

## SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSESSMENT SAMPLE QUESTIONS

SBCC administers the College Tests for English Placement (CTEP). This test is designed to assess students' skills in reading and writing. The Reading Comprehension test consists of seven reading selections and 35 multiple choice questions. The Sentence Structure and Grammar test contains 30 multiple choice grammar questions; and the Sentence & Syntax Skills test contains 40 fill in the blank questions which test both grammar and comprehension. The English assessment also requires a 20 minute essay on a general topic.

### 1. READING COMPREHENSION (30 minutes, 35 questions): Sample Passage

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 which 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.

*Answers: (1) A (2) C (3) A*

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### 2. SENTENCE STRUCTURE & GRAMMAR (20 minutes, 30 questions): Sample Questions

**Section 1:** In this section, each question contains 4 sentences. Choose the one that is best.

**Example:**

- 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.

**Answer:** "D" is the only choice that makes sense and is grammatically correct.

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**Section 2:** In this section, you are given a sentence which has words left out. Fill in the blank space and complete the sentence by choosing the correct answer from the choices given.

**Example:** The workers left early and \_\_\_\_\_ home.

- A) gone      B) went      C) have dinner      D) drives

**Answer:** "B" is the only answer that makes sense and is grammatically correct.

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**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. Choose the best answer.

**Example:** 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.

**Answer:** "A" is the only sentence that makes sense and is grammatically correct.

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### 3. SENTENCE & SYNTAX SKILLS (15 minutes, 40 questions): Sample Questions

**Directions:** 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.

**Example:** 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.

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|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. a. the     | 2. a. dental | 3. a. their |
| b. infrequent | b. person    | b. his      |
| c. regular    | c. cleaning  | c. front    |
| d. often      | d. tooth     | d. cleaned  |

*Answers: (1) c (2) a (3) a*

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### ESSAY (20 minutes): Sample Topic

We all have hobbies or favorite pastimes. Write an essay in which you describe an activity that you enjoy. Give specific examples of the benefits you gain from participating in this activity.