

Sample ASSET Writing Skills Test

Directions: In the passage that follows, certain words and phrases are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for each underlined part. You are to choose the one that best expresses the idea, makes the statement appropriate for standard written English, or is worded most consistently with the style and tone of the passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE." You will also find questions about a section of the passage, or about the passage as a whole. For each question in the test, choose the alternative you consider best and blacken the corresponding space on your answer sheet. Read each passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. You cannot determine some answers without reading several sentences beyond the phrase in question. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

The following paragraphs may or may not be in the most logical order. Each paragraph is numbered in parentheses, and item 11 will ask you to choose the sequence of paragraph numbers that is in the most logical order.

[1]

In the end, everyone gives up jogging. Some find that their strenuous efforts to earn a living drains away the energy necessary for

1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. drain
C. has drained
D. is draining

running. Others suffering from

2

defeat by the hazards of the course, which can range from hard pavement to muddy tracks and from smog to sleet and snow.

Person's can also simply

3

collapse in their sneakers. My experience having been different,

4

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. suffered
C. suffer
D. suffering with
3. A. NO CHANGE
B. Still others
C. One may also
D. It's also possible to

however; I had a revelation.

[2]

It happened two summers ago up at Lake Tom, where I was vacationing with friends. I had been accustomed to running fairly regularly, but that whole week I decided to be lazy. I sailed, basked in the sun, and ate wonderful: lobster, steak,

5

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. being different
C. was a difference,
D. was different,

corn on the cob, baked potatoes, and ice cream. By the fourth day of this routine I had to face the truth which

6

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. ate wonderfully:
C. eating wonderful:
D. eat wonderful:
6. A. NO CHANGE
B. truth about

my body was slowly changing to dough.

[3]

So, filled with worthy ambition,
I tied on my favorite pair of running
shoes and loped out to the main road
in search of a five-mile route.

Out of curiosity, I turned onto

Lookout Hill Road

7

and soon discovered how the road had come by
its name. I was chugging, at a painfully
slow rate, up one of the

longest, steepest

8

inclines in the region. Perched at
the faraway top of the hill was a
solitary house, and only a desire to
get a closer look at the place kept
me going.

[4]

I was exhausted when, gasping and
bedraggled, I reached the crest of
the hill. There I found a native
New Englander rocking tranquilly on
the front porch of the

house, which was painted. "Mister,"

9

I panted, "you sure live on a big hill!"

[5]

He studied me closely for a moment
and then responded, "Yep, and
I've got the good sense not to run
up it." That night I tied the

laces of my running shoes

10

around a rock and pitched them into Lake Tom.

Items 11 and 12 pose questions about the essay as a whole.

11. Choose the sequence of paragraph numbers that will make the essay's structure most logical.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. 1, 4, 5, 2, 3
- C. 1, 5, 4, 3, 2
- D. 4, 5, 1, 2, 3

- C. truth:
- D. truth, which

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. Out of curiosity, Lookout Hill Road was turned onto
C. Having become curious, Lookout Hill Road was the road I turned onto
D. Lookout Hill Road, having become curious, was the route I turned onto-

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. longest, steepest,
C. steepest longest
D. longest and steepest,

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. house (painted).
C. house, and it was painted.
D. house.

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. laces, of my running
C. laces of my running,
D. laces; of my running

12. Is the use of direct quotation in the essay appropriate?

- A. No, because the essay is an explanation of why the writer gave up jogging.
- B. No, because more physical detail would be better in a descriptive essay.
- C. Yes, because the story is enlivened by dialogue.
- D. Yes, because the essay persuades readers to talk about running.

Asset Reading Skills -- Sample Test

Directions: The passage below is followed by 8 questions. After reading the passage, chose the best answer to each question and write down your answer. You may look back at the passage as often as you wish.

The Industrial Revolution got under way first in England. This is a historical fact of the utmost significance, for it explains in large part England's primary role in world affairs in the nineteenth century. Consequently, the question of why the Industrial Revolution began where it did is of much more than academic interest.

The problem may be simplified by eliminating those countries that could not for one reason or another, have generated the Industrial Revolution. Italy at one time had been an economic leader but had dropped behind with the Discoveries and the shift of the main trade routes from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. Spain had been economically predominant in the sixteenth century but had then lost out to the Northwestern states for various reasons already noted. Holland had enjoyed her golden Age in the seventeenth century, but she lacked the raw materials, labor resources, and water power necessary for machine production. The various countries of Central and Eastern Europe had been little affected by the commercial Revolution and hence did not develop the technical skills, the trade markets, and the capital reserves needed for industrialization.

This leaves only France and Britain as possible leaders: and of the two, England had certain advantages that enabled her to forge far ahead of her rival. In commerce, for example, the two countries were about equal in 1763, or, if anything, France was somewhat in the lead. But France had a population three times that of England. France also lost ground in foreign trade when she was driven out of Canada and India in 1763. Furthermore, the blockade of the British fleet during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars reduced French commerce to about half its 1788 value, and the loss was not restored until 1825.

Another important advantage enjoyed by Britain is that she had taken an early lead in the basic coal and iron industries. Because the forest reserves were being depleted, Britain early began using coal for fuel and for smelting iron. By the time of the French Revolution in 1789, Britain was producing 700,000 tons. A contemporary poet sensed the significance of this unlimited source of power for English industry when he wrote:

England's a perfect World! has

Indies too!

Correct your Maps!

New-castle

is Peru.

England also pioneered in the development of the blast furnace which, in contrast to the old forges, could mass-produce iron. In 1780 Britain's iron output had been a third that of France; by 1840, it was three times

more. All this meant that Britain was pushing ahead in the production of goods of mass consumption for which there was a large and steady demand, whereas France specialized more in luxury commodities of limited and fluctuation demand. Perhaps Voltaire had this in mind when he wrote in 1735, "In truth we are the whipped cream of Europe."

From L. S. Stavrianos, The World Since 1500: A Global History.

Question 1: The word forge, as it is used in the third paragraph, means:

- A. make use of the blast furnace.
- B. alter in order to deceive.
- C. move forward steadily.
- D. produce wrought iron.

Question 2: In comparing the economic development of England and France, the passage shows that:

- A. England and France were essentially equal until the middle of the nineteenth century.
- B. France modeled itself on the example of Italy and Spain, while England modeled itself on the example of Holland.
- C. England gained most of its capital reserves from the spoils of war, while France gained its capital reserves from trade.
- D. England began on an equal base with France in the middle of the eighteenth century, but pulled far ahead by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Question 3: What reasons does the author give for discussing several countries besides England and France?:

- A. Enriching the information provided in the passage
- B. Balancing the passage in the interest of fairness
- C. Simplifying the problem confronted in the passage
- D. Eliminating countries whose Golden Age was yet to come

Question 4: The passage suggests that generating the first Industrial Revolution required which of the following?

- 1.Raw materials
- 2.Technical skills
- 3.A large population

- A. 1 only
- B. 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 2 and 3 only

Question 5: The author asserts that England's primary role in the world affairs in the nineteenth century can be explained in large part by:

- A. the Industrial Revolution getting under way in England first
- B. England's overwhelming naval power
- C. the decline of Italy, Spain, Holland, and Central and Eastern Europe
- D. England's unlimited source of power to fuel its industry

Question 6: The passage suggests that one indication of a country's success in industrializing was:

- A. an educational system that could produce a steady supply of skilled workers
- B. an ability to satisfy a large market for necessary, rather than luxury, goods
- C. a forest reserve that could be rapidly and efficiently replenished
- D. a fluctuating demand for luxury, rather than necessary, goods

Question 7: According to the passage, France was compared to whipped cream by:

- A. an unnamed contemporary poet
- B. Voltaire
- C. Napoleon
- D. L.S. Stavrianos

Question 8: The main idea of the passage is that:

- A. certain conditions gave England an advantage over other countries in industrializing
- B. with its conquest of Canada in 1763, England controlled the raw materials necessary for industrialization
- C. the English preferred quantity in their goods, while the French demanded quality
- D. England's primary position in international affairs gave it the wealth and influence necessary for industrialization

Asset Numerical Skills -- Sample Test

Directions: Solve each problem, choose the correct answer, and write down the answer. For some questions, the fifth choice for an answer will be "Not given." Whenever none of the first 4 possible answers is correct, choose "Not given" as your answer. Do not linger over problems that take too much time. Solve as many as you can; then return to the others in the time you have left.

Question 1: $0.05 + 0.30 = ?$

- A. 0.08
- B. 0.305
- C. 0.35
- D. 0.38
- E. Not given

Question 2: $0.35 \div 5 = ?$

- A. 0.07
- B. 0.70
- C. 1.75
- D. 7.00
- E. Not given

Question 3: On a road map with a scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch per 10 miles, the highway from Waukee to Winterset is $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches long. How many miles long is this highway?

- A. 44
- B. 55
- C. 65
- D. 70
- E. 90

Question 4: The price of gasoline has increased by 5% during the past month. If the price per gallon a month was \$1.20, what is the current price per gallon?

- A. \$1.24
- B. \$1.45
- C. \$1.26
- D. \$1.70
- E. \$1.80

Question 5: $-2|3 - 4 - 5| = ?$

- A. -12
- B. -8
- C. 8
- D. 12
- E. 24

Question 6: Which of the following fractions is equivalent to 0.05?

- A. $\frac{1}{5}$
- B. $\frac{1}{20}$
- C. $\frac{1}{25}$
- D. $\frac{1}{50}$
- E. $\frac{1}{200}$

Asset Answer Sheet

Writing Skills Answer Sheet

- 1.B
- 2.C
- 3.B
- 4.D
- 5.B
- 6.C
- 7.A
- 8.A
- 9.D
- 10.A
- 11.A
- 12.C

Reading Skills Answer Key

- 1.C
- 2.D
- 3.C
- 4.C
- 5.A
- 6.B
- 7.B
- 8.A

Numerical Skills Answer Key

- 1.C
- 2.A
- 3.B
- 4.C
- 5.A
- 6.B

Tips for Specific ASSET Tests

Use the following tips to prepare for the reading, writing, and mathematics tests.

Reading Skills Tips

- Read the entire passage carefully before trying to answer any items.
- Reread appropriate sections of the passage as needed to answer specific items.
- Read a few sentences before and after the appropriate sections of a passage to ensure that you understand the context.

Writing Skills Tips

- Determine the intended meaning of each paragraph before trying to answer items in that paragraph
- Substitute each alternative into the appropriate underlined portion for each item and select the one that fits best with the meaning of the paragraph.

Mathematics Tips

- Read each item carefully and examine all supporting information (e.g. tables and graphics) to be sure you understand each question.
- Solve each problem before you look at the alternatives.
- Find your solution among the listed alternatives.
- If your answer is not among the listed alternatives, check your work.
- Use the scratch paper provided to do your calculations since calculators are not allowed.
- For some items, "Not given" may be the correct alternative.

A Brief Description of the Asset Test:

Writing Skills (36 Questions, 25 Minutes)

This section consists of three reading passages. Certain sentences in each passage are underlined, and students are asked to select a better choice for the portion underlined. Each passage has 12 multiple-choice questions. (11 items --- punctuation & grammar, 13 items --- sentence structure, 12 items --- organization, strategy, & style) Spelling, vocabulary, and recall of grammar rules are not tested.

Reading Skills (24 Questions, 25 minutes)

This section is composed of 3 reading passages of about 375 words each on topics from fiction, business, and social studies, and 8 multiple-choice questions per passage. Students must determine the simple meanings of the passages from what is stated (such as determining the meaning of words by context). They must also use reasoning to determine subtle meanings by drawing conclusions and making comparisons and generalizations.

(12 items --- refer back to passages, 12 items --- reasoning skills)

Math Skills (32 Questions, 25 Minutes)

This test measures basic numerical and problem-solving skills, and covers arithmetic and pre-algebra.

Arithmetic (25 questions):

- operations with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions
- factors and common factors
- multiple and common multiples
- comparison of fractions and decimals
- ration, proportion, and percentage
- conversion of fractions, decimals, and percents
- order of operations of real numbers

Pre-Algebra (7 questions):

- prime and composite numbers
- complex fractions
- signed numbers
- absolute values
- scientific notation
- square roots