



ASSESSMENTS FOR SUCCESS

SAMPLE QUESTIONS - LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

1. WRITING ASSESSMENT

- 300-600 WORD ESSAY
- TIMED FOR 1 HOUR

2. READING SKILLS

- 20 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS
- UNTIMED

3. CRITICAL THINKING

- 26 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS
- TIMED FOR 45 MINUTES

****PLEASE NOTE: THE USE OF EXTERNAL AIDS
SUCH AS DICTIONARIES OR EXTERNAL WEBSITES
IS NOT PERMITTED****

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ASSESSMENTS FOR SUCCESS – LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

60 minutes - Essay

WritePlacer® ESL

Writing an essay gives you an opportunity to show how effectively you can develop and express your ideas in writing. On the next screen, a brief statement will be presented, followed by an assignment that relates to the statement. You should respond to the assignment by writing an essay in which you develop your point of view. You should support your position with appropriate reasoning and examples.

The position you take will not influence your score.

Your essay will be given a holistic score that represents how clearly and effectively you expressed your position. The following four characteristics of writing will be considered.

- **Word Use** – The extent to which you are able to use a wide range of words and phrases accurately.
- **Sentence Use** - The extent to which you are able to use a variety of sentence patterns with both independent and dependent clauses.
- **Grammar** - The extent to which you are able to express ideas using grammatically correct English.
- **Organization and Development** - The extent to which you are able to focus on the assigned topic and to develop ideas clearly.

WritePlacer® ESL Sample Topic

Passage

A woman recently received an inheritance of \$25 million from an unknown, distant relative. She cannot decide what to do: spend it, save it, or give most of it away.

Assignment

Prepare a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300–600 words on the topic below. You should use the time available to plan, write, review and edit what you have written. Read the assignment carefully before you begin to write.

If you suddenly received a large sum of money, what would you do with it?

ASSESSMENTS FOR SUCCESS – LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Untimed – 20 Questions – Multiple Choice

Reading Skills Sample Questions

ACCUPLACER ESL READING SKILLS TEST

The ESL Reading Skills test measures your ability to read English. Specifically, it assesses your comprehension of short passages. It contains brief passages of 50 words or less and moderate length passages of 50 to 90 words. Half of this test contains straightforward comprehension items (paraphrase, locating information, vocabulary on a phrase level, and pronoun reference). The other half assesses inference skills (main idea, fact versus opinion, cause/effect logic, identifying irrelevant information, author's point of view and applying the author's logic to another situation).

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Television has been introduced to almost every country in the world, reaching a large number of viewers on every continent. About 600 million people saw the first person walk on the moon, and a billion people watched the twentieth Olympic Games. Television has in many ways promoted understanding and cooperation among people. It does this by showing educational and cultural programs. From this passage, a reader can conclude that the author believes that
 - A. people spend too much time watching television
 - B. not every country needs to have television
 - C. television can unify people from around the world
 - D. television is as important as schools
2. Janet's parents bought her a new sports car as a birthday present. It was blue. Janet sold her 7-year-old blue pickup truck to a high school student. The truck could not go very fast, but the student was happy with it.
From the passage, which of these statements can the reader assume?
Janet prefers trucks to cars.
 - A. Janet prefers trucks to cars.
 - B. Janet likes the color blue.
 - C. Janet owns more than one vehicle.
 - D. Janet drives her car every day.
3. Some of Edward Weston's black-and-white photographs of American nature scenes are considered superb examples of visual art. Indeed, some of his photographs have commanded top prices at art galleries.
Which of the following best characterizes Weston's photographs?
 - A. They belong to famous collectors.
 - B. They have been sold in art galleries for large sums of money.
 - C. They introduced many Americans to visual art.
 - D. They contrast American cities with natural settings.

4. Speaking to a group of people can be a frightening experience. Some speakers cope by looking above the heads of the audience. Others try to imagine that they are talking to a friend. A few try picturing the audience in some nonthreatening way, such as in their pajamas.

The author of the passage assumes that speakers should

- A. feel comfortable when addressing an audience.
- B. scare the audience.
- C. encourage people to talk during the speech.
- D. speak only to familiar people.

5. People have different ways of learning. Some are better at making mental pictures of new ideas. Others are more comfortable with writing lists of things to memorize. Certain people can learn best when listening to music, while others need silence to concentrate.

Which of the following is the main idea of the passage?

- A. Mental pictures help many to learn.
- B. Some people prefer lists to making mental pictures.
- C. To learn well you need to be comfortable.
- D. Different individuals have different ways of acquiring information.

6. Before giving first aid to an accident victim, you should obtain his or her consent. Asking for consent takes a simple question. Say to the victim, "I know first aid, and I can help you until an ambulance arrives. Is that okay?"

"Asking for consent" means asking for

- A. permission to help the victim.
- B. thanks from the victim.
- C. help from onlookers.
- D. information about the victim's injuries.

7. Jane and Paul are busy for 15 hours a day, 5 days a week going to college and working in a restaurant. They go to sleep at 11 p.m. every day, but on Sunday they take part in dance lessons.

According to the passage, Jane and Paul spend most of their time

- A. at home.
- B. going to college and working.
- C. taking part in dance lessons.
- D. sleeping.

8. If you hold a piece of copper wire over the flame of a match, heat will be conducted by the copper wire to your fingers, and you will be forced to drop the wire. You will, however, still be able to hold the match because the match is a poor conductor of heat. Anyone, child or adult, can try this simple experiment.

Which of the following is implied in the passage above?

- A. Copper is a good conductor of heat.
- B. A match and copper conduct heat equally.
- C. A match is an excellent conductor of heat.
- D. Matches should be kept out of the reach of small children.

9. Many people own different pets. Dogs, cats, birds, and fish are common household pets. Others pets are considered to be exotic animals. These include snakes, lizards, and hedgehogs.
Snakes are
- A. uncommon pets.
 - B. likely to be found in a household with dogs.
 - C. found only in zoos.
 - D. not allowed in people's homes.
10. Cesar Chavez was an influential leader for farmworkers. He fought for their rights and better working conditions. Chavez led many strikes that angered farm owners. Eventually he succeeded in getting increased wages and improved living situations for farmworkers.
Chavez changed lives because he
- A. helped the farmers get more workers.
 - B. worked for the farmers.
 - C. helped work on the farms every day.
 - D. changed the conditions for the farmworkers.
11. When cartoonist Charles M. Schulz was a boy in elementary school, other boys teased him for being small and not very good at sports, and his art teacher told him he had no talent for drawing. He had few friends, and was too shy to talk to a red-haired girl he admired. Later in life, Schulz used his childhood experiences in his comic strip "Peanuts," using the strip's main character, the sad and lonely Charlie Brown, to represent himself as a little boy. "Peanuts" was unique at the time because it contained no adult characters. Readers fell in love with Charlie Brown, and "Peanuts" eventually became one of the most popular comic strips of all time. What is the main idea of the passage?
- A. "Peanuts" was the world's most widely read comic strip.
 - B. Charles M. Schulz was a very famous cartoonist.
 - C. Schulz turned the pain of his youth into fame as an adult.
 - D. The "Peanuts" comic strip featured children as its only characters.
12. Money has existed for thousands of years in nearly every culture as a means of exchange. However, today, the use of cash is becoming less and less common in modern societies all over the world. Every year, a higher percentage of purchases is made online, and even in stores customers are now using credit cards more often than cash. Many people today do all of their banking on the Internet rather than going to the bank in person.
The author of the passage probably assumes that
- A. cash will become virtually obsolete in the near future
 - B. using cash will become popular again
 - C. paying with credit cards all the time is dangerous
 - D. societies that do business online will prosper
13. Insomnia - the inability to fall asleep or to stay asleep - is a condition that plagues many people at one time or another in their lives. It can be uncomfortable, but is usually not harmful, and most people who believe they have been awake all night have actually slept more than they think. While some people rely on prescription medication to help them sleep, insomnia can be controlled by changing behavior. Insomnia is often caused by stress or anxiety, but it can also be made worse by eating too heavily too late; consuming a lot of caffeine; or watching television, using computers or exercising right before bedtime. If you can't sleep, the best thing to do is to get out of bed and do something calming for a while, such as read, until you feel sleepy. Some people find that herbal tea such as chamomile helps them feel drowsy.
The author believes that people can best combat insomnia by
- A. trying to sleep
 - B. taking medication
 - C. accepting their condition
 - D. changing their habits

14. Before giving first aid to an accident victim, you should obtain his or her consent. Asking for consent takes a simple question. Say to the victim, “I know first aid, and I can help until an ambulance arrives. Is that okay?”

According to the passage, it is wrong to use first aid on an accident victim without medical

- A. training
- B. attempt to help an accident victim without permission
- C. help a victim before an ambulance arrives
- D. call for an ambulance instead of helping the victim

15. Dr. Ellen Ochoa is an inventor and is also the first female Hispanic astronaut. Her inventions include technology to help robots to inspect equipment in space to maintain safety and quality control on spacecraft. Before retiring, she logged more than 1,000 hours in space across several space missions.

Dr. Ochoa is

- A. the first Hispanic person to travel into space
- B. the first inventor to travel into space
- C. the first woman to travel into space
- D. the first Hispanic woman to travel into space

16. Dogs and cats make very different types of pets. Before deciding whether to buy or adopt a dog or a cat, prospective owners need to carefully consider their own lifestyles and personalities. Dogs may make more affectionate companions, but they require more care and attention. They must be taken out several times a day and should not be left alone for more than a few hours. Larger dogs require significant exercise to remain fit and healthy. Cats are usually more independent in nature and interact less with their owners. Also, a cat can be left on its own all day, or even for several days, as long as it has food and clean water to drink.

From this passage a reader can conclude that

- A. owning a cat requires less work than owning a dog
- B. people who travel a lot should not own a cat
- C. people who like to play with their pets should own a cat
- D. owning a cat is more responsibility than owning a dog

17. People’s moods are largely a matter of focus. It is a natural tendency of many people to focus on what is wrong in their lives, or on the day-to-day events that make them angry or irritated. However, anyone can change this by directing the mind. When feeling down or upset, a person can change his or her state of mind by recalling happy memories, by paying attention to the things for which he or she is grateful, or by directing the attention to something uplifting or beautiful, such as artwork, nature or music. By directing the mind in this way, a person can transform his or her mood in an instant, even if none of the outward circumstances have changed.

Which of the following is implied by the passage above?

- A. People’s moods are determined by the conditions around them.
- B. People can take responsibility for controlling their own moods.
- C. A person’s mood depends on what happens to him or her that day.
- D. People are usually in a good mood unless something happens to change it.

HElghten™ Critical Thinking

Sample Items

Questions 1 - 2 are based on the material below.

1. Records indicate that William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, and buried April 25, 1616, in Stratford-upon-Avon, England.
2. There is no evidence that William Shakespeare attended school, but had he done so, it would have been the local grammar school, and he would have left by age 14.
3. Documents show that by the early 1590s William Shakespeare was a managing partner of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, an acting company in London that built the Globe Theatre.
4. A total of 37 plays list Shakespeare as the author, including 13 that are set in Italy and several that make references to London politics.
5. There is no evidence that Shakespeare traveled outside of England.
6. In writings by others during Shakespeare's lifetime, Shakespeare was often referred to as a writer.
7. There is no manuscript of any play in William Shakespeare's own handwriting; only print versions of his plays exist.
8. No one questioned Shakespeare's authorship of the plays attributed to him during his lifetime or for centuries after his death.
9. Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) was a brilliant poet and dramatist, educated at Cambridge University, who pioneered blank verse (unrhymed lines, almost always in the pattern of stressed syllables called "iambic pentameter") for dramatic plays.
10. Blank verse praised for its beauty appears frequently in the works attributed to Shakespeare.
11. Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550–1604), whose aristocratic crest of arms depicted a lion shaking a spear, was trained in law, was a court poet, and visited Italy extensively.

Argument 1: (an abstract of an academic paper in a literary journal)

Abstract: "William Shakespeare of Stratford Could Not Have Written the So-called Shakespearean Plays"

We all know that there was a real person named William Shakespeare, who was born in Stratford in 1564, the son of a middle-class glove-maker, and who died in 1616. He was also a well-known actor and managing partner of an acting company in London in the 1590s. Beyond that, there is not a shred of evidence linking him to the 37 plays ascribed to him. How could an uneducated actor from Stratford have such intimate knowledge of court politics, legal matters, royalty, and Italy (the setting of 13 plays including *Othello*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*)? Clearly, the plays reflect a sophisticated intellect, a familiarity with London politics, and a deep understanding of Latin and Greek literature—all improbable for a mere actor who grew up in Stratford and who had at best a grammar-school education. Either Edward de Vere (who is known to have visited Italy and was a court favorite) or Christopher Marlowe (who was college educated and the pioneer of blank verse for dramatic plays) was the real author of these brilliant and nuanced plays.

Argument 2: The argument below is a rebuttal in the form of a letter to the editor, published in a subsequent issue of the journal that published Argument 1 above.

It is ludicrous to question Shakespeare's authorship of the plays. The argument presented in this journal smacks of elitism. Other arguments for that position rely on conspiracy theory and convoluted logic. There is a historical record of such a man who was connected to London theater and whose name was given as the author of the plays. No one questioned Shakespeare's authorship until hundreds of years after his death. Those who put forward names of the "real" author—over 60 such names have been suggested—have their own agendas, including the elitism already mentioned, or a preference for a particular alternative author. Circumstantial evidence or outrageous ideas such as that Marlowe faked his own death in 1593 and authored some of the plays afterward, or that the real author, for whatever reasons, wanted to keep his own identity hidden, are flimsy and do not hold up under serious scrutiny.

1. Given the information in the facts list, someone wishing to establish that Marlowe is most likely the author of the plays attributed to Shakespeare would be aided in that task if which of the following were found and determined to be authentic? Select all that apply.
 - ☐ 1. Comparisons of Marlowe's plays with Shakespeare's plays that show strong linguistic parallels and similar range of vocabulary
 - ☐ 2. Journal entries in Marlowe's handwriting that note plot elements of a Shakespearean play prior to its being performed
 - ☐ 3. Historical events that continue into the 1600s and parallel key plot elements in the plays
2. From the following facts excerpted from the list, select the two that together most help to support a claim central to Argument 1.
 - ☐ 2. There is no evidence that William Shakespeare attended school, but had he done so, it would have been the local grammar school, and he would have left by age 14.
 - ☐ 4. A total of 37 plays list Shakespeare as the author, including 13 that are set in Italy and several that make references to London politics.
 - ☐ 5. There is no evidence that Shakespeare traveled outside of England.
 - ☐ 10. There is no manuscript of any play in William Shakespeare's own handwriting; only print versions of his plays exist.
 - ☐ 12. Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) was a brilliant poet and dramatist, educated at Cambridge University, who pioneered blank verse (unrhymed lines, almost always in the pattern of stressed syllables called “iambic pentameter”) for dramatic plays.

3. The following is an exchange between two contributors to an online literary forum.

Kate: Ursula Seti's undated poem "Eucalyptus," which compares the eucalyptus tree's periodic shedding of its bark to various momentous events in her own life, could not have been written before 1960. Before that date, Seti had never left her native Alaska, where it is far too cold for most species of eucalyptus trees to grow. In 1960, however, she visited Australia, where eucalyptus trees are very common, so the poem must have been written during or after that visit.

Miriam: But Seti could certainly have known that eucalyptus trees periodically shed their bark without having personally observed that process, so she could have written the poem at any time during her career, which began well before 1960.

Which of the following most accurately characterizes Miriam's response to Kate?

- (A) It shows that Kate's argument assumes the very point that it attempts to demonstrate.
- (B) It draws an opposing conclusion from the evidence cited in Kate's argument.
- (C) It refutes Kate's argument by rejecting one of its unstated assumptions.
- (D) It calls into question one of the statements Kate makes to support her conclusion.

4. In Longport, a survey of residents showed that more of them had taken continuing education classes in literature than in the arts over the last twelve months. If so, some residents must have taken multiple arts classes, because an examination of enrollment figures showed that overall enrollment in continuing education arts classes was higher than overall enrollment in continuing education literature classes.

The reasoning in the passage depends on assuming which of the following?

- (A) There was no substantial enrollment in arts classes by people who were not residents of Longport.
- (B) There were no more literature classes than arts classes.
- (C) Few, if any, residents took both an arts class and a literature class in the last twelve months.
- (D) Most Longport residents took at least one arts class in the last twelve months.

Questions 5 - 6 are based on the information below.

In a benefit concert, seven solo performers—Harris, Jones, McIntyre, Nelson, Strapp, Trevino, and Williams—will each sing once only and one after another. The order in which the performers will sing is governed by the following conditions:

Harris must sing at some time before McIntyre sings.

Strapp must sing at some time before Jones sings.

Trevino must sing either immediately before or immediately after Nelson sings.

Williams must sing third.

5. If McIntyre is to sing immediately before Strapp sings, Trevino can sing

- (A) second
- (B) fourth
- (C) sixth
- (D) seventh

6. If McIntyre is to sing fourth, which of the following must be true?

- (A) Harris sings at some time before Strapp sings.
- (B) Jones sings at some time before Trevino sings.
- (C) Nelson sings at some time before McIntyre sings.
- (D) Strapp sings at some time before Williams sings.

Keys

- 1) 1, 2
- 2) 4, 5
- 3) C
- 4) A
- 5) A
- 6) D