

Student Guide For The Academic Skills Placement Tests

The Purpose of the Tests

The placement tests provide information about your level of skills accomplishment in reading, writing, and mathematics. The tests help to determine the English, mathematics, and reading courses most appropriate for you at this time.

The Types of Tests

The Reading Comprehension test uses multiple-choice questions to measure your understanding of what you read. The Arithmetic and Elementary Algebra tests consist of multiple-choice questions that measure your understanding of mathematics. For the Writing test, a handwritten essay on the enclosed topic will be used to measure your ability to express your ideas in writing.

Test Administration

The mathematics and reading tests are administered using a computer. Calculators are permitted but are not required for the mathematics sections. The writing portion of the placement tests will be administered using a blue book.

Test Time

The placement tests are untimed. Most students take approximately two to 2 to 2 ½ hours to complete the tests.

Score Reporting

When you have completed testing, scrap paper, essay, and any other additional materials will be collected. Your scores will be sent promptly to your advisor.

Who Must Take the Tests

All incoming students must take the tests. Exceptions are as follows: those with SAT verbal scores of 540 or higher are exempt from taking the reading test, and those with SAT math scores of 540 or higher are exempt from taking the mathematics test.

When and Where the Tests are Given

The tests are administered in **The Conklin Academic Skills Center**. Refer to the college's placement tests schedule for available dates and times.

Special Arrangements for Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability or temporary disabling condition that will prevent you from taking the test under standard conditions, inform William Moesch, the Coordinator of Disability Services at 973/290-4261 before taking the test.

What to take with You on the Test Day

On the day of the test, be sure to bring your student ID number (this is usually your social security number) and a calculator, should you choose to use one.

Testing Regulations

Textbooks, notebooks, dictionaries, or other papers of any kind are not allowed in the testing room. Further, anyone who gives or receives help during the test, or uses notes (except those for the writing portion) or books of any kind, will not be allowed to continue the test. Following the test administration, no test materials or notes may be removed from the room. The college may cancel any test score if there is reason to question its validity.

Confidentiality

Your test scores and the information you provide when taking the tests will be used by the college for counseling and placement purposes. The college and The College Board or Educational Testing Service may also use it for research purposes. Your test information will not be used for any other reason without your permission.

Description of the Tests

Reading Comprehension

This test is designed to measure how well you understand what you read. Some questions are of the sentence relationship type in which you must choose how two sentences are related. Other questions refer to reading passages of various lengths. Some passages are 75 words in length, while others are longer.

Sample Questions for Reading Comprehension

Question 1: (Comprehension Question)

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.

There are two types of pottery that I do. There is production pottery-mugs, tableware, the kinds of things that sell easily. These pay for my time to do the other work, which is more creative and satisfies my needs as an artist.

The author of the passage implies that:

- (A) artists have a tendency to waste valuable time
- (B) creativity and mass-production are incompatible
- (C) buyers of mugs never appreciate good art
- (D) pottery is not produced by creative artists

Question 2: (Sentence Relationships Question)

Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement about them. Read each pair of sentences and then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

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.
- (B) It states an effect.
- (C) It gives an example.
- (D) It analyzes the statement made in the first.

Elementary Algebra

There are three categories of questions in the Elementary Algebra Test. The first, operations with integers and rational numbers, includes computation with integers and negative rationals, the use of absolute values, and ordering. The second category is operations with algebraic expressions. This tests your skills with the evaluation of simple formulas and expressions, and the adding and subtracting of monomials and polynomials. Both of these categories include questions about multiplying and dividing monomials and polynomials, the evaluation of positive rational roots and exponents, simplifying algebraic fractions, and factoring. The third category tests skills in equation solving, inequalities, and word problems. These questions include solving systems of linear equations by factoring, solving verbal problems presented in algebraic context, geometric reasoning, translation of written phrases into algebraic expressions, and graphing.

Sample questions for Elementary Algebra

Question 1:

If a number is divided by 4 and then 3 is subtracted, the result is 0. What is the number?

- (A) 12
- (B) 4
- (C) 3
- (D) 2

Question 2:

$$16x - 8 =$$

- (A) $8x$
- (B) $8(2x-x)$
- (C) $8(2x-1)$
- (D) $8(2x-8)$

Question 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

Arithmetic

The Arithmetic test measures your skills in three primary categories. The first is operations with whole numbers and fractions. This includes addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and recognizing equivalent fractions and mixed numbers. The second category involves operations with decimals and percents. It includes addition, subtraction, multiplication, division as well as percent problems, decimal recognition, fraction and percent equivalences, and estimation problems. The third category involves applications and problem solving. Questions include rate, percent, and measurement problems, geometry problems, and distribution of a quantity into its fractional parts.

Sample Questions for Arithmetic

Question 1:

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

All of the following are ways to write 20 percent of N EXCEPT

(A) $0.20 N$

(B) $\frac{20}{100} N$

(C) $\frac{1}{5} N$

(D) $20N$

Question 2:

Which of the following is closest to $\sqrt{10.5}$?

(A) 3

(B) 4

(C) 5

(D) 8

Question 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 of the people is budgeted for $\frac{1}{2}$ of his time to the project and a second person for $\frac{1}{3}$ 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) $\frac{1}{8}$

Answers to the Sample Questions

Reading Comprehension

1. B

2. B

Elementary Algebra

1. A

2. C

3. A

Arithmetic

1. D

2. A

3. C