Saddleback College
English Composition and Reading Exam Sample Question

Your English composition placement will be based upon a combination of your CTEP Comprehension, Sentence Structure and Grammar, and Syntax Skills test scores. Reading placement is solely based upon the Reading Comprehension exam.

- Reading Comprehension exam contains seven reading passages and a total of 35 questions, each with four multiple choice answers. The time limit for this test is 30 minutes.
- Sentence Structure and Grammar exam consists of 3 sections, each having 10 questions with four multiple choice answers. The time limit for this test is 20 minutes.
- Sentence and Syntax Skills exam consists of 2 reading passages with a total of 40 words that have been left out. You will select from four multiple choice answers on each question. The time limit for this test is 15 minutes.

READING COMPREHENSION TEST
(30 minutes, 35 questions)

Question 1:

The study of history provides many benefits. First, we learn from the past. We may repeat mistakes, but, at least, we have the opportunity to avoid them. Second, history teaches us what questions to ask about the present. Contrary to some people's view, the study of history is not the memorization of names, dates, and places. It is the thoughtful examination of the forces that have shaped the courses of human life. We can examine events from the past and then draw inferences about current events. History teaches us about likely outcomes.

Another benefit of the study of history is the broad range of human experience that is covered. War and peace are certainly covered as are national and international affairs.
However, matters of culture (art, literature, and music) are also included in historical study. Human nature is an important part of history: emotions like passion, greed, and insecurity have influenced the shaping of world affairs. Anyone who thinks that the study of history is boring has not really studied history.

1. What is the main idea of this passage?
   A. Studying history helps us to live in today's world.
   B. Studying history is not just memorization.
   C. The role of education is to help students deal with real life.
   D. Students should study both national and international history.
2. In the first paragraph, inferences means
   A. graphs
   B. articles
   C. conclusions
   D. circumferences
3. Which method of teaching history would the author of this passage support?
   A. Applying historical events to modern society.
   B. Using flash cards to remember specific facts.
   C. Weekly quizzes on dates and events.
   D. Student competitions for most books memorized.

Q1: 1=A, 2=C, 3=A Q2: 1=D, 2=A, 3=B, 4=C

READING COMPREHENSION TEST
(30 minutes, 35 questions) Continued

Question 2:

Easter Island is without doubt the enigma of Polynesia. On the one hand it has the most magnificent stone monuments and statues in the whole of Oceania; but on the other hand, its prehistoric culture was utterly destroyed before outsiders had any chance to make reliable records. Records of course there are, but because they are so unreliable and contradictory they have allowed Easter Island to be the subject of unprecedented batterings by the lunatic fringe, and to have its name linked with such garbled trivia as sunken continents and astronauts. Fortunately, however, not all is at the level of the "popular" press, and some of the research carried out on the island since 1914 has been of excellent standard, particularly that by the Franco-Belgian expedition in 1934-35 and by the Norwegian team under Thor Heyerdahl in 1955-56.

1. What is the main point of this passage?
   A. Research reveals nothing of significance about Easter Island.
   B. Easter Island may have been occupied by astronauts.
   C. The Franco-Belgian and Heyerdahl expeditions are providing some answers about Easter Island.
   D. The monuments and statues on Easter Island are not fully understood because the island's prehistoric culture has been destroyed.
2. From the way it is used in line 1, "enigma"' most likely means?
   A. puzzle
   B. example
   C. source
   D. frustration
3. The use of the phrase "battering by the lunatic fringe" in line 4 serves to emphasize?
   A. That senseless wars have been fought over Easter Island
   B. That many people have been stubbornly irrational in discussing Easter Island
   C. That Easter Island is probably imaginary
   D. That Easter Island has been the subject of much science fiction
4. Why was Thor Heyerdahl referred to?
   A. He is the most recent researcher.
   B. He discovered records from the prehistoric culture of Easter Island.
   C. He is an example of more valid and productive research than has usually been conducted on Easter Island.
   D. He represents a kind of research which the press does not report.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE & GRAMMAR TEST
(20 minutes, 30 questions)

Section 1

In this section, each question contains 4 sentences. Choose the best structured sentence.

Question 1:

A. One of the musicians who is Eric has been looking for a practice room.
B. Eric, one of the musicians, are looking for a practice room.
C. Eric who is one of the musicians who are looking for a practice room.
D. Eric, one of the musicians, is looking for a practice room.

Question 2:

A. California having big, old trees according to the portly ranger.
B. The ranger said that the oldest and largest trees are in California.
C. The ranger say that the oldest and largest trees are in California.
D. The ranger say that the oldest and largest trees is California.

Section 2

In this section, you are given a sentence which has words left out. Complete the sentence by choosing the correct answer from the choices given.

Question 1:

The workers left early and _____ home.

A. gone
B. went
C. have dinner
D. drives

Question 2:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, _____ people can change the world.

A. tiny
B. disinterested
C. committed
D. pride

Section 3

In this section, you are first given two sentences. Then you are given four choices of how these two sentences can be combined.

Question 1:

• The traffic was heavy.
• I was late to work.

A. I was late to work because the traffic was heavy.
B. I was late to work, so the traffic was heavy.
C. The traffic was heavy, I was late to work.
D. The traffic was heavy: and then I was late to work.

Question 2:

• The writer's fine pen ran out of ink.
• She finished writing the story with a short, dull pencil.

A. She finished writing the story with a short, dull pencil however her fine pen ran out of ink.
B. The writer's fine pen ran out of ink although she finished writing the story with a short, dull pencil.
C. The writer's fine pen ran out of ink while she was writing with a short, dull pencil.
D. The writer's fine pen ran out of ink while writing a story but she finished writing with a short, dull pencil.

Sec 1: Q1=D, Q2=B|Sec 2: Q1=B, Q2=C|Sec 3: Q1=A, Q2=D

SENTENCE & SYNTAX SKILLS
(15 minutes, 40 questions)

Words have been left out of reading passages. Choose the answer that will correctly fill in the blank. When you finish, you should have a logical and grammatical passage. It may be useful to try to read the passage through to check your answers.
Don't get stuck; if one blank is difficult to fill in, go on to the next one.

Question 1:

It used to be common for dentists to have to remove teeth. However, with modern technology, (1)_____ visits to the dentist's office and good (2)_____ hygiene at home, most people can keep (3)_____ teeth for their entire lives.

1.
A. the
B. infrequent
C. regular
D. often

2.
A. dental
B. person
C. cleaning
D. tooth

3.
A. their
B. his
C. front
D. cleaned

Question 2:

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "It means just what I (1)_____it to mean – neither more nor less.
"The question is," said Alice, "(2)_____ you can make words mean different things."
"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "(3)_____ is to be master -- that's all."

1.
A. didn't
B. sentence
C. choose
D. speak

2.
A. why
B. however
C. although
D. whether

3.
A. whose
B. which
C. those
D. if

Q1: 1=C, 2=A, 3=A | Q2: 1=C, 2=D, 3=B