



Accuplacer
College Placement Test (CPT)

General Information and Study Guide

Revised 2/9/12

College Placement Test Preparation Suggestions

Try to avoid the most common test mistakes

- Misreading the question
- Not following directions
- Not eliminating unlikely answer choices before guessing
- Rushing unnecessarily

Strategies for reading comprehension tests

1. Read as much of the passage as possible- even if you don't understand all the words
2. Read each question and all answer choices
3. Refer back to the passage to be sure your answer is correct (This is NOT a test of your ability to memorize the passage!) Some questions test your ability to locate stated information while others test your ability to infer. For example:
 - In what year did (you are expected to locate stated information)
 - The author of the passage probably (you are expected to make an educated guess based on the passage)

Strategies for English sentence skills tests

1. Read all answer choices
2. Don't expect to be able to visualize every answer try rewriting items with each answer choice substituted

Strategies for math tests

1. Use scratch paper
2. Write out steps even if the problem looks easy
3. Check your work

Testing Strategies

Strategies prior to taking the placement test

- Consider attending an Accuplacer Study Session to prepare for your placement test (Contact the testing office at 339-4332 to schedule)
- Reschedule your testing appointment if you are unable to attend
- The lack of adequate rest the night before will affect test-taking efficiency
- Relax; too much worry and anxiety is neither necessary nor helpful
- Remember this is a placement test – not an entrance exam
- Mobilize your self-confidence; be positive, your attitude is important
- Take care of any personal needs before the testing begins
- If you require special accommodations contact the SCC Disabilities Coordinator
- Take a brisk walk about 10 minutes before the test
- Avoid *excess* caffeine the day of the test
- Eat a balanced meal about an hour before the test
- Turn off your cell phone and put it away

Strategies during the placement test

- Breathe
- Relax and smile
- Listen to the oral instructions that are provided to you by the testing proctor
- Read the instructions carefully and follow them exactly
- Read the questions carefully
- If you start to draw a blank or lose your focus, try writing (responses, formulas, questions) on scratch paper to jog your memory and refocus your attention
- Use positive self-talk
- Visualize success
- Take brief breaks
- If you change an answer to a question before it is submitted, be sure the change is justified
- Indiscriminate guessing does not pay off. An educated, reasoned guess may be worthwhile

Computer Skills Placement (CSP) Test Vista / Office 2007

The exam consists of 30 questions to be answered within 70 minutes. Please be familiar with the concepts below in order to earn the 50% required to pass the test. The questions are both hands on and multiple choice.

File Management:

- Control Panel
- Navigating Windows (folders, icons)
- Creating folders
- Identifying file types by their icon
- Sorting files in a dialog box
- Keyboard shortcuts
- Task Manager

Information and Communication:

- Searching within the Web browser
- Saving images on a Web page
- Sending email
- Reloading Web pages
- Accessing home page
- Adding favorites

Word 2007:

- Navigating commands on the ribbon
- Quick access toolbar
- Headers and Footers

Benefits of the CSP BASIC are:

- Pinpoints each student's proficiencies and deficiencies within the four basic skill sets (File Management, Word Processing, Information and Communication)
- Results provide faculty, staff, and administrators with essential information needed for both proper academic advising and accurate course selection
- Outcomes allow students to be assigned to classes which optimize their opportunity for success (CIS-070, 110 or 111)
- Developed with input from higher education faculty, test development experts, and actual marketplace experience

Key features of CSP:

- The CSP assessment is a mix of multiple choice and performance-based action oriented questions
- Questions quickly and efficiently test a student's basic knowledge of the four basic competency areas (File Management, Word Processing, Information and Communication) necessary for success in today's digital world
- The CSP assessment is administered via a secure internet connection
- Students take the assessment using campus computers in a secure, proctored environment

Sample Test Available:

<http://www.csplacement.com/mdc/>

CPT Reading Practice

Implied or stated meaning

Michelle opened the mailbox at the curb and pulled out a white envelope addressed to her and her husband. She opened it before she even could reach her front door. She had barely gotten past "Dear Mom and Dad" when tears began streaming down her face. She would have to call Roger and tell him the news.

1. The author of the passage implies that
 - a. Michelle had never received a letter from her son before.
 - b. Michelle's child is critically ill.
 - c. Michelle felt deeply about the message in the letter.
 - d. Roger is Michelle's son.

The freak weather transformed the outdoors into a rigid fairyland. Young leaves hung stiffly, and the daffodils seemed buried alive under a glass-like coating.

2. The author of the passage implies that
 - a. Such weather had never happened before.
 - b. Rain had turned to ice in spring.
 - c. The daffodils would not survive the weather conditions.
 - d. A freak hail storm wiped out all the local vegetation.

Relationships between sentences

Many people do not know how to respond when someone they know is dying. Hospice workers, on the other hand, are experienced in giving comfort to dying people.

3. What does the second sentence do
 - a. It restates the idea found in the first.
 - b. It gives an example.
 - c. It analyzes the statement found in the first.
 - d. It provides a contrast to the idea stated in the first.

A good study space is well lighted and well supplied with paper, pens, and study aids. A dictionary, thesaurus, and writing guide would be useful aids when writing college reports.

4. What does the second sentence do
 - a. It restates the idea found in the first.
 - b. It gives an example.
 - c. It analyzes the statement found in the first.
 - d. It provides a contrast to the idea stated in the first.

(Reading solutions 1.c, 2.b, 3.d, 4.b)

CPT Sentence Skills Practice

Choose the correct form

1. Mr. Reynolds eating the sandwich when the fire alarm went off.
 - a. eating
 - b. eats
 - c. was eating
 - d. he ate

2. It is important to end an interview on a positive note, that final impression is what the interviewer will remember.
 - a. note, that final impression
 - b. note because that final impression
 - c. note, but that final impression
 - d. note and that final impression

Rewrite the sentence

3. Ellen didn't believe she had the ability to pass Chemistry until she saw the results of her exam.
Rewrite, beginning with
 Until Ellen saw the results of her exam,...
The next words will be
 - a. Ellen had the ability
 - b. Ellen didn't believe
 - c. she didn't believe
 - d. she believed

4. Companies need to attract and keep the best possible employees, so employers often offer incentives for doing a job well.
Rewrite, beginning with
 Needing to attract and keep the best possible employees,
The next words will be
 - a. so companies often offer
 - b. offer incentives for doing
 - c. for doing a job
 - d. companies often offer

(Sentence Skills solutions 1.c, 2.b, 3.c, 4.d)

Concepts to review for the CPT Sentence Skills subtest

Logical use of coordinating conjunctions to combine independent clauses (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)

NO: I should have brought a tape recorder, so at least I should have taken notes.

YES: I should have brought a tape recorder, or at least I should have taken notes.

Logical use of adverbial conjunctions to combine independent clauses (in addition, also, besides, furthermore, moreover, indeed, in fact, likewise, similarly, instead, on the other hand, otherwise, however, nevertheless, nonetheless, accordingly, consequently, therefore, thus, meanwhile)

NO: Joe is a very poor reader, however, it takes him a week to read a comic book.

YES: Joe is a very poor reader, consequently, it takes him a week to read a comic book.

Introductory words or phrases and the related logic and punctuation

NO: Beginning in infancy we develop lifelong tastes for sweet foods.

YES: Beginning in infancy, we develop lifelong tastes for sweet foods.

Appropriate punctuation when listing

NO: Five of Mrs. Murray's students ate lunch in the classroom Mandy, Mark, Jonas, Elishia, and Ricky.

YES: Five of Mrs. Murray's students ate lunch in the classroom: Mandy, Mark, Jonas, Elishia, and Ricky.

Subject verb agreement

NO: The students in my college class works long hours.

YES: The students in my college class work long hours.

Parallelism (elements of equal weight must be expressed in equal, or parallel, forms)

NO: The project is tedious, difficult, and makes me tired.

YES: The project is tedious, difficult, and tiring.

NO: Paul got his information reading books and by talking to people.

YES: Paul got his information by reading books and by talking to people.

Eliminating wordiness

NO: Due to the fact that we wanted to see the cinematic film production at 12:30, we ate our lunch at a time that was earlier than we originally planned.

YES: We ate lunch sooner than we had planned because we wanted to see the 12:30 movie.

Active voice vs. passive voice

NO: At 3:00 our mail was delivered by the postal carrier. (passive)

YES: The postal carrier delivered our mail at 3:00. (active)

Clear and correct antecedents for pronouns

NO: Arnold likes to study geological records. That will be his major

YES: Arnold likes to study geological records. Geology will be his major.

NO: Martha asked Mom if she could go to the store after dinner.

YES: Martha asked Mom's permission to go to the store after dinner.

Pronoun agreement

Singular indefinite pronouns: anybody, anyone, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, none, no one, somebody, someone, something

Singular or plural (check antecedent): all, any, some

NO: Everyone are going to the assembly on Friday.

YES: Everyone is going to the assembly on Friday.

NO: Some of the children was eating lunch.

YES: Some of the children were eating lunch.

Revising misplaced and dangling modifiers

NO: Walking down the Street, the limousine caught my attention.

YES: While I was walking down the Street, a limousine caught my attention.

NO: I bought the gift at a large department store which cost only \$10.99.

YES: I bought the gift, which cost only \$10.99, at a large department store.

Arithmetic Practice Problems
(Solutions on page 13)

Fractions

Add:

1) $1/10 + 3/4 + 4/5 =$

2) $2 \frac{1}{3} + 3 \frac{3}{5} =$

Subtract:

3) $4 \frac{3}{7} - 2 \frac{1}{2} =$

Multiply:

4) $1 \frac{1}{4} \times 3 \frac{1}{5} =$

Divide:

5) $7/9 \overline{) 5/18} =$

6) $5 \frac{1}{2} \overline{) 3 \frac{1}{4}} =$

Arithmetic Practice Problems (Continued)
(Solutions on page 14)

DECIMALS

Express as a decimal:

7) **$719/10000 =$**

Multiply:

8) **$1.23 \times 0.4 =$**

Divide:

9) **$1.44 \overline{) 0.12} =$**

Evaluate:

10) **$0.7 + (0.2)^3 - 0.08(0.03) =$**

Multiply:

11) **$3.75 \times .0001 =$**

Ratios and Percents
(Solutions on page 15)

- 12) John's car traveled 375 miles on 15 gallons of gasoline. Determine the miles per gallon.
- 13) \$3870 was spent for 129 shares of Mattel stock. Find the cost per share.
- 14) In a scuba diving course there are 96 male students and 54 female students. What is the ratio of male students to the total number of students?
- 15) Find 30% of 200.
- 16) What percent of 300 is 60?
- 17) 145 is 58% of what number?
- 18) There are 12 cm of water in the rain gauge this week. Last week the rain gauge held 8 cm of water. What is the percent of increase from last week to this week?

CPT Algebra Practice
(Solutions on page 16)

1. Multiply. $(5x - 1)(x - 2)$

2. $x^2 - 3x - 18 =$

- a. $(x-3)(x-6)$
- b. $(x+3)(x-6)$
- c. $(x-3)(x+6)$
- d. $(x+3)(x+6)$

3. $(7y - 2)(3y - 1) =$

- a. $21y - 13y - 2$
- b. $21y^2 - 13 - 2$
- c. $21y^2 - 13y + 2$
- d. $21y^2 - 13y - 2$

4. The length of a rectangle is 3 meters longer than twice the width. The area of the rectangle is 44 square meters. Find the length and width of the rectangle.

SOLUTIONS

Arithmetic Practice Problems

Fractions

Add:

1) $1/10 + 3/4 + 4/5 = \underline{2/20 + 15/20 + 16/20} = \underline{33/20}$

2) $2 \frac{1}{3} + 3 \frac{3}{5} = \underline{2 \frac{5}{15} + 3 \frac{9}{15}} = \underline{5 \frac{14}{15}}$

Subtract:

3) $4 \frac{3}{7} - 2 \frac{1}{2} = 4 \frac{6}{14} - 2 \frac{7}{14} = 3 \frac{20}{14} - 2 \frac{7}{14} = \underline{1 \frac{13}{14}}$

Multiply:

4) $1 \frac{1}{4} \times 3 \frac{1}{5} = \underline{5/4 \times 16/5} = \underline{4}$

Divide:

5) $7/9 \overline{) 5/18} = \underline{7/9 \times 18/5} = \underline{14/5}$ or $2 \frac{4}{5}$

6) $5 \frac{1}{2} \overline{) 3 \frac{1}{4}} = \underline{11/2 \overline{) 13/4}} = \underline{11/2 \times 4/13} = \underline{22/13}$ or $1 \frac{9}{13}$

SOLUTIONS

Arithmetic Practice Problems (Continued)

Decimals

Express as a decimal:

7) $719/10000 = \underline{.0719}$

Multiply:

8) $1.23 \times 0.4 = \underline{.492}$

Divide:

9) $1.44 \overline{) 0.12} = \underline{12}$

Evaluate:

10) $0.7 + (0.2)^3 - 0.08(0.03) = \underline{0.7 + .008 - .0024 = 0.7056}$

Multiply:

11) $3.75 \times .0001 = \underline{.000375}$

SOLUTIONS

Ratios and Percents

- 12) John's car traveled 375 miles on 15 gallons of gasoline. Determine the miles per gallon.

$$375 \text{ miles } \div 15 \text{ gallons} = 25 \text{ miles/gal}$$

- 13) \$3870 was spent for 129 shares of Mattel stock. Find the cost per share.

$$\$3870 \div 129 \text{ shares} = \$ 30/\text{Share}$$

- 14) In a scuba diving course there are 96 male students and 54 female students. What is the ratio of male students to the total number of students?

$$96 \text{ males} + 54 \text{ females} = 150 \text{ total}$$

$$96 \div 150 = 48/75 = 16/25$$

- 15) Find 30% of 200.

$$.3 \times 200 = 60$$

- 16) What percent of 300 is 60?

$$n \times 300 = 60$$

$$n = 60 \div 300 = .2 = 20\%$$

- 17) 145 is 58% of what number?

$$145 = .58 \times n$$

$$145 \div .58 = n = 250$$

- 18) There are 12 cm of water in the rain gauge this week. Last week the rain gauge held 8 cm of water. What is the percent of increase from last week to this week?

$$\begin{aligned} \% \text{ Increase} &= \text{Amount of Increase} \div \text{Original Amount} \\ &= 4/8 \\ &= .5 = 50\% \end{aligned}$$

SOLUTIONS

CPT Algebra Practice

1. Multiply. $(5x - 1)(x - 2)$

$$5x^2 - 10x - 1x + 2$$

$$5x^2 - 11x + 2$$

2. $x^2 - 3x - 18 =$

- a. $(x-3)(x-6)$
- ✓ **b. $(x+3)(x-6)$**
- c. $(x-3)(x+6)$
- d. $(x+3)(x+6)$

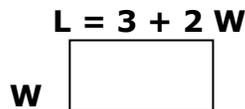
3. $(7y - 2)(3y - 1) =$

- a. $21y - 13y - 2$
- b. $21y^2 - 13 - 2$
- ✓ **c. $21y^2 - 13y + 2$**
- d. $21y^2 - 13y - 2$

4. The length of a rectangle is 3 meters longer than twice the width. The area of the rectangle is 44 square meters. Find the length and width of the rectangle.

Width = 4

Length = 11



$$A = L \times w$$

$$3w + 2w^2 = 44$$

$$2w^2 + 3w - 44 = 0$$

$$2w^2 + -8w + 11w - 44$$

$$2w(w - 4) + 11(w - 4)$$

$$(2w + 11)(w - 4) = 0$$

$$2w + 11 = 0$$

$$w - 4 = 0$$

$$w = 4$$

Other Study Resources

The links listed below can also be used to prepare for the placement test. These sites are listed for your convenience. You can also use an online search engine such as Google to identify other study sites and practice tests.

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/>

<http://www.purplemath.com/>

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

http://www.testprepreview.com/accuplacer_practice.htm

<http://www.studyguidezone.com/accuplacertest.htm>

<http://www.csplacement.com/mdc/>

<http://practicecollegeplacementtest.college-placement-test.com/>

http://amby.com/tests/math/PPT_a.html

<http://www.themathpage.com/>

<http://www.qcflernfree.org/>