preceding sentence, the essay would primarily lose:
  1. **A.** evidence that the father was an avid gardener.
  2. **B.** a detail that changes the meaning of the sentence.
  3. **C.** support for a point made earlier.
  4. **D.** a crucial link to the following paragraph.
4. Which of the choices best emphasizes how much the father wanted his son to share his avid interest in gardening?
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** Because of my indifference to his hobby,
  3. **H.** Contrary to this thinking,
  4. **J.** Despite his repeated attempts,
5.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** More important, I had no qualms
  3. **C.** It stands to reason, then, that I certainly would have no qualms
  4. **D.** I had no qualms, as a consequence of it,
6.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** coaxed
  3. **H.** surrendered
  4. **J.** enlisted
7.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** the most fun to reap than to sow.
  3. **C.** much more fun to reap than to sow.
  4. **D.** the most fun reaping than if I'd had to sow.
8. The best placement for the underlined portion would be:
  1. **F.** where it is now.
  2. **G.** after the word *sorry*.
  3. **H.** after the word *follow*.
  4. **J.** after the word *garden* (ending the sentence with a period).

9.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** have given
3. **C.** has gave
4. **D.** have gave

10.

1. **F.** NO CHANGE
2. **G.** with getting
3. **H.** of getting
4. **J.** got

11.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** wished I had spent
3. **C.** wish I had spent
4. **D.** wish to have spent

12. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following true statement:

I have many photo albums, and each one includes pictures of my father in various poses.  
Should the writer make this addition here?

1. **F.** Yes, because it informs the reader that the photograph he describes in the preceding sentence is not the only one he has of his father.
2. **G.** Yes, because it informs the reader that the writer is more than an amateur photographer.
3. **H.** No, because it contradicts the writer's claim that the photograph he describes in the preceding sentence is one he also treasures.
4. **J.** No, because it distracts the reader from the main focus of the paragraph and does not logically fit at this point in the essay.

13.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** is
3. **C.** were
4. **D.** OMIT the underlined portion.

Questions 14 and 15 ask about the preceding passage as a whole.

14. For the sake of the logic and coherence of the essay, Paragraph 2 should be placed:

1. **F.** where it is now.
2. **G.** before Paragraph 1.
3. **H.** after Paragraph 3.
4. **J.** after Paragraph 4.

15. Suppose the writer had intended to write a brief essay showing how a value he holds as an adult is very different from what he felt as a child. Would this essay successfully fulfill the writer's goal?

1. **A.** Yes, because the essay shows how the writer came to value gardening when this was something he had not appreciated as a child.
2. **B.** Yes, because the essay shows that as an adult the writer finally learned to value his father's ability to be a good parent, when as a child he had not done so.
3. **C.** No, because the focus of the essay is on the writer's father's values and not on the values of the writer himself.
4. **D.** No, because the essay is not about values; rather, it is about one man's avid interest in backyard gardening.

## Sample English Test Questions: Passage 3

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For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. Read the passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

### Passage III

#### The Andean Panpipe

Whether its bright and jaunty or haunting and melancholic, the music of the Andes highlands has a mellow sound unique in the musical world. The instrument responsible for this sound is the *antara*, or Andean panpipe, known for the hollow-sounding, breathy notes it creates. The antara has its origins in the Incan civilization, once the more richer and more powerful empire in South America.

The antara consists of a connected row of hollow, vertical pipes of varying lengths, which are then lined up.

The pipes, which can vary numerously from three to fifteen, are fashioned from clay that is rolled around a mold. Each pipe is individually rolled to create the proper pitch before being bound to the other pipes.

The antara dates back to the ninth century.

Evidence about how musicians played the instrument have come from painted images on Incan ceramic pottery. Musicians are depicted playing a six-pipe antara by holding the lower ends of the two longer pipes with the right hand while placing the left hand near the remaining tops of the four pipes. The antara was also sometimes held in one hand while the other hand beat a cylindrical drum.

[1] Due to the limited number of notes that can be played on an antara, early musicians' most likely worked in groups, coordinating the timing and pitch of their instruments to extend the range of sounds produced. **10**

[2] Other pottery images show two antara players facing each other while dancing. [3] Each player holds a set of pipes so that both sets are connected to the other set by a string, as if to suggest that those two antaras should be played together. [4] Even to this day, descendants of the Incas, the Quechua people of Peru and Bolivia, prefer to play matched antaras bound together. **12**



Unfortunately, the music of the Incas can probably never be exactly re-creating. Yet one can hear in the music of their descendants, beautiful variations on a musical sound that has survived for many centuries. **15**

1.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** they're
  3. **C.** it's
  4. **D.** its'
2.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** one of the richest and most
  3. **H.** the richest and most
  4. **J.** the richer and more
3. Given that all of the choices are true, which one provides the most significant new information?
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** thus forming this musical instrument.
  3. **C.** arranged from shortest to longest.
  4. **D.** which are fastened together.
4.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** in quantity of numbers
  3. **H.** number-wise
  4. **J.** in number
5.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** being binded
  3. **C.** been bounded
  4. **D.** been bound
6.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** are coming
  3. **H.** comes
  4. **J.** come
7. The best placement for the underlined portion would be:
  1. **A.** where it is now.
  2. **B.** before the word *left*.
  3. **C.** before the word *of*.
  4. **D.** before the word *four*.
8.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** beaten
  3. **H.** beated
  4. **J.** beats
9.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** antara, early musicians

3. **C.** antara early musicians'
  4. **D.** antara early musician's
10. If the writer were to delete the phrase "coordinating the timing and pitch of their instruments" from the preceding sentence, the sentence would primarily lose:
1. **F.** a description of how musicians overcame the limitations of the antara.
  2. **G.** an indication that music was an important element in Incan life.
  3. **H.** the idea that the antara was a key feature of Incan music.
  4. **J.** nothing of significance, because the phrase is redundant.
- 11.
1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** in such a way that both sets are
  3. **C.** with both sets being
  4. **D.** OMIT the underlined portion.
12. For the sake of the logic and coherence of this paragraph, Sentence 4 should be placed:
1. **F.** where it is now.
  2. **G.** before Sentence 1.
  3. **H.** after Sentence 1.
  4. **J.** after Sentence 2.
- 13.
1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** re-created exactly.
  3. **C.** exact re-created.
  4. **D.** re-created exact.
- 14.
1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** hear, in the music of their descendants
  3. **H.** hear in the music of their descendants;
  4. **J.** hear in the music of their descendants
15. If the writer were to change the pronoun *one* to *we* in the preceding sentence, this closing sentence would:
1. **A.** indicate that the writer is a descendant of the Incas.
  2. **B.** suggest that the essay's audience are all musicians.
  3. **C.** take on a somewhat more personal tone.
  4. **D.** become more clearly a call to action.

## Sample English Test Questions: Passage 4

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For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. Read the passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

### Passage IV

#### Vatican City's Wonders

Surrounded by the ancient city of Rome, Vatican City is an independent nation on the west bank of the Tiber River. This tiny country—about one-sixth of a square mile in all—is also home to a disproportionately large number of sites with great historical, artistic, and which have religious significance. **4**

The Vatican Museums house a great many valuable paintings, sculptures, pieces of jewelry, and tapestries, as well as the world's most extensive collections of ancient manuscripts. Scholars often probe the museums' archives of early written works for insights into lives led long ago.

Accordingly, St. Peter's Basilica, the largest cathedral in the Northern Hemisphere, is remarkable. Built upon second-century foundations, St. Peter's features a dome designed by the artist and architect Michelangelo. **10** Intricate mosaics—enormous "paintings" fashioned from millions of tiny cut stones of various colors—lining each of the basilica's several smaller domes. **12** The marble floor, with its intricate designs, covers the cathedral's catacombs, where popes are buried. Sculptures by Michelangelo and Bernini, including Michelangelo's poignant *Pietà*, contributes to the basilica's beauty.

However, to many, the most spectacular part of Vatican City is the Sistine Chapel. This vast chapel displays what many consider some of the most important works of Renaissance art: Michelangelo's awe-inspiring frescoes. These frescoes—paintings made on freshly spread, still-moist plaster—capture the attention of viewers with a complex array of religious images. One of his most famous frescoes, *The Last Judgment*, is painted on the west wall. A series of interrelated frescoes covers the vaulted ceiling.

Despite its small size, Vatican City offers its many visitors a chance to see a wide range of historical and artistic wonders. It is easy to understand why the city has become one of the most frequently visited places in the world.

1. Given that all of the choices are true, which one best supports the sentence's claim about Vatican City's status as an independent nation?
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** with an interesting past.
  3. **C.** with its own government, banking system, postal service, and army.
  4. **D.** that has to import most of its supplies, even such necessities as food and water.
2.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** approximately about one-sixth of a square mile, all told—
  3. **H.** a grand total sum of about one-sixth of a square mile—
  4. **J.** a total of about one-sixth of a square mile when added together—
3.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** having
  3. **C.** as well as
  4. **D.** OMIT the underlined portion.
4. If the writer were to delete the words *tiny* and *disproportionately* from the preceding sentence, the sentence would primarily lose:
  1. **F.** elements of the setting of the essay.
  2. **G.** a contrast emphasizing the unusual number of sites.
  3. **H.** details that stress how important the sites are.
  4. **J.** a comparison between Vatican City and Rome.
5. Given that all of the choices are true, which one best emphasizes the extent and worth of the museums' holdings?
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** thousands of invaluable
  3. **C.** numerous important
  4. **D.** a group of precious
6. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?
  1. **F.** in addition to
  2. **G.** besides
  3. **H.** also there is
  4. **J.** and also
7.
  1. **A.** NO CHANGE
  2. **B.** grab an eyeful of
  3. **C.** check out
  4. **D.** pry
8.
  1. **F.** NO CHANGE
  2. **G.** Indeed,
  3. **H.** For instance,
  4. **J.** OMIT the underlined portion.

9.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** foundations,
3. **C.** foundations:
4. **D.** foundations;

10. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following true statement:

In addition to being an architect and artist, Michelangelo wrote poetry, including more than 300 sonnets.

Should the writer make this addition here?

1. **F.** Yes, because it provides further details about Michelangelo, who designed the dome at St. Peter's.
2. **G.** Yes, because it reinforces the paragraph's implication that Michelangelo was extremely talented.
3. **H.** No, because it distracts attention from the paragraph's focus, which is on the architecture and visual art of St. Peter's.
4. **J.** No, because it adds more information about Michelangelo, who made only small contributions to Vatican City's art and architecture.

11.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** that line
3. **C.** line
4. **D.** lines

12. If the writer were to delete the quotation marks around the word *paintings* in the preceding sentence, the sentence would primarily lose a feature that suggests:

1. **F.** that mosaics are not paintings in the usual sense of the word.
2. **G.** how large and complicated the mosaics in St. Peter's actually are.
3. **H.** how carefully mosaics are put together.
4. **J.** that the mosaics in St. Peter's are not typical of mosaics in general.

13.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** does contribute
3. **C.** has contributed
4. **D.** contribute

14. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?

1. **F.** Yet,
2. **G.** Therefore,
3. **H.** Still,
4. **J.** Nonetheless,

15.

1. **A.** NO CHANGE
2. **B.** consider some,
3. **C.** consider, some,
4. **D.** consider, some