

Accuplacer Reading Placement Test

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Please look through this webpage for detailed information concerning effective college reading and taking the reading placement exam. There are many links and resources here designed to prepare students for the Reading Placement Test. It is highly recommended that students review this material and seek assistance to ensure that they are placed into the appropriate class.

Information about scheduling your test is at the bottom of this webpage.

Why Do I Have to Take a Reading Placement Test?

Reading is a big part of the college experience. Most professors use books in their classrooms and expect students to learn from them as part of the learning process. CSN has implemented mandatory reading placement testing as a means to ensure all students are prepared for the reading demands of their academic program. If you place above the reading classes, then you can feel confident that you will be able to read and learn from your college level material with success. If you place into one of the reading classes, you can feel confident that the reading instructors will equip you with the reading and study strategies you will need to be successful in your college courses.

About the Accuplacer Reading Placement Test

The Accuplacer reading comprehension test measures how well the student understands what he/she reads.

- Some questions are of the sentence relationship type in which one must determine how two sentences are related.
- Other questions assess the ability to distinguish between main and secondary points and making simple deductions from a series of facts.
- Specific skills to be tested are in the areas of main ideas, supporting details, words in context, author's purpose and tone, relationships within and between sentences, fact and opinion, inferences, and conclusions.
- There are 20 reading comprehension questions on the Accuplacer test.

To learn more about the Accuplacer test and view sample questions please visit the link below.

<http://Accuplacer.collegeboard.org/students>

What Does My Score Mean?

CSN has created appropriate classes for students who score below 86.

The chart below tells you the Accuplacer score range on the left and the Grade Level Equivalent Reading Level on the Right.

Accuplacer Reading Test Score	Grade Level Equivalency
1-18	3
19-24	4
25-29	5
30-39	6
40-49	7
50-54	8
55-59	9
60-73	10
74-82	11
83-87	12
88-97	13
98-107	14
108-117	15

A score below 50 points: This is an indication that you will experience extreme difficulty reading college level material. CSN can help you strengthen your reading skills before you retake the Accuplacer Reading Placement test. CSN options are listed below.

- **READ 99:** This is a one-unit reading intervention course.
- **Reading Center:** A Reading Assistant will work through an individualized learning plan with you, and help you prepare to retake the Accuplacer test.
- **ESL Placement Testing:** If English is not your first language, you may be interested in taking an ESL placement test.
- **Adult Basic Education:** Please see your academic counselor for more information.

A score between 50 and 70 points: This is an indication that you will experience substantial difficulty reading college level material. CSN can help you strengthen your reading skills. CSN options are listed below.

- **Reading 95:** This 3-unit course will improve fundamental reading skills, including word-attack skills, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, fluency, and interpretation.
- **Reading 99:** This is a one-unit reading intervention course.
- **CSN Reading Center:** A Reading Assistant will work through an individualized learning plan with you, and help you prepare to retake the Accuplacer test.

A score between 71 and 85 points: This is an indication that you will experience moderate difficulty reading college level material. CSN can help you strengthen your reading skills before you retake the Accuplacer Reading Placement test. CSN options are listed below.

- **Reading 130:** In this 3-unit course, students will learn the unique skills required to read textbooks and related materials in different subject areas. Students will learn how to adapt and apply academic reading strategies to suit distinct characteristics of texts in academic disciplines.
- **Reading 99:** This is a one-unit reading intervention course.
- **CSN Reading Center:** A Reading Assistant will work through an individualized learning plan with you, and help you prepare to retake the Accuplacer test.

A score above 85 points: This is an indication that you may be prepared to read college level material. No reading courses are recommended.

The College of Southern Nevada offers various resources at every campus to help you become prepared for this test.

The Reading Center

<https://www.csn.edu/writing-centers>

The Reading Centers are located in the Writing Centers at the West Charleston, Cheyenne, and Henderson campuses. A specially trained Reading Assistant is available to provide CSN students with free and unlimited support. Students can work on practice Accuplacer tests with the reading assistant. Students can also work through an individually prepared reading improvement plan and get training in using active reading strategies.

The Library

<http://libguides.csn.edu/placement/reading>

The library has digital and printed resources to help you prepare for the reading placement test. Please follow this link to see the many resources available.

Online Student Success Workshops

All CSN students have access to the Student Lingo Online Student Success Workshops. These workshops can be accessed through your MYCSN page.

- [Reading Comprehension Strategies](#)

Sample Reading Test from Passaic County Community College

Click on the link below and take this sample reading test to get an idea of what type of passages you can expect when you come in for your test.

<http://accuprep.pccc.edu/reading.html>

More Accuplacer Sample Reading Tests

CSN recommends that students spend several hours preparing to take the Reading Placement Test. More sample reading tests are provided below.

https://www.varsitytutors.com/Accuplacer_reading_comprehension-practice-tests

Videos about taking the Accuplacer Reading Comprehension Test

The following videos are available to help you understand the different types of questions that you will encounter as you take the Reading Placement Test.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bSYwmug0ks> (4 minutes) **Accuplacer Reading Comprehension; Question Forms**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvqBKaPDMj4&list=PLA77D9B035ED158C0&index=33> (3 minutes) **Accuplacer Reading Comprehension; secondary and supporting ideas.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyHIEUhPaNQ&list=PLA77D9B035ED158C0&index=31> (3 minutes) **Accuplacer Reading Comprehension; applications**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWA9scP2ZZ8&list=PLA77D9B035ED158C0&index=34> (3 minutes) **Accuplacer Reading Comprehension; identifying main ideas**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6K_Ox2oTqww&list=PLA77D9B035ED158C0&index=32 (3 minutes) **Accuplacer Reading Comprehension; inferences**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvv8O4YdMaY> (4 minutes) **Accuplacer Reading Comprehension Test - Understanding Fact or Opinion**

Videos about Improving Reading Comprehension

These videos will give you a good idea of what is expected with college-level reading.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ia5Q7pCXnIU> (38 minutes) **How to Improve Your Reading Comprehension**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OggLyAfUsZE> (11 minutes) **Reading Skills that Work - for Tests and In-Class**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=919-G_PKm60&list=PLV7pH0sATf6g_WZfCHKVnfk_tBu0ZLQuG

Accuplacer Reading Review: This link (above) has several short videos about varied reading topics and strategies; **Be an Active Reader, Bias and Stereotype, Circular Reasoning, Drawing Conclusions from Graphic Organizers, Fact or Opinion, False Analogy, False Dichotomy, Historical Context, Inductive and Deductive Reasoning, Overgeneralization, Plotline, Reading Comprehension Tips, Textual Evidence for Prediction, Textual Support for Interpretation, and Topics and Main Ideas.**



Some Helpful Hints about Taking the Test

This is not a time to “speed read”. Doing well on this test could save you hundreds; potentially thousands of dollars in tuition fees, book orders, and lost income.

- When you sit down to take this test, enjoy the reading; visualize the passage and try to relate what you read to your life and what you already know about the information.
- Read the first sentence, or the title of a passage, and think for 5 seconds about the topic before you start to read.
- Try first to determine the **topic** of the passage.
- Look very carefully at the **supporting details** being provided.
- Think about how the supporting details relate to the **main idea**.
- Don't be afraid to reread the passage. The test is not timed.
- Sometimes it is helpful to read the questions first.
- Look for transition words to help focus on key details and understand the main idea.

Clear your mind before you take the test.

Eliminate Internal Distractions

It is extremely important that you come to the test with a clear mind that can focus on the reading test. Make sure you get plenty of rest, eat well, and feel relatively stress free. If for instance, something stressful happens on the day you are to take the test, or you are stressed out or ill, it would be better to reschedule than to take the test in a frantic state of mind.

Internal distractions are the concerns that come into your mind while you are trying to read. These may be chores, memories, or important items to cross off your to-do list. It is important that you are clear from these thoughts during the test. To keep your mind off of

these distractions, have a list prepared of all the things that you need to do or to think about and keep it for after the test.

It is equally important that when you do come in for your test that you feel confident. Have a positive attitude and remember you are a beginning college student who has already accomplished many great things in life. You are making great decisions and your life is only going to get better. Don't let negative self-talk interfere with your ability to concentrate and comprehend the reading passages.

Perhaps most importantly, you must reduce your anxiety. Nervous tension will be distracting and may interfere with your ability to concentrate. Some people like to exercise or meditate to gain control of anxiety. It will be good for you to arrive a little early and do some deep breathing and visualization exercises before you begin the test.

Preparing for the test will also give you a sense of ease. Spend a few days practicing taking reading tests and reviewing important reading strategies. This will help you feel more confident and will help provide the most accurate reading placement score.

A Review of Some Key Reading Concepts

Topic

The topic of the passage is going to be a single word or idea. It is probably the word you will see repeated throughout the passage. It is the one concept that the whole passage is basically about...but it is not a complete sentence.

Main Idea

The main idea of the passage is the point that the author is trying to make about the topic. This is a complete sentence about the topic. Typically, one might see the main idea stated directly in the passage. Often this is the first or second sentence of the paragraph...but not always. Sometimes, it is the last sentence. However, the stated main idea may be found anywhere in the passage. The main idea is supported by all the details in the passage.

Sometimes, the passage has an *unstated main idea*. In cases such as these, you will need to think carefully about all the supporting details and how they are connected and what they tell you about the topic.

Regardless of whether the main idea is stated or unstated, it can be identified by answering the following question; What is the author trying to tell me about the topic?

Supporting Details

Supporting details are the bits of evidence that support the main idea. Most of the sentences in the passage will be details. It is important to distinguish between major details and minor details. Major details will directly support the main idea, whereas minor details will give evidence to the major details.

Words in Context

Being able to determine a word's meaning based on context is going to require you to understand that words often have several meanings. A single word can function as a noun, adjective, verb, adverb, etc. The word "light," for instance, can mean *not heavy*, or *a source of illumination*, and have 86 other meanings as well. You will have to understand the context that the word is used in in order to identify the meaning of the word. Often context is a good way to determine the meaning of an unknown word as well. It is by understanding how the word is used and through recognizing the clues in the text that a reader might understand the meaning of an unknown word.

There are several types of context clues;

Definition: Often, a new word will be introduced with its definition. Typically the new word is introduced and followed by a comma and the definition of the word. Often this word will be in italics or bold.

Comparison: When a concept is difficult to understand, the author will try to make comparisons to concepts that you might already understand. Think about the concept you know about, and how it relates to the passage.

Contrast: Sometimes a contrast is made to help you infer the meaning of an unknown word. By contrasting a word with a word you might know, the author is trying to help you understand how the new word is different from the word you already know.

Elaborating Details: An unknown word may not be defined but the author may give descriptive details to demonstrate the meaning of the word. It is through the details that the reader can come to understand the unknown word.

Examples: Another way the author might help you to uncover the meaning of unknown words is to provide examples with which you might be familiar. Find the connection among the examples to determine the meaning.

Antonyms: Sometimes an antonym, or word that means the opposite of the word you are trying to understand, can be found in the text. Antonym clues are often signaled with transition words and phrases such as *however*, *but*, *yet*, *in contrast*, or *on the other hand*.

Author's Purpose and Tone

There are three basic purposes that an author might have when writing something; which are to inform, to entertain, or to persuade. It is important to determine what this purpose is because it will help you figure out the main idea and facilitate the process of critical thinking. It is important to note that often a writer may have more than one purpose in mind.

To Inform: The author is trying to give you information. Perhaps something is being explained or defined. Typically passages written solely to inform are written in a very dry, professional, matter-of fact tone.

To Persuade: The author is trying to get you to change the way you think about something. Often, the author is telling you what should be done and why. Passages written to persuade typically use manipulation tactics involving guilt, shock, or the promise of pleasure.

To Entertain: The author is simply trying to provide some escape from the world. Often passages written to entertain are humorous and contain some basic storyline elements such as character, plot, and setting. The use of figurative language is often more prevalent in entertainment passages.

Facts and Opinions

It is important to understand the difference between a fact and opinion. Sometime a fact is combined with an opinion. A skilled reader is able to separate the fact from the opinion. It is also important to note that an author who is trying to persuade you might provide only facts that manipulate you and give a biased representation of the concept. It is equally important to note that some facts are wrong, and just because the author says, "It is a fact that..." doesn't mean what follows is a fact.

Fact: A fact is something that can be proven. It is also proven by common knowledge. A fact is usually a representation of data. There are absolutely no judgment words involved with facts. Facts can be verified by witnesses or documentation.

Opinion: An opinion is an expression of judgment and is a value statement. Skilled readers will realize that just because they might agree with the opinion, it is still an opinion. If anybody – anywhere in the world – can disagree with a statement, then it is an opinion. Predictions are always opinions. Anytime a passage is stating that something should be done, it is an opinion. Some subtle opinion words include *easy, clean, important, valuable, proper*, etc. More obvious opinion words are *good, bad, better, best, beautiful, disastrous, worthy, expensive*, etc.

Informed Opinion: An expert in a particular area may give an opinion that non-experts can appreciate; however, it is still an opinion.

Inferences

Authors rely heavily on a reader's ability to make inferences. Very often, the author will not explicitly state some idea. Instead, the author is going to rely on your experiences in the culture and as a citizen of humanity in order for you to understand much of what is being communicated. The author will provide parts of the story, and will expect you to fill in the gaps with what you (should) already know about the subject. To make successful inferences, try to imagine being in the story.

Conclusions

Conclusions are inferences that identify an unstated understanding that is implicit in a passage. To make conclusions you must make logical deductions from both the stated and unstated ideas that are present in the passage. You must use your own experience to help understand motives and actions in a passage. You must find clues in the details and from your own experiences that reveal why something happened, or perhaps what must have happened prior to this point in the story, or perhaps what will happen in the story's unwritten future.

Transition Words:

Authors use transition words to connect ideas or signal a change in the direction of thought. Transition words are often used in identifying important major supporting details and also help to support the main idea. There are several types of transition words.

Addition: When an author is trying to connect more and more details that support the main idea, she might use addition signal words; *in addition, moreover, furthermore, and, also, another, etc.*

Examples: An author is trying to give examples using signal words such as *for example, for instance, to illustrate, such as, including, etc.*

Time or Sequence: When an author is trying to convey times or sequences, she might use transition words such as *first, second, finally, last, afterward, after, during, while, before, then previously, until, now, next, etc.*

Comparison: An author might be trying to show you how something compares to something else, using words such as *similarly, likewise, in the same manner, like, as, just as, as well, etc.*

Contrast: An author might be trying to show you how one thing is different from another, using words like *however, but, nevertheless, whereas, on the contrary, conversely, yet, in contrast, even though, on the other hand, although, instead, etc.*

Cause and Effect: An author might be trying to show how something caused something else to happen, or that one thing is the result of some other action. There may be several causes leading to a result, or perhaps several results stemming from a particular cause. To signal these relationships, the author might use words such as *thus, consequently, therefore, as a result, accordingly, because, so, hence, etc.*

Connotation:

Connotation refers to the emotions and feelings surrounding a word. An author will use just the right word to convey a particular mood, tone, or emotion in their writing. Take the words *skinny* and *slender*. *Slender* has a more positive connotation and therefore would be used to convey a more positive emotion. Paying attention to connotation will help the reader pick up on an author's point of view and tone.

To Schedule Your Test: Tests are offered on a walk-in basis through the new CoyoteQ along with limited call-in appointments from 8am to 10am.

CSN Testing Centers and Information

Testing Center Website: <https://www.csn.edu/testing>

- CSN does not charge the students to take the Accuplacer tests.
- The Tests must be taken in person at one of the CSN Testing Centers.
- At the present time, in order to take the test again, you must wait four months. Effective July 1, 2014, retesting is available after two weeks; however a student may not take a test more than two times in a six month period.
- The Reading Placement test is untimed, but the average time taken is approximately one hour.
- Once started, the test must be completed.

- **You must NOT press the tab key during the test.** Pressing the tab key will prematurely end your exam. Even if this happens, your unfinished test will be counted as an official submission.
- 95% of students will receive their score immediately. Your score and the placement information will be printed out immediately after the test. If your test requires a human reader, you will not receive immediate results; instead you must wait up to 72 hours for your score. In this case, you can find your score by logging in at MyCSN.
- Plan to arrive five minutes early for your appointment. Students who arrive 15 minutes late will lose their appointment time and need to reschedule.

Required Materials:

- Picture ID (Identification)
- NSHE # - Online Admissions form
- Pen or Pencil (scratch paper will be provided and collected)

SAT and/or ACT scores can be used to place into classes if:

- Less than two (2) years old
- Originals are presented (no copies)
- SAT Critical Reading at least 440 / ACT Writing at least 18 (For English 101)

Prohibited Items:

- Children or Infants
- Food or Drinks
- Cell phones, pagers, or headphones
- Any electronics (iPads, iPods, or other hand held devices)