



**Independence**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## **COMPASS**

The COMPASS test is a computer based placement test.

This test differs from other placement tests in that it is computerized and adaptive. An adaptive test generates questions based upon the individual responses of the students taking the test. In other words, the number of questions given during a testing session is dependent upon the responses of the student testing. Each test will be unique and untimed.

*Students seeking admission to ICC must take the COMPASS if they do not have SAT and/or ACT scores.*

*Any student with an ACT score of 15 or below in either Reading, English, or Math should take the COMPASS. (A student may be able to test out of a developmental class)*

The COMPASS test includes three tests:  
Reading, Writing, and Math

### **THE TEST RESULTS AFFECT YOUR ENROLLMENT, SO DON'T RUSH!**

The **Reading Skills test** is used to determine whether a student's reading ability is at the level necessary to be successful in college level courses. A score of 74 or below requires a student to enroll in a developmental class.



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The test consists of a pool of 54 passages, each accompanied by 5 reading comprehension items. There are five types of passages: practical reading, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Passages range from 190 to 300 words on a reading level that is less difficult than most first year college texts.

The **Writing Skills test** is used to determine whether the student has the required writing skills and knowledge to succeed in an entry level college composition course. A score of 74 or below requires a student to enroll in either Composition Preparation or Basic Writing.

The test simulates the editing process by presenting an essay and requiring the student to locate and then correct grammar, usage, and style errors. The test offers several essays each approximately 200 words in length. The essays are presented as a whole without any indication as to the location of the errors. The student selects the segment to be edited and is presented with five possible corrections. Additionally, the test presents one or two multiple choice questions at the conclusion of the editing process.

***Please note: During the test, click on each sentence to determine if it needs corrections. Students should always reread the essay with corrections. Once the choices are confirmed, it is not possible to return to the essay.***

The **Math Skills test** is used to determine whether the student is ready for college level mathematics courses or if the student would benefit from enrollment in Beginning Algebra. A student must score a 66 to be able to enroll in the 3 hour College Algebra class.

Each section of the test has a question pool of 200 items. If the student performs well in one section, the test will allow the student to move on to the next section. This process continues until the student's level of proficiency is established.

***Students are permitted to use basic calculators, which are supplied, for this portion of the exam. No personal calculators are permitted.***



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## HELPFUL TEST TAKING HINTS:

- During the test, read each question carefully until you fully understand what the question is asking.
- Be sure to answer every item. You aren't penalized for guessing.
- Writing test:
  - Carefully read the essay looking for errors in punctuation, grammar, and style.
  - Click on each sentence in the essay and then choose the best option for correcting the error. (Some sentences will be correct.)
  - Make sure you check each sentence in every essay. (VERY IMPORTANT!)

**TAKE YOUR TIME AND DO YOUR BEST!**

COMPASS practice websites:

[http://www.testprepreview.com/compass\\_practice.htm](http://www.testprepreview.com/compass_practice.htm)

<https://web.gsc.edu/fs/mhorton/LSEnglish/> (Reading & English)

<https://www.khanacademy.org> (Math)

ACT website: all three tests: <http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/>



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