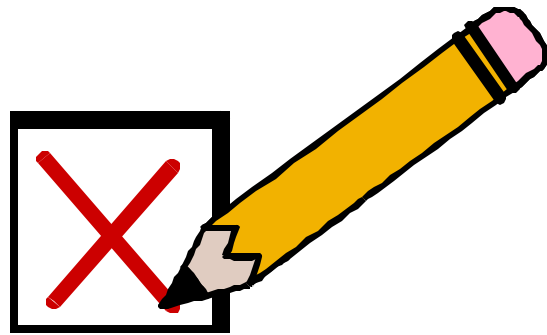# STUDENT GUIDE
TO THE
COLLEGE PLACEMENT TEST (CPT)

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(QUESTIONS PROVIDED BY SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE)

THE PURPOSE OF THE TESTS

The Florida College Entry-Level Placement Tests (CPT) were developed by The College Board, with help from committees of college professors, to provide information about your level of skill accomplishment in reading, writing, and mathematics. The tests help to determine the reading, English, and mathematics courses most appropriate for you at this time.

THE TYPE OF TESTS

Eight paper-and-pencil versions, two computerized versions and an online version are available in the Florida College Entry-Level Placement Tests program. Three tests are included in a core battery of tests and are required of entering students. The three required tests are Reading Comprehension, Sentence Skills, and Elementary Algebra. Each exam is offered in a multiple-choice question format. The Reading Comprehension test measures your understanding of what you read. The Sentence Skills test measures your understanding of how sentences are put together and what makes a sentence complete. The Elementary Algebra test measures your understanding of algebra concepts.

There are five additional multiple-choice tests that may be administered at the option of the college. These are Arithmetic Skills, College-Level Mathematics and three Levels of English Proficiency tests (Reading Skills, Sentence Meaning and Language Use).

TEST ADMINISTRATION

The three required tests are provided in paper-and-pencil format, usually administered at the area high schools in this format, two times per year. The three required tests are also provided by computer on both of PCC's campuses in the Teaching, Learning, Computing Centers (TLCC) and are available Monday through Saturday. Testing may begin during the following hours: Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM until 7:00 PM, Friday from 8:00 AM until 2:00 PM and Saturday mornings from 9:00 AM until 11:00 AM. Hours are subject to change without notice. An admission ticket from the Registrar's office and a picture ID are required to be admitted to the testing center.

TEST TIME

The paper and pencil CPT is a two-hour exam when administered in the high school setting. The computerized exams administered in the TLCCs are untimed exams. It takes approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours for most students to complete the exam. The exam is important so please allot enough time for the exam to complete it without feeling rushed.

SCORE REPORTING

The paper and pencil exam results are mailed in approximately two weeks to the student's address provided on the answer sheet. Included with the test results is an interpretation guide for understanding the test results meaning. The exam results are provided in a scaled score format which is used for interpretation and course placement. The scaled score is an estimate of how many questions you could expect to answer correctly if you took a test comprised of 120 question rather than the 20 questions you had in each subtest.

The computerized exam results are printed in the TLCC and given to the student before the student leaves the testing center. The student is encouraged to speak with an academic advisor regarding the test results and placement into appropriate courses. The results are reported in a scaled score format called **Total Right Score**. Also reported is a Percentile Rank. The **Total Right Score** is an estimate of how many questions you could expect to answer correctly if you took a test comprised of 120 question rather than the 20 questions you had in each subtest. The **Percentile Rank** compares your score with the scores of typical students entering college who completed tests composed of similar questions. For example, a percentile rank of 70 means that your score is higher than the score of 70 percent of students in the comparison groups.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING THE TESTS

The test administrator will provide instructions for completing the background information and how to respond to the questions. The computerized version of the exam provides a tutorial on how to use the keyboard to respond to the questions, make changes and to finalize the responses.

Work as quickly as you can and do not spend too much time on any one question. If you find a question difficult to answer, guess and go on to the next question. As you finish each test, go on to the next test. You should not spend more than 60 minutes on any one test. When you finish with the entire exam, notify the test administrator and wait for further instructions.

OPTIONAL TESTS

Polk Community College may request that you take one or more of the following optional exams to help us understand your skill level in that given subject. The Arithmetic Skills test may be taken to assess your skill level in arithmetic skills. The College Level Mathematics assesses your understanding of advanced mathematics concepts. The Levels of English Proficiency battery of tests may be requested to assess basic English skills for students whose native language is not English.

WHO MUST TAKE THE TEST

All students entering college for the first time must take the test. Transfer students may be required to take one or more parts of the exam after the Registrar does an evaluation of transcript(s) from the transferring institution(s).

FEES

There is no additional fee assessed for students to take the CPT exam. The $20 fee assessed for admissions covers the cost of administering the CPT exam.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability or temporarily disabling condition that will prevent you from taking the tests under standard conditions, inform the test administrator before taking the test. Accommodations that are available include a large-print paper and pencil test, a cassette version and a Braille version.

WHAT TO BRING/NOT BRING WITH YOU ON TEST DAY

On the day of the test you must present a valid photo ID, such as drivers license, state ID card, passport or military ID card. You must also have an admission ticket issued from the Registrar's or from the Testing Coordinator's office, which indicates which tests to be administered. Also have available your social security number. Scratch paper and pencils for the mathematics sections will be provided by the testing center. Please do not bring with you – food, drinks, notes, dictionary or thesaurus, a calculator or a calculator watch. If you have a cell phone or pager, please turn it off during testing.

TESTING REGULATIONS

Textbooks, notebooks, dictionaries, thesauruses, calculators or calculator watches, or other papers or aids of any kind are not allowed in the testing center. Scratch paper and pencils will be provided to complete the exam. Further, anyone who gives or receives help during the exam, or uses any unauthorized aid will not be allowed to continue the test. PCC will cancel any test score if there is reason to question its validity. PCC will require you to retake the test if the test administrator questions the validity of the exam and cancels the original test score.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your test scores and any personal information you provide when taking the test will be used by the college for counseling and placement purposes. Students who are current Polk County high school students may have their test scores provided to the Polk County School Board for assessment of eligibility for the dual enrollment program, the college-ready diploma and for scholarship eligibility. Test scores may also be reported to the College Board, Educational Testing Service and the Florida Department of Education for research purposes. Your test information will not be used for any other reason without your permission. If the data are used for research purposes, special precautions will be taken to ensure that your identity is kept confidential. Any data received by ETS will be held for no more than five years. If you have any questions about the confidentiality of the data you have provided, or about your test scores, please contact the college's test administrator.

GUESSING

If you do not know the answer to a question, try to eliminate one or more of the choices. Then guess between the remaining choices. In the computerized version of the test, the next question will not appear until you respond to the current question.

LENGTH OF EXAM

PAPER AND PENCIL EXAM: There are 35 questions on each test. Suggested time to complete the Reading exam is 45 minutes, Sentence Skills 35 minutes and Elementary Algebra is 40 minutes.

COMPUTERIZED EXAM: There are 20 questions on the Reading Comprehension and Sentence Skills exams and 12 questions on the Elementary Algebra exam. The exam is computer-adaptive, which allows the computer to choose questions of various skill levels. The next question is determined by how you responded to the previous question. If you responded correctly, the next question is slightly harder, if your response was incorrect, the next question is slightly easier. It therefore takes fewer questions to predict your level of skills.

CPT READING SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The CPT reading test measures how well the student understands what he/she reads. Some questions are of the sentence relationship type in which one must choose how two sentences are related. Other questions test your ability to recognize distinctions between main and secondary points and to make simple deductions from a series of facts. Specific skills to be tested are main ideas, supporting details, words in context, author's purpose and tone, relationships within and between sentences, fact and opinion, inferences, and conclusions.

DIRECTIONS: Read each of the statements or passages below and then choose the best answer to the question that follows. 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 imaginations, 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 purposefully written for the reader who lacks imagination
c.   provide the reader with a means of escape from reality
d.   illustrate the values that are considered important to a society.
From The College Board

2. 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 only 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 in 1776, and Britain hired thirty thousand German soldiers to supplement its forces during the war. However, the American Revolutionaries were not deterred.

What is the main point of the passage?
a.   Britain was a great power whose population outnumbered that of America's.
b.   America's military forces were less experienced than Britain's military.
c.   America's Continental Congress had limited authority.
d.   As America was about to engage in its struggle for autonomy, it was faced with arduous barriers.
From *An American History* by Rebecca Brooks Gruver

3. It is 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 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 come to mind when we hear the words "outdoor food."

The passage suggests that the author believes that
a.   Picnicking is the best way to spend summer.
b.   August is better than June for a picnic.
c.   Picnicking has an unsavory reputation.
d.   Picnicking is better alfresco.
From *A Spanish Picnic* by Robert Capon

4. Elements are basic substances that can not be broken down into anything simpler, and an atom is the smallest unit of an element. Compounds are combinations of two or more elements and can be broken down into simpler substances. Compounds are formed when atoms are held together by an attractive force called a chemical bond. A molecule is the smallest unit of a compound, or a gaseous element, which can exist and still retain the characteristic properties of a substance.

According to the passage, compounds
a.   require a chemical bond
b.   develop when the smallest unit of an element is broken down
c.   are formed when elements combine with atoms
d.   are the basic units of molecules
From *Introduction to Physics and Chemistry* by Bill Tillery

5. My parents' divorce was final. The house had been sold and the day had come to move. Thirty years of the family's life was now crammed into the garage. The two-by-fours that ran the length of the walls were the only uniformity among the clutter of boxes, furniture and memories. All was frozen in limbo between life just passed and the one to come. I suddenly became aware of the coldness of the garage, but I didn't want to go back inside the house, so I made my way through the boxes to the couch. I cleared a space to lie down and curled up, covering myself with my jacket. I hoped my father would return soon with the truck so we could empty the garage and leave the cryptic silence of parting lives behind.

What is the author's mood?
a. melancholy
b. idealistic
c. vindictive
d. indignant
From *Limbo* by Rhonda Lucas

6. While silk-stocking Manhattan is asleep, East Harlem is starting to bustle. The poor are early risers. They have jobs others don't want: the early-hour jobs, the late-hour jobs. The streets are filled with fast-moving people: men, women, and swarms of children of all sizes. Some will stand at the bus stops, but most will crowd into the downtown subways that speed them to jobs to serve the affluent. East Harlem is a busy place, night and day, filled with the joyous and troubled lives of residents – rather than the heavy commercial traffic of mid-Manhattan. There is so much togetherness.

The main idea of this passage is that the residents of East Harlem
a. are dissatisfied with their jobs
b. are poorer than Manhattan's residents
c. share common struggles and goals
d. disdain the rich of Manhattan
From *A Day in East Harlem* by Patricia Cayo Sexton

DIRECTIONS: There are two underlined sentences in each question below, which is followed by a question about them. Read each sentence and then choose the best answer to the question.

7. 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 contrasts an idea expressed in the first sentence.
c. It analyzes an idea stated in the first sentence.
d. It exemplifies an idea found in the first sentence.
From *Sociology* by Scott and Sally McNall

8. Males and females are treated differently from grade school through college.

Therefore, this treatment of the sexes by school officials influences both the student's choice of career and level of performance.

How are the sentences related?
a. The second sentence contradicts the first sentence
b. The second sentence shows a cause of the first sentence
c. The second sentence states an effect of the first sentence
d. The second sentence defines an idea found in first sentence
From *Sociology* by Scott and Sally McNall

9. 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 an effect.
c. It gives an example.
d. It analyzes the statement made in the first sentence.

From The College Board

10. <u>The function and meaning of the American family have changed over time.</u>

<u>There is now a stronger emphasis on romantic love between parents and an increase in the number of mothers in the workforce.</u>

What does the second sentence do?
a. It gives examples to support the statement in the first sentence.
b. It states effects.
c. It contradicts ideas found in the first sentence.
d. It makes a comparison to the first statement.
From *Sociology* by Scott and Sally McNall

Answer Key for Reading Questions:
1. D   2. D   3. C   4. A   5. A   6. C   7. B   8. C   9. B   10. A

CPT SENTENCE SKILLS SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Two kinds of questions are given in the Sentence Skills test. Sentence Correction questions ask you to choose a word or phrase to substitute for an underlined portion of a sentence. Construction Shift questions ask that a sentence be rewritten in a specific way without changing the meaning. A broad variety of topics is included here.

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. The baby was obviously getting <u>hot, then Sam did</u> what he could to cool her.
a. hot, then Sam did
b. hot, Sam did
c. hot; Sam, therefore, did
d. hot; Sam, trying to do

2. <u>Knocked sideways, the statue looked</u> as if it would fall.
a. Knocked sideways, the statue looked
b. The statue was knocked sideways, looked
c. The statue looked knocked sideways
d. The statue, looking knocked sideways

3. <u>When you cross the street in the middle of the block, this</u> is an example of jaywalking.
a. When you cross the street in the middle of the block, this
b. You cross the street in the middle of the block, this
c. Crossing the street in the middle of the block
d. The fact that you cross the street in the middle of the block

4. <u>To walk, biking, and driving</u> are Pat's favorite ways of getting around.
a. To walk, biking, and driving
b. Walking, biking and driving
c. To walk, biking and to drive
d. To walk, to bike, and also driving

5. Walking by the corner the other day<u>, a child, I noticed, was</u> watching for the light to change.
a. a child, I noticed, was
b. I noticed a child
c. a child was watching, I noticed
d. there was, I noticed, a child watching

Directions: Rewrite the sentences below in your head, following the directions given below. Keep in mind that your new sentences should be well written and should have essentially the same meaning as the sentences given you.

6. In his songs, Gordon Lightfoot makes melody and lyrics intricately intertwine.
Rewrite, beginning with
<u>Melody and lyrics</u> …
Your new sentence will include
a. Gordon Lightfoot has
b. make Gordon Lightfoot's
c. in Gordon Lightfoot's
d. does Gordon Lightfoot

7. It is easy to carry solid objects without spilling them, but the same cannot be said of liquids.
Rewrite, beginning with
<u>Unlike liquids,</u> …
The next words will be
a. it is easy to
b. we can easily
c. solid objects can easily be
d. solid objects are easy to be

8. Excited children ran toward the loud music, and they told others about the ice cream truck outside.
Rewrite, beginning with
<u>The excited children, who had run toward the loud</u> …
The next words will be
a. music, they told
b. music, told
c. music, telling
d. music and had told

9. The band began to play, and then the real party started.
Rewrite, beginning with
<u>The real party started</u> … The next words will be
a. after the band began
b. and the band began
c. although the band began
d. the band beginning

10. Chris heard no unusual noises when he listened in the park.
Rewrite, beginning with
<u>Listening in the park,</u> …
The next words will be
a. no unusual noises could be heard.
b. then Chris heard no unusual noises
c. and hearing no unusual noises
d. Chris heard no unusual noises

Answer Key for Sentence Skills Questions:
1. C   2. A   3. C   4. B   5. B   6. C   7. C   8. B   9. A   10. D

CPT ELEMENTARY ALGEBRA SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The Elementary Algebra test measures skills in three categories. The first, operations with integers and rational numbers, includes computations with integers and negative rational numbers, the use of absolute values, and ordering. The second category, operations with algebraic expressions, tests skills with the evaluation of simple formulas 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, the solution of quadratic equations by factoring, solving verbal problems presented in algebraic context, geometric reasoning, the translation of written phrases into algebraic expressions, and graphing.

1. **Evaluate:** $|{-26} + 10| =$

   a. 4   b. -16

   c. 16   d.. 36

2. **Evaluate:** $-3/5 \left[2/3 - 1/2 \left(3/4 - 1/2 \right) \right]$

   a. $-1/40$ b. $-3/5$

   c. $-17/40$ d. $-13/40$

3. **Simplify:** $(5x^2 - 2x + 5) - (2x^2 + 3x - 7) =$

   a. $7x^2 + x + 12$ b. $3x^2 + x - 2$

   c. $3x^2 - 5x + 12$ d. $3x^2 - 5x - 2$

4. **Simplify:** $(-6a^2 b^3)(2a^4 b^2) =$

   a. $-12a^6 b^5$ b. $-12a^8 b^6$

   c $-4a^6 b^5$ d. $-12a^{-2}b$

5. **Simplify:** $\left[(2x^7 y^2) \div (4xy^3) \right]^3$

   a. $\dfrac{x^{18} y^3}{2}$ b. $\dfrac{x^6}{8y^3}$

   c. $\dfrac{x^{18}}{8y^3}$ d. $8x^{18} y^6$

6. **Solve for x.** If $-6(2x + 1) = -4x + 10$, then $x =$

   a. -2 b. $-1/4$

   c. -1 d. 24

7. **Solve for x.** If $2x + 2 \geq 5x + 11$, then

a. $x \leq -3$

b. $x \geq -3$

c. $x \geq 12$

d. $x \geq 3$

8. **Which of the following is a linear factor of $2x^2 - x - 6$?**

a. $2x - 3$

b. $x + 2$

c. $2x + 3$

d. $x - 3$

9. **Solve for x.** If $x^2 - 2x - 8 = 0$, then $x =$

a. -4 or 2

b. -2 or 4

c. -1 or 8

d. -8 or 1

10. **Simplify:** $\dfrac{x^2 - x - 6}{x^2 - 2x - 3} =$

a. $\dfrac{x - 6}{x - 3}$

b. $\dfrac{x + 2}{x + 1}$

c. $\dfrac{2}{x}$

d. $\dfrac{(x + 3)(x - 2)}{(x - 3)(x + 1)}$

11. **Choose the equation that is equivalent to the verbal description:**

The difference between a number, x, and five less than twice the number is 9.

a. $x - (5 - 2x) = 9$

b. $x + (5 - 2x) = 9$

c. $x - (2x - 5) = 9$

d. $x + 2x - 5 = 9$

12. **Solve.** $\dfrac{6!}{4!} =$

a. 30

b. 24

c. 1.5

d. 120

Answer Key for Elementary Algebra Questions:
1. C   2. D   3. C   4. A   5. C   6. A   7. A   8. C   9. B   10. B   11. C   12. A