The Practice Guide

Bridge Valley
Community & Technical College

Accuplacer
Purpose of the Placement Test

The purpose of the placement test is to assist us in determining your best course placement. The placement test measures entry-level skills in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics.

This test is not an admissions test that can be passed or failed. Be prepared to do your best when you take the placement test! It may be taken only once.

Remember that you cannot fail the test! For example, if you have not had an algebra course, you would not be expected to do well in this area.

Who needs to take the ACCUPLACER placement test?

State colleges are required to test the entry-level skills of their students. If you are a new student seeking a degree and you have not completed over 30 hours of course-work at another college or you do not have current admissions test scores (ACT, SAT, etc.), you must take the ACCUPLACER placement test.

How is the ACCUPLACER administered?

The computerized placement test is untimed but takes approximately two hours. No computer experience is necessary.

Your results will be given to you after the test. A counselor or advisor will review these results with you and help you register for the appropriate classes.

What areas are covered on the ACCUPLACER placement test?

The placement test includes questions to evaluate your skills in four areas: reading comprehension, sentence skills, basic mathematics, and elementary algebra.

Following are more detailed descriptions of each of the four areas and sample questions to help you better understand the placement test before you take it. Take time to review and practice the sample items.

Answers to the sample questions are at the end, after the algebra
READING COMPREHENSION

This test measures your ability to understand what you read. You may be asked to
- identify the relationship between sentences
- distinguish between the main and secondary ideas
- make inferences

Directions: Read the statement or passage and then choose the best answer to the question. Answer the question on the basis of what is stated or implied in the statement or passage.

1. Myths are stories, the products of fertile imagination, sometimes simple, often containing profound truths. They are not meant to be taken too literally. Details may sometimes appear childish, but most myths express a culture’s most serious beliefs about human beings, eternity and God.

The main idea of this passage is that myths
a. are created primarily to entertain young children.
b. are purposely written for the reader.
c. provide the reader with a means of escape from reality.
d. illustrate the values that are considered important to a society.

2. Australia has many strange beasts, one of the oddest of which is the koala. Perfectly adapted to one specific tree, the eucalyptus, this living teddy bear does not need anything else, not even a drink! The moisture in the leaves is just right for the koala, making it the only land animal that doesn’t need water to supplement its food (from That Astounding Creator, by Jean George).

The passage indicates that the koala
a. is a member of the bear family that does not need moisture to live.
b. gets all of its nourishment from the eucalyptus tree.
c. adapts itself to any surroundings.
d. is the only animal that does not need food to live.

3. It is the early summer. August’s long-awaited vacation time still seems ages away, but by the same token, its torpor-producing heat and mildew-generating humidity have not yet arrived. Instead, these cool, end-of-June days practically insist on getting the picnic season under way immediately. But, alas, there is a difficulty: alfresco dining has a bad name among us. Tenth-rate hot dogs, carbonized chicken parts, and beef a-la-charcoal lighter are principally what comes to mind when we hear the words outdoor food (from A Spanish Picnic by Robert Capon).

This passage suggests that the author believes that
a. picnicking in August is long awaited.
b. August is better than June for a picnic.
c. there are some negative aspects to eating outside.
d. picnicking is better alfresco.

4. In embarking on the fight for Independence, America faced formidable obstacles. The Continental Congress did not have the authority to pass binding legislation or to impose taxes. The new nation had no army and no navy, and its population numbered 2.5 million people, 20 percent of whom were slaves. Britain, by contrast, was a mighty power of 11 million people with the world’s best navy and a well-disciplined army. Fifty thousand troops were in North America by 1778, and Britain hired thirty thousand German troops to supplement its forces during the war to supplement its forces during the war (from An American History by Rebecca Brooks Gruver).

What is the main point of the passage?
- Britain was a great power whose population outnumbered that of America.
- America’s military forces were less experienced than Britain’s military.
- America’s Continental Congress had limited authority.
- As America was about to engage in its struggle for autonomy, it was faced with arduous barriers.
Directions: Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or a statement about them. Read each pair of sentences and then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

5. The Midwest is experiencing its worst drought in fifteen years.
   Corn and soybean prices are expected to be very high this year.

What does the second sentence do?
   a. It restates the idea found in the first sentence.
   b. It states a result or effect of the statement in the first sentence.
   c. It gives an example of the statement in the first sentence.
   d. It analyzes the statement made in the first sentence.

6. The American prison system functions primarily to exact retribution.
   In Japan, the courts are less concerned with sending people to jail than they are with rehabilitating them.

What does the second sentence do?
   a. It supports an idea found in the first sentence.
   b. It analyzes an idea stated in the first sentence.
   c. It states a contrast to the statement in the first sentence.
   d. It exemplifies an idea found in the first sentence.
SENTENCE SKILLS

This test measures your understanding of sentence structure – of how sentences are put together and what makes them complete and clear. You may be asked to

- choose the most appropriate word or phrase to substitute for the underlined portion of the sentence
- identify sentences which have the same meaning
- recognize incomplete sentences
- recognize relationships of coordination and subordination
- follow the logic of a sentence

Directions: Select the best version of the underlined part of the sentence. The first choice is the same as the original sentence. If you think the original sentence is best, choose the first answer.

1. Ms. Rose planning to teach a course in biology next summer.
   a. planning  b. plans  c. with a plan  d. are planning

2. The professor listing only four journals on psychology.
   a. listing  b. are listing  c. with a list  d. listed

Directions: Follow the directions for rewriting the sentences below. Keep in mind that your new sentence should be well written and should have essentially the same meaning as the sentence given.

3. Being a female jockey, she was often interviewed.
   Rewrite beginning with She was often interviewed
   The next words will be
   a. on account of she was  b. by her being
   c. because she was  d. being as she was

4. Copies of the proposed rules were provided by the president of the college to the members of the committee.
   Rewrite beginning with The president of the college
   The next words will be
   a. to the members of the committee  b. providing proposed rules from
   c. provided copies of the proposed  d. proposed copies of the rules

5. Having no air conditioning, her condo is very hot.
   Rewrite beginning with Her condo is very hot
   The next words will be
   a. on account of it has  b. because it has
   c. be its being  d. being as it is

6. The praise of the other officers was earned by the young sergeant who solved the murder.
   Rewrite beginning with Having solved the murder
   The new sentence will include
   a. earned the praise  b. earning the praise
   c. praising of  d. praised the young sergeant
ARITHMETIC
This test measures your ability to perform basic arithmetic operations and to solve problems that involve fundamental arithmetic concepts. You may be asked to
• add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers and fractions
• add, subtract, multiply and divide with decimals and percents
• solve problems pertaining to rate, percent, distributing a quantity into fractional parts, measurement and simple geometry

Directions: Solve the following problems and choose your answer from the alternatives given.

1. All of the following are ways to write 20 percent of $N$ except
   a. $0.20N$  b. $\frac{20}{100}N$  c. $\frac{N}{5}$  d. $20N$

2. $\frac{3.7}{0.015}$ is closest to
   a. 2  b. 20  c. 200  d. 2,000

3. Three people who work full time are to work together on a project, but their total time on the project is to be equivalent to that of only one person working full time. If one person is budgeted for 1/2 of his time to the project and a second for 1/3 of her time, what part of the third worker’s time should be budgeted to this project?
   a. $\frac{1}{3}$  b. $\frac{1}{4}$  c. $\frac{1}{6}$  d. $\frac{1}{8}$

4. A ranger counts 1,922 deer in the forest, which represents 71 percent of the deer population of the forest. What is the approximate deer population?
   a. 1,400  b. 2,700  c. 7,100  d. 3,500

5. When 30 tickets are sold, $210 is collected. If $350 had been collected, how many tickets would have been sold?
   a. 50  b. 40  c. 35  d. 60

6. $12 \div 6^2 =$
   a. $\frac{1}{3}$  b. 3  c. 4  d. $\frac{1}{4}$

7. $\frac{3}{8} + \frac{2}{3}$
   a. $\frac{5}{11}$  b. $\frac{2}{9}$  c. $\frac{25}{24}$  d. $\frac{5}{24}$
ELEMENTARY ALGEBRA

This test measures your knowledge of elementary algebraic concepts and your ability to solve basic algebra problems. You may be asked to

- add, subtract, multiply and divide integers and rational numbers, absolute values
- add, subtract, multiply and divide algebraic expressions; evaluate formulas and expressions; factor polynomials; and simplify roots and algebraic fractions
- solve equations, inequalities, and word problems; solve systems of linear equation and inequalities; solve quadratic equations; translate written phrases into algebraic expressions or equations; graph linear equations

Directions: Solve the following problems and choose your answer from the alternatives given.

1. If a number is divided by 4 and then 3 is subtracted, the result is 5. Write an equation to solve this problem.
   a. \( \frac{x}{4} - 3 = 5 \)  
   b. \( \frac{x}{4} + 3 = 5 \)  
   c. \( \frac{x-3}{4} = 5 \)  
   d. \( \frac{x+3}{4} = 5 \)

2. Of the following, which is a factor of \( 2x^2 + 7x - 15 \)
   a. \( 2x + 3 \)  
   b. \( x - 5 \)  
   c. \( x - 3 \)  
   d. \( 2x - 3 \)

3. If \( x^2 - x - 6 = 0 \), then \( x \) is
   a. \(-2\) or \(3\)  
   b. \(-1\) or \(6\)  
   c. \(1\) or \(-6\)  
   d. \(2\) or \(-3\)

4. Simplify \( 3(2x^2 - 5x) - (5x^2 + 3x - 12) - 2(4x + 8) \)
   a. \( x^2 - 10x - 4 \)  
   b. \( x^2 - 26x - 4 \)  
   c. \( x^2 - 20x - 20 \)  
   d. \( 11x^2 - 20x + 36 \)

5. If \( x = 3 \), then \( x^2 - 7x = \)
   a. \(-12\)  
   b. \(30\)  
   c. \(-30\)  
   d. \(12\)

6. If \( 2x = 11 - 7x \), then \( x = \)
   a. \(-\frac{11}{9}\)  
   b. \(\frac{11}{9}\)  
   c. \(-\frac{11}{5}\)  
   d. \(\frac{11}{5}\)

7. Simplify \( \frac{10}{2+\frac{4}{x}} \)
   a. \(\frac{5}{1+\frac{2}{x}}\)  
   b. \(\frac{5}{1+x}\)  
   c. \(\frac{20}{4+x}\)  
   d. \(\frac{10}{1+x}\)
How did you do? Check your answers here.

Reading Comprehension: 1-d; 2-b; 3-c; 4-d; 5-b; 6-c
Sentence Skills: 1-b; 2-d; 3-c; 4-c; 5-b; 6-a
Arithmetic: 1-d; 2-c; 3-c; 4-b; 5-a; 6-a; 7-c
Elementary Algebra: 1-a; 2-d; 3-a; 4-b; 5-a; 6-b; 7-c

For more Accuplacer practice, go to http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/preparation-sample.html

On the day of the test
- Bring an official photo ID with signature (Driver’s License, for example)
- Stay relaxed, but do your best

After you take the placement test
- Review placement results
- Attend orientation and schedule your classes
- Pay for your classes
- Purchase your books at the bookstore
- Attend class!

To Schedule the Accuplacer,
Contact Mr. Tim Moore
Student Success Center (Room 031)
304-205-6607 timothy.moore@bridgevalley.edu

Students needing testing accommodations due to a disability should contact Disabilities Services at (304)205-6600 before taking the Placement Test.