

# TAKING TESTS (ACT PLAN)

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## Lesson Descriptions

### **Taking Tests 1: Introduction to the ACT PLAN**

*What is the ACT PLAN, and why should I take it?*

**Note:** Coordinate with school counselor re: ACT PLAN test date, sign up, and fee in your district.

### **Taking Tests 2: Psyching Out the ACT PLAN**

*What kinds of questions will I find on the ACT PLAN, and what strategies should I use to answer them?*

### **Taking Tests 3: Post-High School Tests**

*What kinds of tests might I need to take after high school?*

# PLANNING PYRAMID

## GRADE 10, Unit 2, Taking Tests (ACT PLAN)



### Some Students Will:

- Recognize ways in which high school courses prepare them for tests that lead to college and career opportunities.

### Most Students Will:

- Describe the procedure for signing up at his/her school and know when the ACT PLAN is given.
- Describe two things besides taking the ACT PLAN that a sophomore in high school can do to prepare for future standardized tests like the ACT.
- Describe strategies for answering two or more types of questions on the ACT PLAN.
- Describe two similarities between the ACT PLAN and tests they might be required to take after high school.

### All Students Will:

- List at least two reasons for taking the ACT PLAN.
- Recognize that students not planning on attending college may be required to take standardized tests to get a job or be promoted.

# **ROADS to SUCCESS**

Grade 10

High School Testing

Family Newsletter

## High School Testing

**Roads to Success** is a new program designed to help middle and high school students prepare for their futures. This newsletter will keep you posted on what we're doing in school, and how families can follow through at home.

For more information about Roads to Success, please visit our website: [www.roadstosuccess.org](http://www.roadstosuccess.org)

### Did you know?

Thinking about a career in the skilled trades? Apprenticeships are a great way to earn while you learn. But be prepared for competition and standardized tests. In New York City, only one out of 10 applicants gets an apprenticeship as an electrician. That is more competitive than some top colleges!

To a sophomore, high school graduation may seem far away. But there are plenty of things your student can do now to prepare for college and careers. Beginning in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, taking college admissions tests is one of them.

Many colleges rely on test scores to compare students who want to attend. Students who do well on admissions tests will have more colleges to choose from. Here's what you need to know:

#### The ACT PLAN

**What?** The ACT PLAN is a practice test for the ACT. There are six sections: two English, two math, one reading, and one science section.

**When?** 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Your school counselor will have info on the time, date, and place.

**Why?** This test prepares students for the ACT and shows which skills need improvement.



#### The SAT and ACT.

**What?** The SAT and the ACT are admissions tests required by many colleges. Students may take one or both tests depending on what colleges they are applying to. Both tests include math and reading sections.

**When?** The SAT and the ACT are both offered in the spring of 11<sup>th</sup> grade and can be taken again at later dates. Please see your school counselor for a complete list of test dates.

**Why?** Many colleges require one or both of these tests for admission into their schools. While these tests are not the only factor, they are important.

#### Other Tests.

**What?** Tests to get a job or get ahead in the job you have.

**When?** When applying for a job or promotion.

**Why?** Whether you want to join the Army, deliver packages for FedEx, or something in between, tests are often part of the selection process.

## Grade by Grade

Roads to Success students get basic information about the ACT PLAN and learn a few strategies for improving their scores. This is not the type of test you can cram for, but there are things students can do to improve their scores and confidence for the test.

#### Building Word Power.

Learn a new word each day

with websites like these:

- <http://education.yahoo.com/wotd/>
- <http://www.number2.com/exams/sat/daily/word>

#### Math Prep.

Paying attention in math class and completing math homework are two great ways to master geometry and algebra skills.

#### ACT PLAN and ACT Info.

The ACT website includes information on both the ACT PLAN and the ACT along with practice questions and tests: <http://www.actstudent.org>.



## Introduction to the ACT PLAN

### The **BIG** Idea

- What is the ACT PLAN, and why should I take it?

### AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up (10 minutes)
- II. The ACT PLAN Comic Book (15 minutes)
- III. Preparing for the ACT PLAN (15 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up: My ACT PLAN Action Plan (5 minutes)

### MATERIALS

#### ☐ STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 44, Previewing the ACT PLAN
- Student Handbook pages 45–47, ACT PLAN Comic Book
- Student Handbook pages 48–49, Important ACT PLAN Information
- Student Handbook page 50, Context Clues
- Student Handbook page 51, Guess What's Next
- Student Handbook pages 52–53, Building Word Power
- Student Handbook page 54, ACT PLAN Wrap Up

#### ☐ FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, Answer Key: Previewing the ACT PLAN

### OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, student(s) will:

- List at least two reasons for taking the ACT PLAN, such as:
  - \* Prepare for the ACT, an important part of the college applications process.
  - \* Find out what math and reading skills students will need to work on during high school.
- Describe the procedure for signing up at his/her school and know when the ACT PLAN is given.
- Describe two things besides taking the ACT PLAN that a sophomore in high school can do to prepare for future standardized tests like the ACT, such as:
  - \* Read more novels, non-fiction books, and longer magazine articles.
  - \* Use RUPrepareND.com's test prep tool, available in the College Planning section.
  - \* Visit vocabulary-building websites.
  - \* Make learning algebra a priority, and go to tutoring if needed.

## OVERVIEW .....

Students learn what the ACT PLAN is, and discover some compelling reasons for taking it. After reading a comic strip that presents some basic information about the ACT PLAN (its purpose, how long it is, what skills it measures, and so on), the facilitator presents some skill-building strategies that can help students prepare for the reading sections of the test.

In the second lesson of this unit, students will become familiar with the format of the ACT PLAN and will describe strategies for answering each type of question.

The third lesson of this unit covers post-high school tests. The purpose of this lesson is to help students recognize that even if they are not planning on attending college, they may be required to take standardized tests to get a job or be promoted.

## PREPARATION .....

- Write the **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- In advance of this lesson, speak to your school counselor so that you can inform your students of the procedures for signing up for the ACT PLAN and the official test date. Your school counselor can also tell you if there is a per-student fee. (Sometimes testing costs are paid by a school district or state.)
- Make an overhead transparency of **Student Handbook pages 48–49, Important ACT PLAN Information**, including the current fee, if any.
- You may wish to review the information found on the ACT PLAN website (<http://www.act.org/planstudent/tests/index.html>.)
- You may wish to write the questions below on chart paper or on the board. As each question is addressed in the lesson, you can check it off to help students keep track of what's been covered.

### Questions:

1. What is the ACT PLAN?
2. What are some reasons I should take it?
3. What is on the test?
4. How long does the test last?

5. Can you cram for the ACT PLAN?
6. What are some ways that I can prepare for the ACT PLAN and the ACT?

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the fall of their sophomore year, high school students have the option of taking the ACT PLAN. This test has several purposes. The first is to help students practice for the ACT that they will take during their junior year, which can play a key role in college admissions. A second purpose is to help students identify their academic strengths and weaknesses midway through high school, so they can better focus their efforts long before they graduate. Some students do not realize that even if they are not planning to go to college, the kinds of skills that the ACT PLAN tests come into play in other jobs they might consider.

## IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS .....

### DO NOW:

If you prefer, you may choose to use **Student Handbook page 44, Previewing the ACT PLAN** as a DO NOW. Give the students four minutes to answer the questions. Once the students have completed their quiz, go over the answers and then begin with the discussion in the Warm Up.

You may wish to write the questions below on chart paper or on the board. As each question is addressed in the lesson, you can check it off to help students keep track of what's been covered.

### Questions:

1. What is the ACT PLAN?
2. What are some reasons I should take it?
3. What is on the test?
4. How long does the test last?
5. Can you cram for the ACT PLAN?
6. What are some ways that I can prepare for the ACT PLAN and the ACT?

For **Activity II, The ACT PLAN Comic Book**, you may choose to have your students read the comic in pairs. Give each pair a sticky note and instruct students to write down at least one fact they learned about the ACT PLAN from the comic. Students can post their notes on a piece of chart paper or the board. Once all of the pairs have completed the reading, you can bring the class together to review the key information listed on their sticky notes.

All activities in **Activity III, Preparing for the ACT PLAN**, may be abbreviated for time. You may choose to use only one example of each technique, or focus on a single technique. Interested students may wish to take **Student Handbook page 52–53, Building Word Power** with them so they can access websites from home.



## ACTIVITY STEPS

### I. WARM UP (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Tests are an important part of school. Like them or not—and most people don’t—tests not only affect your grades, but are often a good way to find out what you know, and what you don’t know, about a particular subject. Imagine, for example, that you were about to be operated on in a hospital. Wouldn’t you feel better knowing that your surgeon did really well on his tests than have a doctor who flunked every test he took? [Pretend to be a bumbling surgeon.] “Let me see, is this thing here the heart or the liver?! Oh, I don’t know, let’s just poke around with this knife-y thing and find out... (pause) Oops!”

For the next few weeks, we’re going to talk about some of the standardized tests that can have an impact on your college and career plans—what they are, why they’re important, and how you can prepare for them.

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How many of you have ever heard of the ACT?

[Students respond.]

The ACT is a test that many colleges use to help them compare students from many different high schools. If the college can only enroll a limited number of students, the test scores help them decide which students to accept. Students take this test in their junior or senior year of high school.

Fortunately, it’s possible to prepare for this test ahead of time. One of the ways to get ready is to take a practice test called the ACT PLAN in your sophomore year.

If you’ve never even heard of the ACT PLAN or ACT, don’t worry.

Today you’re going to find out a lot more about these tests. Before you leave today, you’ll know the answers to these questions:

- What is the ACT PLAN?
- What are some reasons I should take it?
- What is on the test?
- How long does the test last?
- Can you cram for the ACT PLAN?
- What are some ways that I can prepare for the ACT PLAN and the ACT?

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now you're going to try two sample ACT PLAN questions: one math and one reading. Read each question and use your pencil to fill in the circle beside the best answer. When you're done, we'll go over the answers. Don't worry if the questions seem hard. Next class you're going to learn strategies to help you on the ACT PLAN.

[Refer students to **Student Handbook page 44, Previewing the ACT PLAN**. Give students four minutes to complete it. Go over the answers, having students correct their own papers.]

## II. The ACT PLAN Comic Book (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** If you're worried about the ACT PLAN, you're not alone. Many students get nervous about standardized tests like the ACT PLAN and the ACT. But as with most tests, the more information you have about something, the more you can prepare yourself to do your best. And the more prepared you feel, the less stressed out you'll be, and the better you'll do.

[Refer students to **Student Handbook, pages 45–47, ACT PLAN Comic Book**.]

To find out more about the ACT PLAN, let's have a look at a short comic strip about two high school students, Myra and Ira. Myra's a sophomore, and Ira's a junior.

[Pick two volunteers, and have them read the comic strip together, as the class follows along in their copy. Recommend that the students read the comic strip in a theatrical way. (See **Implementation Options** for suggestions.)]

2. After reading the comic, **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Do you think Myra will take the ACT PLAN? Why, or why not? [Students respond.]

Before we move on, let's go over some of the important information in the Myra and Ira comic. First... What are some reasons for taking the ACT PLAN? [Students respond.] (*Reasons to take the ACT PLAN include: preparing for the ACT; learning what math and reading skills you need to work on during high school.*)

### III. Preparing for the ACT PLAN (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As Ira said in the comic, the ACT PLAN is not the kind of test you can cram for. You won't be asked to name two causes of the Civil War or to explain the structure of a cell because not all students take the same courses or learn precisely the same facts.

But there are four sections you're guaranteed to see on the ACT PLAN. Any idea what those four subjects are? [Students respond.] That's right—English, math, science and reading.

[Put **Student Handbook pages 48–49, Important ACT PLAN Information** on an overhead or rewrite it on chart paper. Instruct students to turn to this page in their student handbook.]

So, how can you prepare for the math portions of a test? (*Pay attention in math class! Do your homework. Ask questions. Get extra help if you need it.*)

This is one subject that doesn't change much from school to school. So this is a really good place to put your energy if you want to perform well on standardized tests.

How do you prepare for the reading portions of the test? Read! Anything you want... novels, biographies, magazines, newspapers, Internet articles, and more. Your big goal is to learn how writers use language, and build your own vocabulary.

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** To get the most out of your reading, it might help to think about the techniques you use to understand the rest of the world. Let me show you two techniques that are guaranteed to improve your reading power.

The first is **context clues**, using the rest of a sentence or paragraph to figure out words you don't know. Think about the first time you saw an unfamiliar abbreviation in a text message. Did you go running to the dictionary for a definition? I didn't think so! If you said something funny, and someone responded with LOL, you probably figured out that it meant... (*laughing out loud*). If someone typed GTG and disappeared from your screen, you probably figured out its meaning from the situation... (*got to go*). [Feel free to substitute current text abbreviations popular with your students for those above.] Let's see how **context clues** work in another situation.

[Refer students to **Student Handbook page 50, Context Clues!**]

Read over the first page. It is an encyclopedia article about the great civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, Jr. You'll see that one word is printed in **bold** letters

("symbol"). See if you can use what you already know to figure out what the bolded word means.

[After three minutes,] **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:**

What does the word "symbol" mean in other situations? Name a symbol from a context other than this paragraph, for example, a symbol for peace or love.

[Allow students a chance to respond. Then explain that in this article, "symbol" means "something that stands for something else." In this passage, the words "I have a dream" make people think of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the struggle for civil rights.]

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now let's try another example. Turn to the next page in your handbook, where you'll find a passage from *National Geographic Explorer*. It's called "Mystery Monster" and is a first-person story about a visit to China.

[Refer students to **Student Handbook page 50, Context Clues.**]

Your mission is to read the second passage, "Mystery Monster," and see if you can figure out the meaning of the word in bold in the last sentence — **lichen**.

[After three minutes,] **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:**

What does the word "lichen" mean in this passage? How can you tell? (*The definition is right after the word.*)

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Here's another technique to build your reading power. As you read, see if you can predict what's going to come next. If you're a fan of video games, this technique is nothing new. As you play, you're always on the alert for obstacles you'll need to avoid or places where bad guys may be hiding. When you're reading, you need to pay attention in the same way so you always have an idea of where the writer is "headed." You can practice this skill by guessing what the next word is going to be each time you turn the page. Let's try an example.

[Refer students to the **Student Handbook page 51, Guess What's Next.**]

This excerpt comes from the novel *Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone*. Read it silently to yourself, and see if you can figure out what words to expect when you turn the page.

[Let students read the excerpt on their own for about three minutes.]

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** What word or phrase do you think might come next?

[Students make predictions; then you can read the text that actually follows: “Next morning, however, he had gotten up to find his hair... exactly as it had been before Aunt Petunia had sheared it off. He had been given a week in his cupboard for this, even though he had tried to explain that he couldn’t explain how it had grown back so quickly.”]

5. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** The final example is a quote from the famous prizefighter Mohammed Ali. Read the passage, and then raise your hand if you know the word that will be next when you turn the page.

How did you figure it out?

The exact word is skill. Ali, who was a very poetic speaker, uses “the skill and the will” in the second to last sentence. When he connects the last two sentences using the word ‘but,’ he contradicts or changes what he said before. He’s using “skill and will” again, but saying that one needs to be stronger than the other. Earlier in the passage, Ali clearly states his belief that one’s desire or will to succeed is more important than one’s physical abilities or skills.

6. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** One last tip: If you learn just one word a day, you’ll know hundreds more by the time you take the ACT in your junior or senior year.

[Refer students to **Student Handbook pages 52–53, Building Word Power.**]

Check out these websites for a new word and definition each day.

- <http://education.yahoo.com/college/wotd/>
- <http://www.number2.com/exams/sat/daily/word>

Practice these words in your writing and conversation, and you’ll remember them if they turn up on tests later on.

#### **IV. WRAP-UP: My ACT PLAN Action Plan (5 minutes)**

1. [Write the date and procedure for signing up for the ACT PLAN at your school on the board. Have students copy the information onto their **Student Handbook page 54, ACT PLAN Wrap-Up.**]
2. [Have students complete the remaining questions before dismissing the class.]
3. Remind students that they can use RUPrepareND.com's test prep tool, available in the College Planning section.

## PREVIEWING THE ACT PLAN ANSWER KEY

### SAMPLE MATH QUESTION

**Directions:** Read the question below and fill in the circle next to the letter that gives the best answer.

1) Mark bought three shirts at a clothing store. Two of the shirts were priced at two for \$15.00. If the average cost of the three shirts was \$8.00, how much did Mark pay for the third shirt?

- (A)  \$7.00
- (B)  \$7.67
- (C)  \$8.50
- (D)  \$9.00
- (E)  \$16.50

**Explanation:** It can help to think about what answer is logical before doing the calculations. Two of the shirts are 2 for \$15, or \$7.50 each. If the average price is \$8, the third shirt must cost more than \$8.00. Now you do the calculations to see which is correct.

$$\text{average cost} = \frac{\text{total cost of all shirts}}{\text{number of shirts}}$$

$$8 = \frac{15 + x}{3}$$

$$3 \times 8 = 15 + x$$

$$24 = 15 + x$$

$$24 - 15 = x$$

$$x = 9$$

### SAMPLE ENGLISH QUESTION

**Directions:** Read the paragraph below and determine the best alternative for the underlined words. You are to choose the one that best expresses the idea and makes the statement appropriate for standard English.

2) D. W. Griffith and the Art of the Close-Up

[1] It took the genius of D. W. Griffith to change this method of filming. [2] When we watch this proposal scene, he argued, our eyes move. [3] We watch the expressions on the faces of the characters; we look at the hands as the man presented the engagement ring to the woman.

- (A)  NO CHANGE
- (B)  presents
- (C)  having presented
- (D)  has presented

**Explanation:** The underlined word must match the tense of the other verbs in the sentence: We watch. We look. The man presents.

SOURCE: <http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/> (sample test questions)

## PREVIEWING THE ACT PLAN

### SAMPLE MATH QUESTION

**Directions:** Read the question below and fill in the circle next to the letter that gives the best answer.

- 1) If you have gone 4.8 miles in 24 minutes, what was your average speed, in miles per hour?
- (A)  5.0
  - (B)  10.0
  - (C)  12.0
  - (D)  19.2
  - (E)  50.0

### SAMPLE ENGLISH QUESTION

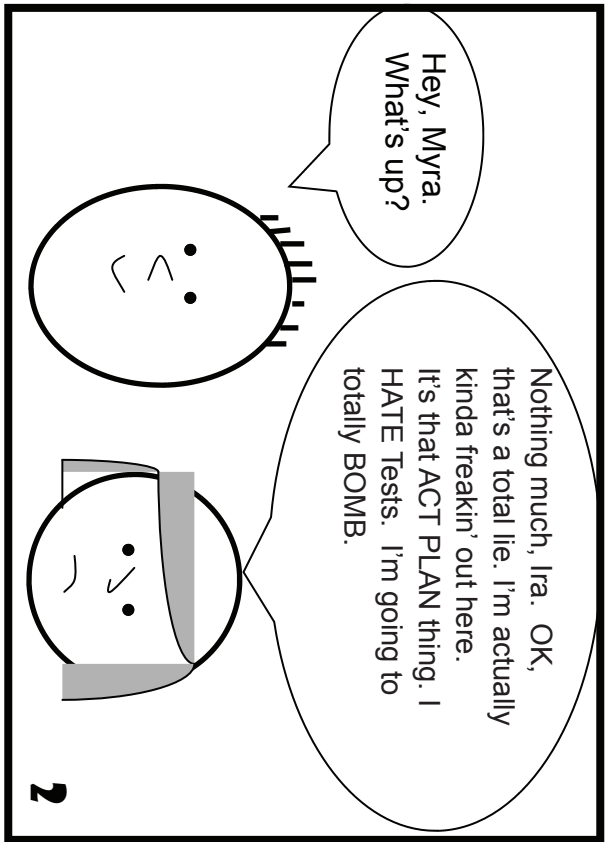
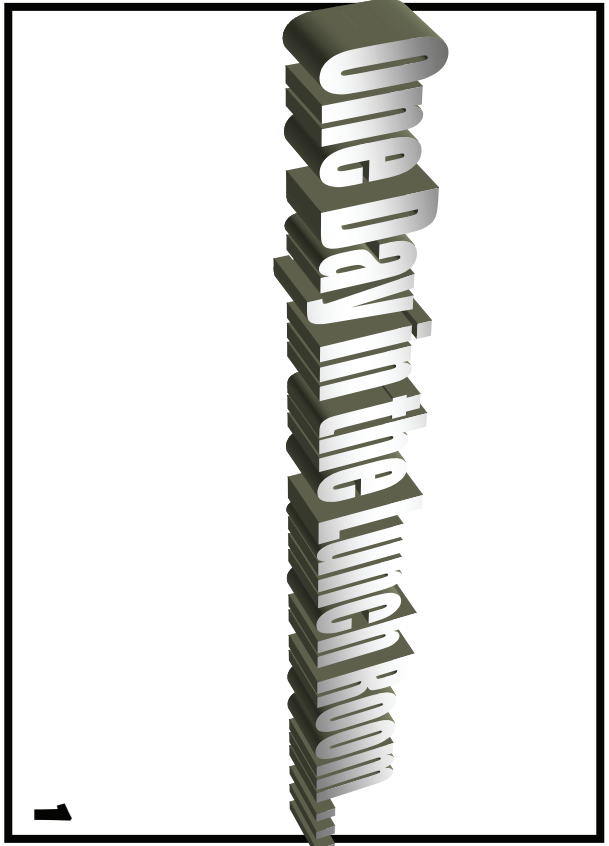
**Directions:** Read the paragraph below and determine the best alternative for the underlined words. You are to choose the one that best expresses the idea and makes the statement appropriate for standard English.

2) Bessie Coleman: In Flight

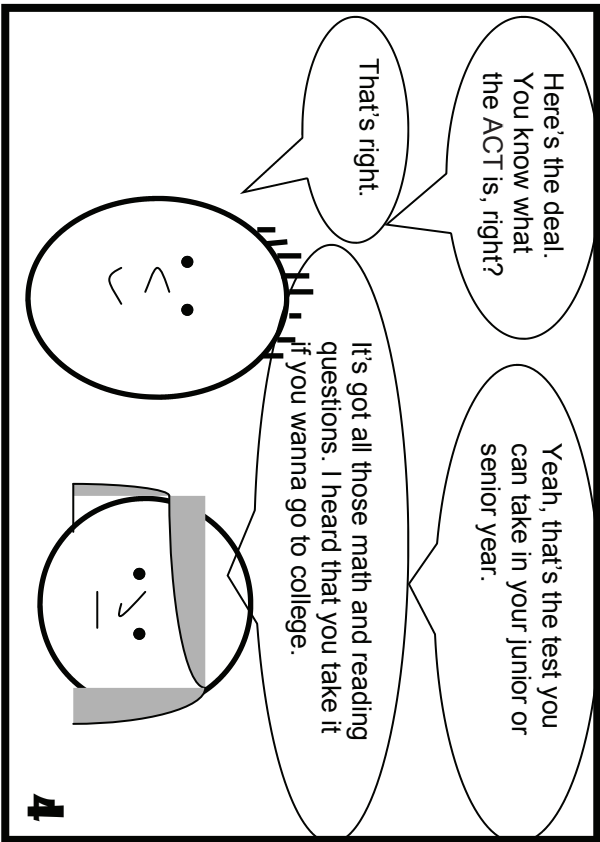
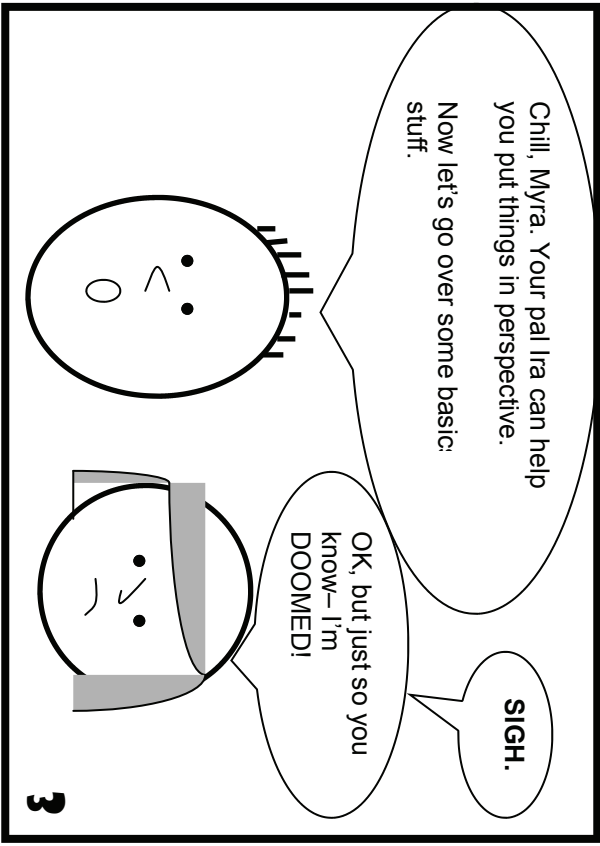
After the final performance of one last practice landing, the French instructor nodded to the young African-American woman at the controls and jumped down to the ground. Bessie Coleman was on her own. She lined up the nose of the open cockpit biplane on the runway's center mark, gave the engine full throttle, and took off into history.

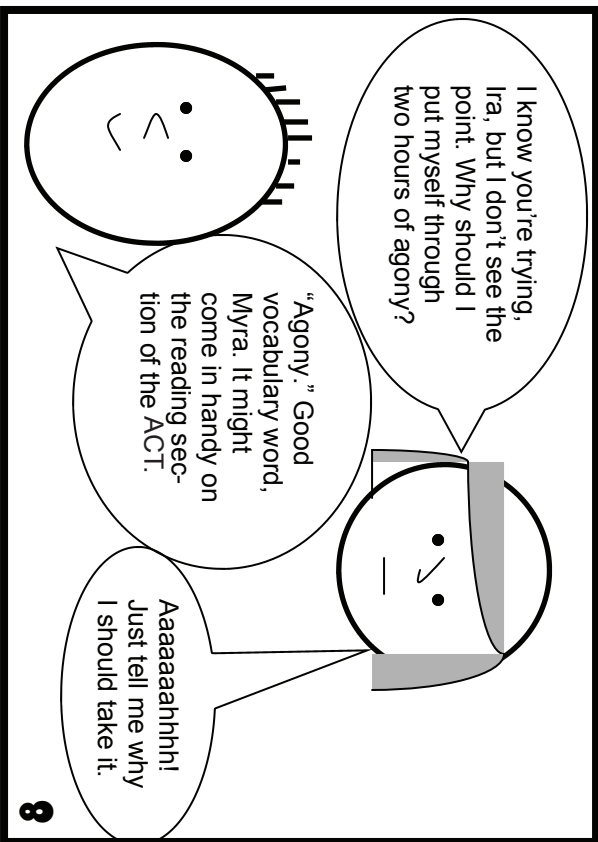
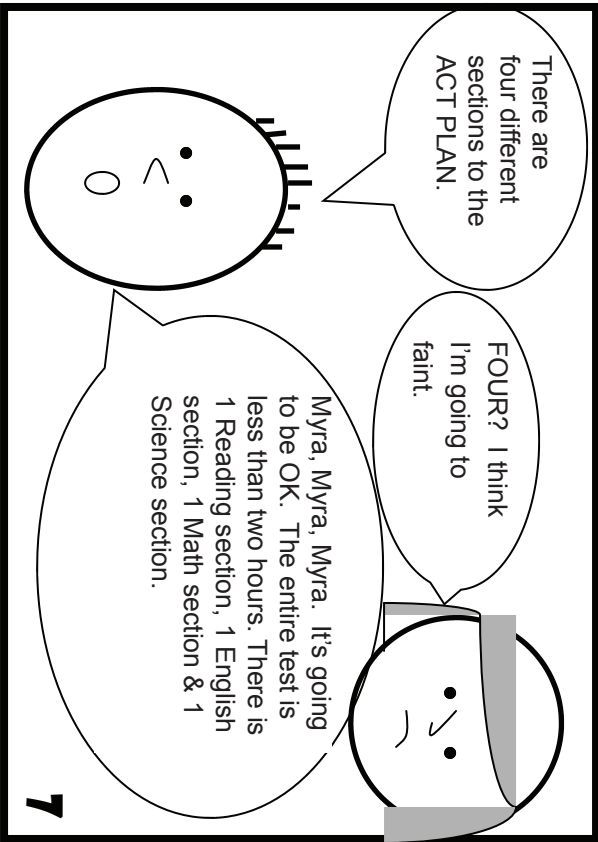
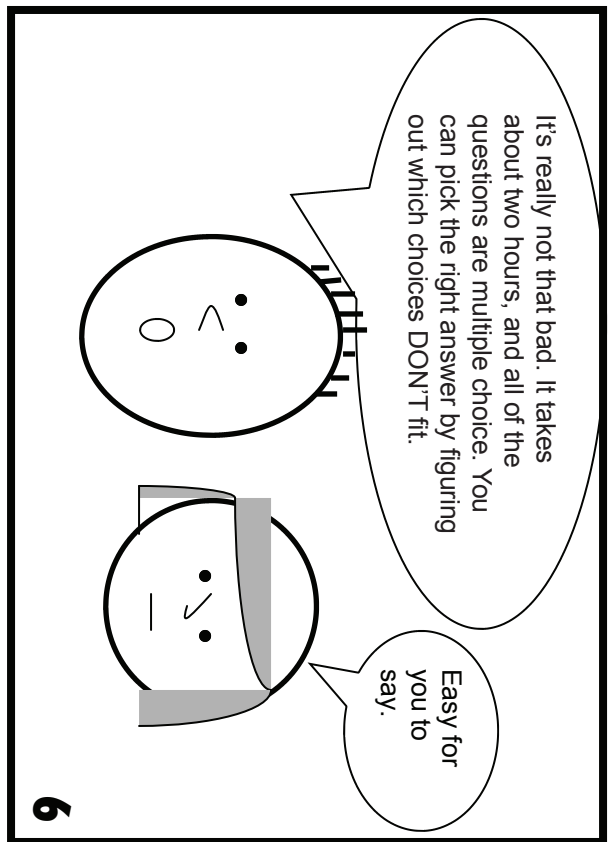
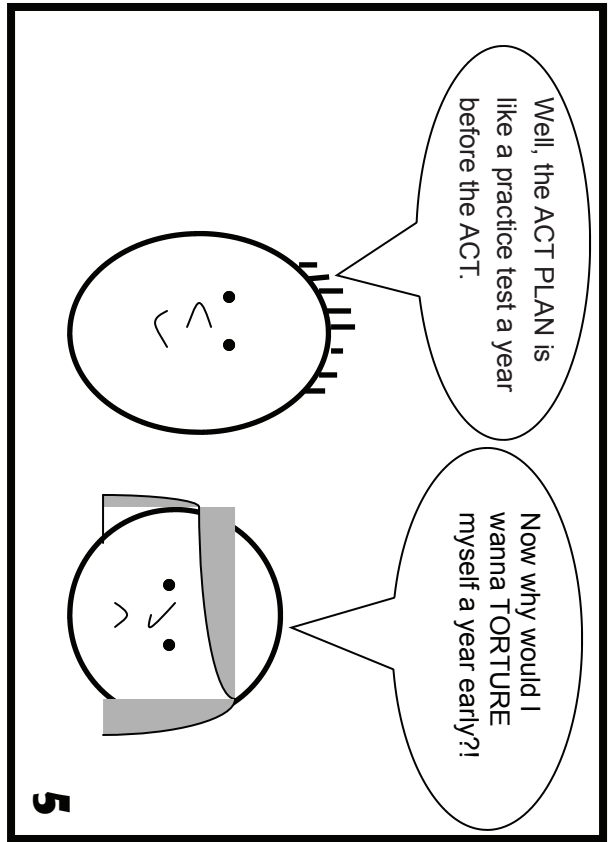
- (A)  NO CHANGE
- (B)  one finally ultimate
- (C)  one final
- (D)  one last final

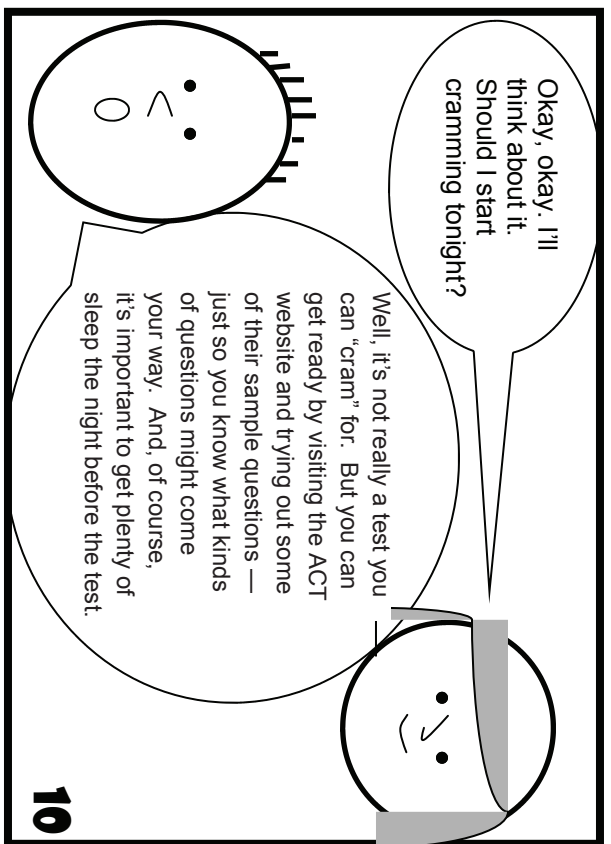
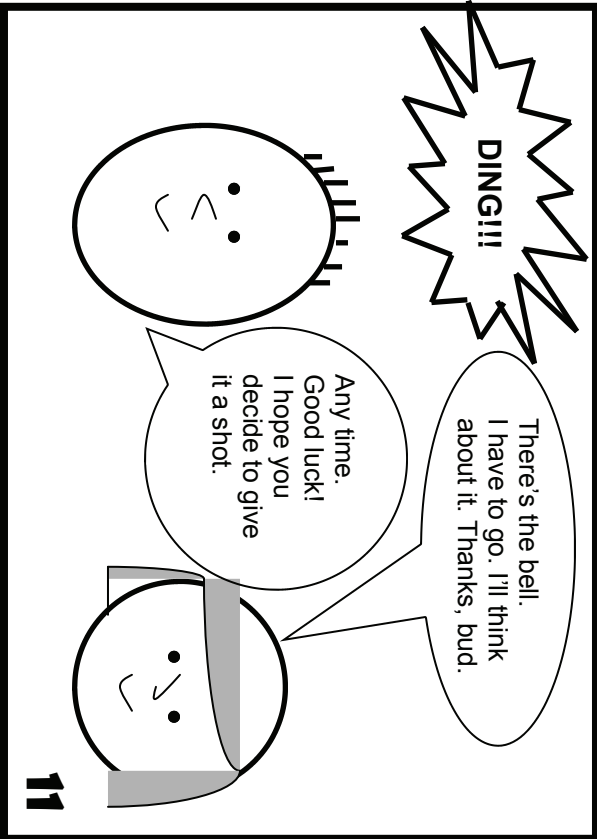
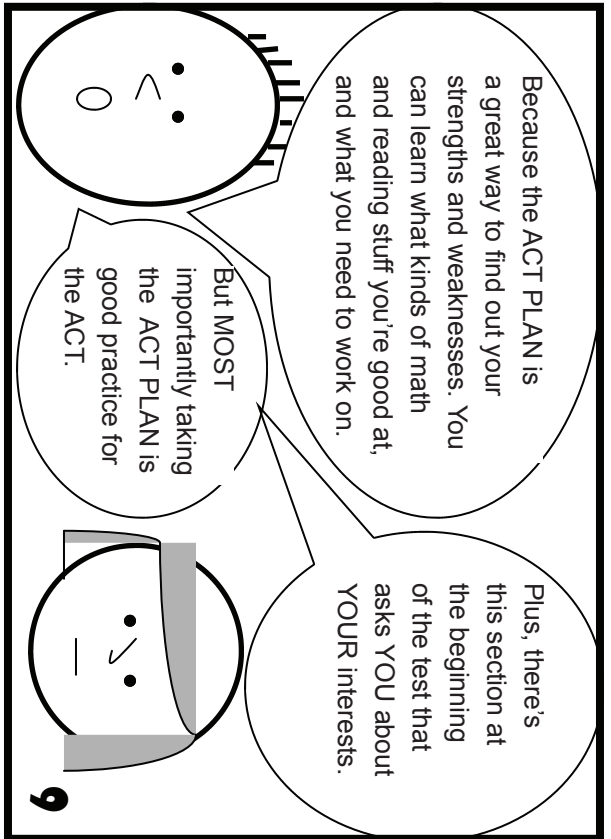




Meet Myra and Ira. She's a sophomore. He's a junior. They've been friends forever.







## IMPORTANT ACT PLAN INFORMATION

### What's On the Test?

The ACT PLAN includes four sections:

- One 30-minute English section
- One 40-minute math section
- One 20-minute reading section
- One 25-minute science section
- The entire test lasts for one hour and 55 minutes.

#### 1. ENGLISH TEST

This section has 50 questions:

- This section consists of four prose passages, each followed by several multiple-choice questions.
- Prose is a fancy word that refers to writing that is not poetry. Anything that is not poetry is prose (e.g., fiction, biography, non-fiction, news articles).

#### 2. MATH

This section has 40 questions:

- 22 pre-algebra/algebra questions
- 18 geometry questions
- All questions are multiple choice.
- You may use a calculator in this section.

#### 3. READING TEST

This section includes 25 questions:

- There are three prose passages, each followed by several multiple-choice questions.

#### 3. SCIENCE TEST

This section includes 30 questions:

- This section is made up of five sets of scientific information: two in research summaries, two in data representations, and one in conflicting viewpoints format.
- You may NOT use a calculator in this section.

## DATES

- The ACT PLAN is given in fall of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Your school counselor will have information on the exact test date at your school.
- You must sign up for the ACT PLAN at your school. The test is given at your high school. (There is no online registration for the ACT PLAN.)
- The fee for the ACT PLAN is \_\_\_\_\_.

## CALCULATOR USE

Important Tips:

- Take a calculator you are comfortable with.
- Practice sample questions with your calculator on hand.
- You will not be allowed to share calculators with other students.
- You are allowed to use most four-function, scientific, or graphic calculators.

Below is a list of types of calculators you are NOT allowed to use:

- Pocket organizers or laptop computers
- Calculators that makes noises or “talks”
- Electronic writing pad or pen-input devices
- Cell phone calculators or other electronic communication devices
- Calculators with built-in computer algebra systems

**Please check in advance of the test for the most current information.**

ADAPTED FROM: <http://actstudent.org/plan/tests/index.html>

## Context Clues

**Directions:** Read each passage. Then figure out the meaning of the bolded **vocabulary word** by using the words before and after it.

### Martin Luther King Jr.

"I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream... a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

These were the words of Martin Luther King Jr., a black Baptist minister, speaking at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. The occasion was the largest civil rights rally in the history of the United States. More than 200,000 people filled the grassy area around the monument on that sizzling August day in 1963. Since that day the words "I have a dream" have become the **symbol** of Martin Luther King Jr., and his nonviolent efforts to secure justice for black Americans.

- What does the word "symbol" mean in the above paragraph?
- 

### Mystery Monster

Later, many villagers are sitting around an outdoor fire. I join them. They tell me about their forest home. They tell me about some of the animals that live there.

I learn about a legendary creature. It is a large animal that looks like a man. It has long brown fur and big fangs. They seem afraid of it.

The description sounds familiar, though. I take out a book and show them a picture. It's of the animal they are talking about. It is the rare and beautiful snub-nosed monkey.

I tell the villagers that the snub-nosed monkey is the only monkey that lives in these cold mountains. I also tell them that it eats **lichen**, a kind of moss-like plant.

- What does the word "lichen" mean in the above paragraph?
- 

Martin Luther King excerpt from Grolier's *The New Book of Knowledge*, which appears on Scholastic.com  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/mlk/news/index.asp?article=mlk>

Mystery Monster excerpt from "People of the Misty Mountains" an article from National Geographic Kids  
<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/0701/articles/mainarticle.html>

## GUESS WHAT'S NEXT

**Directions:** Read each passage, and see if you can figure out what word would come next.

### Harry Potter And The Sorcerer's Stone

"The problem was, strange things often happened around Harry and it was just no good telling the Dursleys he didn't make them happen.

Once, Aunt Petunia, tired of Harry coming back from the barbers looking as though he hadn't been at all, had taken a pair of kitchen scissors and cut his hair so short he was almost bald except for his bangs, which she left 'to hide that horrible scar.' Dudley had laughed himself silly at Harry, who spent a sleepless night imagining school the next day, where he was already laughed at for his baggy clothes and taped glasses. Next morning, however, he had gotten up to find his hair..."

- What word or phrase do you think will appear next?
- 

### Mohammed Ali

"Champions aren't made in gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them, a desire, a dream, a vision. They have to have last-minute stamina, they have to be a little faster, they have to have the skill and the will. But the will must be stronger than the..."

- What word or phrase do you think will appear next?
- 

Harry Potter excerpt from Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling, Scholastic Inc., 2008

Mohammed Ali's excerpt from Quotation Collection <http://www.quotationcollection.com/quotation/14/quote>

## Building Word Power

Want to build your reading power? Learn a new word each day at any of these websites!

<http://education.yahoo.com/college/wotd/>

Yahoo's WOTD (Word of the Day) has links to a dictionary and thesaurus.

### SAMPLE:

<b>rationale (noun)</b>	
•	DEFINITION: An underlying reason or explanation.
•	EXAMPLE: At first, it seemed strange that several camera companies would freely share their newest technology; but their rationale was that offering one new style of film would benefit them all.
•	SYNONYMS: account, excuse

<http://www.number2.com/exams/sat/daily/word/>

This site has a word of the day and lots of other free test prep information.

### SAMPLE:

<b>adhere (verb)</b>	
•	To stick fast or cleave; to hold, be attached; to be in accordance; to agree.
•	In the Middle Ages, those who refused to adhere to the teachings of the church were sometimes condemned as heretics.



<http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/category/word-of-the-day/>

From the *New York Times*, this website tells you how many times this word has appeared in recent newspaper articles and gives you an example of its use.

**SAMPLE:**

<b>gregarious (adjective)</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>a:</b> tending to associate with others of one's kind : SOCIAL <b>b:</b> marked by or indicating a liking for companionship : SOCIABLE <b>c:</b> of or relating to a social group
<b>2.</b>	<b>a:</b> of a plant : growing in a cluster or a colony <b>b:</b> living in contiguous nests but not forming a true colony —used especially of wasps and bees

**EXAMPLE FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES**

The word gregarious has appeared in 122 Times articles over the past year, most recently in **“Intrigue on an Ill-Fated Train, Moscow-Bound”** on July 18, 2008.

“Transsiberian” is a handsomely remodeled variation of a cherished genre you might call the mystery-train movie. Updated by the director Brad Anderson (“The Machinist”), who wrote the screenplay with Will Conroy, it skillfully manipulates familiar tropes: innocents abroad, ominous glowering foreigners, conspiracy and duplicity, erotic intrigue. Until it fizzles in an anticlimactic train crash, it is extremely entertaining...

...Into this human clutter arrive Roy (Woody Harrelson) and Jessie (Emily Mortimer), a naïve American couple returning to the United States from China where they have been teaching English as part of a church-sponsored charity program. There are ominous portents. Early in the trip they are regaled with the story of a passenger from whom a corrupt Russian policeman extorted thousands of dollars and cut off two toes because the name on his passport was misspelled.

Roy is a chirping parody of the **gregarious** American abroad. Jessie, an amateur photographer, is a reformed bad girl with a history of drug and alcohol abuse. Roy met her when she had hit rock bottom and stood by her during her recovery...

## ACT PLAN Wrap Up

1. Year given: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many sections make up the ACT PLAN?

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3. If I have more questions about the ACT PLAN, whom should I ask?

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4. List two reasons for taking the ACT PLAN.

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5. List two things you can do right now to help prepare for the ACT PLAN and ACT.

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Don't forget that you can use RUReadyND.com's test prep tool, available in the College Planning section.

**For more information, check out:** [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

## Psyching Out the ACT PLAN

### The **BIG** Idea

- What kinds of questions will I find on the ACT PLAN, and what strategies should I use to answer them?

### MATERIALS

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up (5 minutes)
- II. Play “Bull’s Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show” (35 minutes)
- III. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

#### STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook pages 55–65, “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show”

#### FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW, Taking Tests 2: Psyching Out the ACT PLAN
- Facilitator Resource 2, “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show” Answer Key
- Facilitator Resource 3, Test Strategies
- Facilitator Resource 4, “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show” Score Card

- White board, marker, and eraser for each pair (or student response cards labeled A, B, C, D, and E)

- Sharpened pencils

- Small prizes (if you’re rewarding Bull’s-Eye winners)

- Timer

- Calculators

### OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, student(s) will:

- Become familiar with the format of the ACT PLAN (four sections), and learn that it tests students’ knowledge of reading, writing, and math skills.
- Describe strategies for answering at least two types of questions on the ACT PLAN.

## OVERVIEW

By participating in a mock game show, students get a taste of the kinds of reading, writing, and math questions they might encounter on the ACT PLAN. During this activity, the facilitator presents strategies for tackling each kind of multiple-choice question.

## PREPARATION

- Write the **BIG IDEA** and the day's agenda on the board.
- The following handouts can be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
  - **Student Handbook pages 55–65, “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show”**
  - **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW**
  - **Facilitator Resource 3, Test Strategies**
- Make one copy, per class, of the **Facilitator Resource 4, “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show” Score Card**.
- You may wish to visit <http://www.act.org/planstudent/tips/> for a complete discussion of preparing for the ACT PLAN.
- Try out RUPrepareND.com’s test prep tool, available in the College Planning section.
- Pair students for the ACT PLAN Bull’s Eye Game. You should pair up academically stronger students with students who need more support.

## IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS .....

### DO NOW:

(You may choose to present the Warm Up activity as a written DO NOW. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards.)

### Questions:

1. If you have to answer 13 questions in 25 minutes, how much time do you have to answer each question?
2. What are some things you can do to make sure you have enough time to answer all the questions on the ACT PLAN?
3. Prediction question: Should you guess on the ACT PLAN if you have no clue what the answer is? If so, why?

[Give the students three minutes to answer these questions. Then start with the discussion in the Warm Up as written. Call on students to volunteer their answers when they are directly addressed in the discussion.]

About eight minutes has been allotted for examples and discussion of each of the four types of ACT PLAN questions. If you run short on time, one math example and one science example may be omitted. Detailed explanations of test question answers aren't necessary. Focus on the strategies for each section. If students seem to want more detailed explanations for a section, brainstorm who they could get help from. For example, if students struggle with the math questions, you may want to suggest that they ask their math teacher for help.

You may choose to have a student in each class keep track of each team's points, using **Facilitator Resource 4, "Bull's-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show" Score Card**.

## ACTIVITY STEPS

### I. WARM UP (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Last week, we reviewed simple facts about the ACT PLAN. This week, we're going to look at the kinds of questions you'll find on the test and some strategies for answering them.

Before we get started, let's talk about two things that are important to know when taking any standardized test.

- How do I make sure I have enough time to answer all the questions?
- Should I guess if I'm not sure of an answer?

[These questions should be written on the board, overhead transparency, or chart paper.]

Let's talk about the first question: "How do I make sure I have enough time to answer all the questions?" One way to do this is to take a practice test and get a feel for how quickly you need to work. The other is to figure out how much time you have for each question. For example, if you'll be expected to do 30 questions in 25 minutes, you know you need to answer each question in a little less than a minute.

Let's try another example. If you had to answer 13 questions in 25 minutes, how much time should you spend on each question?

[Give the students 30 seconds to figure this out. Then call on a volunteer to give the answer, a little under two minutes. You may want to work this problem out on the board, overhead projector, or chart paper to assist struggling students. **Note:** If your students completed the DO NOW, skip the second example, which has already been answered.]

If you're struggling to answer a question, what should you do? [Allow students to respond. Answer: Skip it and come back to it at the end, if you have more time.]

The second question is simple. "Should I guess if I'm not sure of an answer?" The answer is... "Yes." That's because the ACT PLAN and ACT do not take points off for guessing. Your scores on the multiple-choice tests are based on the number of questions you answer correctly. Therefore, it's important to attempt to answer every question. Of course, make sure you read all possible answers before choosing one.

## II. Play “Bull’s-Eye! An ACT PLAN Game Show” (35 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** The ACT PLAN is divided into four sections. Who can remember from last class, which subjects are tested on the ACT PLAN? (Allow students to respond- English, math, reading and science.) There is one English section, one Math section, one reading section, and one science section. Today, we’re going to take a look at the kinds of questions you’ll find on the ACT PLAN. You’ll be working with a partner to solve each problem.

Here is how the game will work. I am going to assign each of you a partner. You and your partner will complete three practice questions from the English section, two from reading, four from math, and three from the science section on the ACT PLAN. I’m going to put a question on the overhead, and you are going to work with your partner to figure out the answer. You also have all the questions listed on **Student Handbook pages 55–65, “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show.”** Before we begin each section, I will tell you how much time you will have to complete the question. I will be keeping track with my timer. When you hear the timer start beeping, you need to put your pens/pencils down immediately. Groups who continue to work after the allotted time will not be awarded points for that question.

I will then ask one person from each pair to hold up their white board (or response card) so I can see your answer. All teams with the right answer get one point each. While I’m excited to see if you got the right answer, today the most important thing is to explain how you figured it out. For each question, one team with the right answer will be chosen to explain how they got the answer. I will only select pairs who have worked well together. You need to talk and work out the problem with your partner. If your explanation makes sense, your pair will get five bonus points.

[Explain how the score will be tracked. See **Implementation Options** for a suggestion on keeping score. Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair of students a white board, eraser, and erasable marker, or a set of answer response cards, each with the letters A through E.]

[**NOTE:** Feel free to award prizes at the conclusion of the game, or eliminate points altogether if competition will make it difficult for your students to focus on the explanations.]

[Place the transparency of **Student Handbook pages 55–65, “Bull’s Eye! the ACT PLAN Game Show”** on the overhead projector, and instruct students to turn to that page in their handbook. Use a piece of paper to cover all but one question so the students can focus on just one question at a time. Use **Facilitator Resource 2, “Bull’s-**

**Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show” Answer Key** to work through the sample test questions, explanations, and strategies.]

### **III. WRAP UP (5 minutes)**

[Thank students for playing “Bull’s-Eye!”. Tell them that if they would like to get some more practice, they can use RUPrepareND.com’s test prep tool, available in the College Planning section.

[www.RUPrepareND.com](http://www.RUPrepareND.com)

They can also visit go to the ACT PLAN Web site:

<http://www.act.org/planstudent/tests/epas.html>



## DO NOW .....

### Taking Tests 2: Psyching Out the ACT PLAN

**Directions:** You will have three minutes to read the questions below and write your responses.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. If you have to answer 13 questions in 25 minutes about how much time do you have to answer each question?

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2. What are some things you can do to make sure you have enough time to answer all the questions on the ACT PLAN?

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3. Prediction question: Should you guess on the ACT PLAN if you have no clue what the answer is? Explain your answer.

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## “Bull’s-Eye! The ACT PLAN Game Show” Answer Key

[Note: The explanations for each question are intended as resources for the facilitator. If the students’ explanations for the questions are adequate, feel free to skip reading the explanations. If the students are unclear, you can use the explanations to clarify the question.]

### ENGLISH TEST

In this section, you’ll be asked to read four short passages, each followed by multiple choice questions. These questions test six essential English and writing skills: punctuation; grammar, and usage; sentence structure; strategy; organization; and style. There are 50 questions in total, and during the real test, you’ll be allotted 30 minutes to complete this section. Give the students one minute to complete each question.

[1]

In the late 1890s, thousands of people crowded into penny arcades across the country to see a remarkable new invention: the movie. Seldom longer than one minute, the first movies were simply recordings of everyday events. A distantly speeding train toward the camera or a man watering his garden—these were typical subjects.

[2]

Within ten years, the movies were telling ten-minute stories. But they were still primitive, because moviemakers were still recording the story from only one viewpoint, just as their predecessors recorded the speeding train. For example, supposing the story called for a young man to propose marriage. The moviemaker would place the camera far from the stage, recording the entire scene from this single position.

1.

- A NO CHANGE
- B train speeding distantly
- C distant train speeding
- D train, distantly speeding

2.

- A NO CHANGE
- B supposedly
- C suppose
- D I suppose

3.

- A NO CHANGE
- B turn the camera and record the entire scene, placing it far from
- C record, place the camera far away, and turn to
- D turn, start, and recording

- **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 1:**

The correct answer is choice C. The issue here is that “distant train,” one that is far away, is the only answer that makes sense. The other answers include “distantly speeding” or “speeding distantly.” “Distant” describes the train, not the speed.

- **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 2:**

The correct answer is C. The writer is using the marriage proposal as an example, so B and D are out; “Supposedly” and “I suppose” change the sentence’s meaning. “Supposing” might be used in informal speech, but “suppose” is the correct choice. (What the author means is, “Let’s suppose.”)

- **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 3:**

The correct answer is A, no change. Reading the sentence aloud is helpful here. There’s no question about where the camera is, or what’s being recorded. All of the other choices make the sentence more confusing.

- **STRATEGIES:**

- 1) Read through the passage to see if it “sounds right” — the punctuation is good, the subject and verb agree, the right tense is used, etc.
- 2) If the sentence is okay, select “NO CHANGE.”
- 3) If the sentence is not okay, substitute the words from each answer. Find the answer that corrects the error.
- 4) Some questions will not have underlined portions. Instead, you’ll be asked to think about the author’s tone, organization, arguments, and evidence — and make suggestions for improvement.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

SOME STRATEGIES ADAPTED FROM: [www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)

## READING TEST

This section measures how well you can think clearly and carefully about a small chunk of reading material, such as an excerpt from a book or magazine article. There are three small reading passages that are accompanied by 25 multiple-choice questions and, during the real test, you’re given 30 minutes to complete all of them. Give the students one minute to complete each question.

### Questions 4 & 5

“Now, this is not your ordinary airplane,” Macon told Muriel.  
“I wouldn’t want you to get the wrong idea. This is what they  
call a commuter plane. It’s something a businessman would  
take, say, to hop to the nearest city for a day and make a  
5 few sales and hop back again.

The plane he was referring to—a little 15-seater that  
resembled a mosquito or a gnat—stood just outside the  
door of the commuters’ waiting room. A girl in a parka was  
loading it with baggage. A boy was checking something on  
10 the wings. This appeared to be an airline run by teenagers...

...Other passengers struggled through, puffing and bumping  
into things. Last came the copilot, who had round, soft, baby  
cheeks and carried a can of Diet Pepsi. He slammed the  
door shut behind him and went up front to the controls. Not  
15 so much as a curtain hid the cockpit. Macon could lean out  
into the aisle and see the banks of knobs and gauges, the  
pilot positioning his headset, the copilot taking a final swig  
and setting his empty can on the floor.

“Now, on a bigger plane, “ Macon called to Muriel as the  
20 engines roared up, “you’d hardly feel the takeoff. But here  
you’d better brace yourself.”

4. When Macon compares the plane he and Muriel are on with a bigger plane (lines 14–21), he is preparing for a:
- (A)  smooth takeoff
  - (B)  smooth flight
  - (C)  short flight
  - (D)  bumpy takeoff

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

5. Since “not so much as a curtain hid the cockpit,” Macon’s view of the instrument panel and the crew was:
- (A)  hidden
  - (B)  unobstructed
  - (C)  frightening
  - (D)  scenic

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 4:**

The correct response is (D) bumpy takeoff. In this question you are asked to focus your attention on a specific section of the passage, lines 14–21 (starting with “Not so much...” and ending with “..better brace yourself”). Within these eight lines of the passage, it is made clear that the plane they are on is small. We also learn in this passage that takeoffs on bigger planes are smoother (“...you’d hardly feel the takeoff”). By using the conjunction “but” (“..But here you’d better brace yourself”) we know that on this plane the takeoff is different from the takeoff of bigger planes. The opposite of a smooth takeoff is a bumpy takeoff.

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 5:**

The correct answer is B, unobstructed. To answer this question you do not need to refer to the passage, all of the important information is given in the question. The line “not so much as a curtain hid the cockpit,” gives the reader a picture that the cockpit is completely visible to the people on the plane. The word that best fits this description is unobstructed.

• **STRATEGIES:**

- 1) There are four passages, with the easiest passage first. Passages get more difficult as you go along. Within each passage, the easiest questions are first, and the most difficult are last. Use this information to budget your time.
- 2) You may find it helpful to glance at the questions first to get an idea of what to look for. Or, you may prefer to read the passage and try to answer the questions.
- 3) You may find it helpful to mark the passages as you are reading, but don’t spend too much time making notes.
- 4) Pay special attention to the first and last sentences of each paragraph, which often give clues to the main idea.
- 5) Use context (words and sentences around a word) to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word.
- 6) Select the choice that best answers the question asked. Don’t be fooled by a choice just because it is a true statement.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

SOME STRATEGIES ADAPTED FROM: [www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)

## MATH SECTION

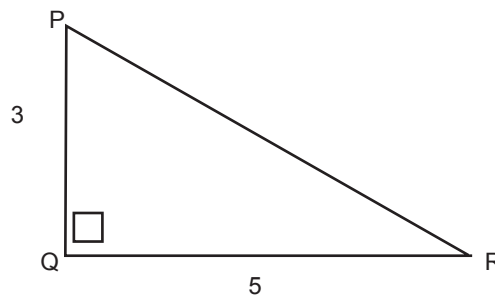
The ACT PLAN has math questions that test your basic understanding of pre-algebra, algebra, and geometry. So, you definitely want to pay attention in math class, do your homework, and ask your teacher questions if you don't understand something. The entire section is 40 multiple-choice questions, and, during the real test, you're given 40 minutes to complete it. Give the students one minute to complete each question.

**Explain to the students that some of the math questions are very difficult and we may not be able to explain all of the answers. Brainstorm with the students where they can go for help. (Math teacher, after-school tutorials, etc.)**

### Multiple Choice

6. In  $\triangle PQR$  below,  $\square PQR$  is a right angle;  $\overline{PQ}$  is 3 units long; and  $\overline{QR}$  is 5 units long. How many units long is  $\overline{PR}$ ?

- (A)  2  
(B)   $2\sqrt{2}$   
(C)  4  
(D)   $\sqrt{34}$   
(E)  8



• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 6:**

The correct response is (D),  $\sqrt{34}$ .

We are told in the question that  $\square PQR$  is a right angle. This makes the triangle a right triangle. In a right triangle you can find any side using the formula  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ , otherwise known as the Pythagorean theorem. PQ represents side a in this equation, while QR represents side b, which makes PR side c.

When you plug the values into the formula you get:

- $3^2 + 5^2 = c^2$
- $9 + 25 = c^2$
- $34 = c^2$
- Since you want to find the value of c not  $c^2$ , you need to take the square root of 34, which is answer D.

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

7. In the figure below, A, B, C, and D are collinear;  $\overline{AD}$  is 35 units long;  $\overline{AC}$  is 22 units long; and  $\overline{BD}$  is 29 units long. How many units long is  $\overline{BC}$ ?

- (A)  5  
 (B)  6  
 (C)  7  
 (D)  13  
 (E)  16



• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 7:**

The correct response is (E), 16.

In the question you are told that AD is 35 units long and that BD is 29 units long. If you subtract BD (29 units) from AD (35 units) you can find the value of AB. This means that AB is equal to 6 units long. However, the question asks for the length of BC. Now that you know the value of AB (6 units), you can find the value of BC. Subtracting AB (6 units) from AC (22 units) gives you the value of BC, 16 units.

8. If  $3x - 10 = 24$ , then  $x = ?$

- (A)  31  
 (B)  18  
 (C)   $11 \frac{1}{3}$   
 (D)   $4 \frac{2}{3}$   
 (E)  -2

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 8:**

The correct answer is (C),  $11 \frac{1}{3}$ .

To find the value of  $x$ , complete the following steps:

$$3x - 10 = 24$$

$$\underline{\quad + 10 \quad +10}$$

$$\frac{3x}{3} = \frac{34}{3}$$

$$x = 11 \frac{1}{3}$$

Step 1: Add 10 to both sides of the equation

Step 2: Divide each side of the equation by 3.

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

9. A certain school's enrollment increased 5% this year over last year's enrollment. If the school now has 1,260 students enrolled, how many students were enrolled last year?

- (A)  1,020
- (B)  1,197
- (C)  1,200
- (D)  1,255
- (E)  1,323

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 9:**

The correct response is (C), 1,200.

To find out how many students were enrolled last year set up the following ratio. Since this year's enrollment is 5% more than last year you want to add .05 for this year's percentage.

$$\frac{\text{Last Years Enrollment}}{\text{This year's enrollment}} = \frac{100\%}{105\%} \quad (1.0.) \quad (1.05)$$
$$\frac{x}{1260} = \frac{1}{1.05}$$

When you cross-multiply, you get:  $1.05 x = 1260$ ; so  $x = 1200$ .

• **STRATEGIES:**

1. Read each question carefully to make sure you understand the type of answer required.
2. Take notes or draw pictures if it helps you keep track of information. Use a calculator you're comfortable with.
3. Don't be fooled by answers that aren't reasonable (for example, are 10 times the correct answer), or answer a different question than the one that was asked.
4. If you don't see your answer among the choices, see if your answer can be written in another form.
5. Check your work.

SOURCE: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

SOME STRATEGIES ADAPTED FROM: [www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)



## SCIENCE TEST

This section consists of 30 multiple choice questions and, during the real test, you're given 25 multiple choice minutes to complete them. To test your scientific reasoning skills, you'll be presented with information in forms such as graphs, charts, and research summaries, and asked to critically examine, interpret, and evaluate the information provided. No calculators are permitted in this section. Give the students about one minute to answer each question.

[In the sample test included in this lesson, a short passage is provided followed by three multiple-choice questions. Students are asked to use this information to answer each problem.]

The following figures contain information about how solar energy can be collected through the window of a house. Figure 1 shows the percent of possible sunshine, Figure 2 the average outdoor temperature during the heating season, and Figure 3 the net heat gained (in British thermal units, Btu) per hour per square foot of window area.

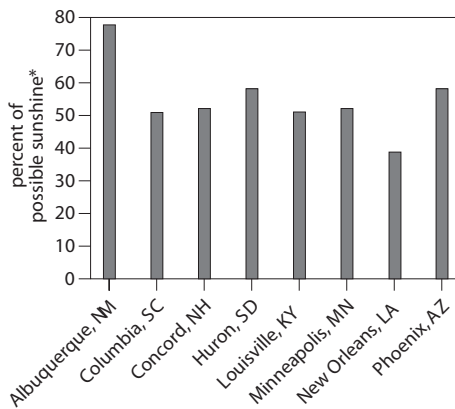


Figure 1

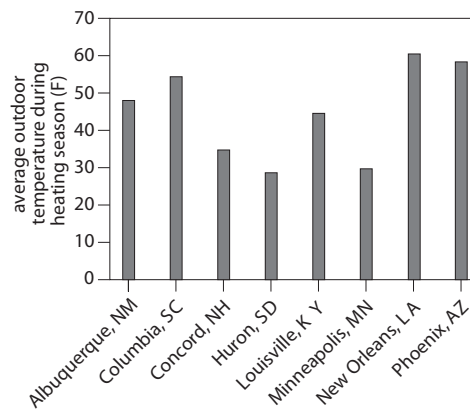


Figure 2

\*percent of possible sunshine =  $\frac{\text{actual hours of direct sunlight}}{\text{possible hours of sunlight}} \times 100$

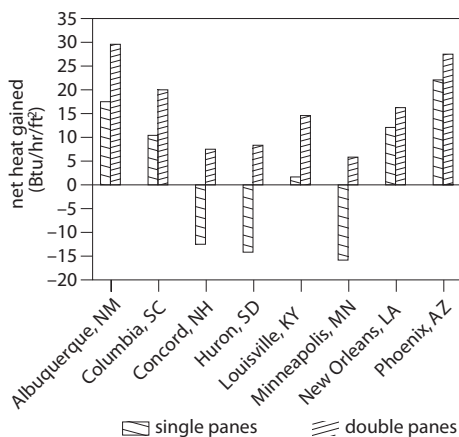


Figure 3

## Science Test continued

10. According to the information in Figure 3, the greatest heat gained through double-pane glass occurs in which of the following cities?

- (A)  Albuquerque
- (B)  Minneapolis
- (C)  New Orleans
- (D)  Phoenix

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 10:**

The correct answer is (A), Albuquerque. In Figure 3, there are two data bars for each city. By using the legend at the bottom of the chart we know that one bar represents data for single-pane glass and the other for double-pane glass. Question 10 asks us to look for the greatest heat gained through **double-pane** glass. If we match the double-pane glass pattern provided in the legend to the patterns on the bars in the chart, we can see that the double-pane data bar for Albuquerque is the tallest of all cities on the chart.

11. Indianapolis, Indiana, receives 51% possible sunshine and has an average temperature of 40.3°F during the heating season. On the basis of the data presented, the net heat gained by a double-pane window in Indianapolis would be approximately?

- (A)  -15 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>
- (B)  7 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>
- (C)  11 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>
- (D)  27 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 11:**

The correct response is (C), 11 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>. In order to solve this problem, we need to use the information provided in all three figures.

- First, we must look at Figure 1 and see which cities receive around 51% of possible sunshine. It looks like Columbia, Concord, Louisville, and Minneapolis all receive around 51%.
- Now, we use the information provided in Figure 2 and determine among the cities we found to receive around 51% of sunshine which one has an average temperature closest to the average temperature of Indianapolis (40.3°F). It looks like Louisville has an average outdoor temperature closest to 40.3°F compared to the average outdoor temperatures of Columbia, Concord, and Minneapolis.

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

- Since the question asked for the approximate net heat gained, we must use the data in Figure 3 to solve our problem. From our previous work in this problem, we concluded that Louisville and Indianapolis have a similar percent of possible sunshine AND average outdoor temperature during heating season.
- Therefore, if we look at Louisville's net heat gained we can infer that it will be similar to Indianapolis's net heat gained. In Figure 3, Louisville gains roughly 15 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup> net heat by a double-pane window.
- Based on the choices provided in question 11, the closest value of net heat gained to that of the net heat gained by Louisville is choice (C), 11 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>.

12. Which of the following hypotheses about the relationship between the percent of possible sunshine and average outdoor temperature during the heating season is best supported by the data?

- (A)  As the percent of possible sunshine increases, the average temperature decreases.
- (B)  As the percent of possible sunshine increases, the average temperature increases.
- (C)  The average temperature is not directly related to the percent of possible sunshine.
- (D)  The percent of possible sunshine depends on the length of the heating season, rather than the average temperature.

• **EXPLANATION OF QUESTION 12:**

The correct response is (C), the average temperature is not directly related to the percent of possible sunshine.

- For this question, we are asked to find the relationship between percent of possible sunshine and average outdoor temperature during the heating season.
- This means we must look at the two figures that provide this information: Figure 1 and Figure 2.
- If we compare these two charts we see cities that receive high percentages of possible sunshine sometimes have low averages of outdoor temperature and sometimes have high averages of outdoor temperatures.
- The same can be said for cities that receive low percentages of possible sunshine.
- There is no pattern that exists between these two variables; therefore we can conclude that no relationship exists, or in other words, the average temperature is not directly related to the percent of possible sunshine.

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

- **STRATEGIES:**

1. Carefully read the passages that accompany the scientific information.
2. Refer to information in these passages to answer questions.
3. Pay attention to titles, labels, and legends within the charts, graphs, and tables.
4. Read each question carefully. Just because a question uses terms that may be unfamiliar to you, it doesn’t mean you can’t answer the question. You can often use the data provided to solve the problem.
5. Be aware of conflicting points of view in some passages.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

SOME STRATEGIES ADAPTED FROM: [www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)

# TEST STRATEGIES

## I. ENGLISH TEST

### STRATEGIES:

- 1) Read through the passage to see if it “sounds right” — the punctuation is good, the subject and verb agree, the right tense is used, etc.
- 2) If the sentence is okay, select “NO CHANGE.”
- 3) If the sentence is not okay, substitute the words from each answer. Find the answer that corrects the error.
- 4) Some questions will not have underlined portions. Instead, you’ll be asked to think about the author’s tone, organization, arguments, and evidence, and make suggestions for improvement.

## II. READING TEST

### STRATEGIES:

- 1) There are four passages, with the easiest passage first. Passages get more difficult as you go along. Within each passage, the easiest questions are first, and the most difficult are last. Use this information to budget your time.
- 2) You may find it helpful to glance at the questions first to get an idea of what to look for. Or, you may prefer to read the passage and try to answer the questions.
- 3) You may find it helpful to mark the passages as you are reading, but don’t spend too much time making notes.
- 4) Pay special attention to the first and last sentences of each paragraph, which often give clues to the main idea.
- 5) Use context (words and sentences around a word) to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word.
- 6) Select the choice that best answers the question asked. Don’t be fooled by a choice just because it is a true statement.

SOME STRATEGIES ADAPTED FROM: [www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)

### III. MATH TEST

#### STRATEGIES:

1. Read each question carefully to make sure you understand the type of answer required.
2. Take notes or draw pictures if it helps you keep track of information.
3. Use a calculator you're comfortable with.
4. Don't be fooled by answers that aren't reasonable (for example, are 10 times the correct answer), or answer a different question than the one that was asked.
5. If you don't see your answer among the choices, see if your answer can be written in another form.
6. Check your work.

### IV. SCIENCE TEST

#### STRATEGIES:

1. Read the passages carefully, including labels on charts and graphs.
2. Refer to the scientific information in the passages to answer questions.
3. Read and consider all choices before choosing the best one.
4. Be aware of conflicting points of view in some passages.

### V. GENERAL

#### STRATEGIES:

- 1) Budget your time.
- 2) It's OK to guess.
- 3) Mark hard questions and return to them later.

SOME STRATEGIES ADAPTED FROM: [www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/tips/subtests.html), [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)





## English Test

### Bull's-Eye: The ACT PLAN Game Show

**DIRECTIONS:** In the following passage, there are certain words that are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for the underlined part. In most cases 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 passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE."

[1]

In the late 1890s, thousands of people crowded into penny arcades across the country to see a remarkable new invention: the movie. Seldom longer than one minute, the first movies were simply recordings of everyday events. A distantly speeding train<sup>1</sup> toward the camera or a man watering his garden—these were typical subjects.

1. 

**A** NO CHANGE  
**B** train speeding distantly  
**C** distant train speeding  
**D** train, distantly speeding

2.

- A** NO CHANGE  
**B** supposedly  
**C** suppose  
**D** I suppose

[2]

Within ten years, the movies were telling ten-minute stories. But they were still primitive, because moviemakers were still recording the story from only one viewpoint, just as their predecessors recorded the speeding train. For example, supposing<sup>2</sup> the story called for a young man to propose marriage. The moviemaker would place the camera far from the stage, recording<sup>3</sup> the entire scene from this single position.

3.

- A** NO CHANGE  
**B** turn the camera and record the entire scene, placing it far from  
**C** record, place the camera far away, and turn to  
**D** turn, start, and recording

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)



**TIPS FOR ANSWERING ENGLISH TEST QUESTIONS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Test

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the passage below. Then answer the questions below it.

5 "Now, this is not your ordinary airplane," Macon told Muriel. "I wouldn't want you to get the wrong idea. This is what they call a commuter plane. It's something a businessman would take, say, to hop to the nearest city for a day and make a few sales and hop back again.

10 The plane he was referring to—a little fifteen-seater that resembled a mosquito or a gnat—stood just outside the door of the computers' waiting room. A girl in a parka was loading it with baggage. A boy was checking something on the wings. This appeared to be an airline run by teenagers...

15 ...Other passengers struggled through, puffing and bumping into things. Last came the copilot, who had round, soft, baby cheeks and carried a can of Diet Pepsi. He slammed the door shut behind and went up front to the controls. Not so much as a curtain hid the cockpit. Macon could lean out into the aisle and see the banks of knobs and gauges, the pilot positioning his headset, the copilot taking a final swig and setting his empty can on the floor.

20 "Now, on a bigger plane, " Macon called to Muriel as the engines roared up, "you'd hardly feel the takeoff. But here you'd better brace yourself."

### QUESTIONS 4 & 5:

4. When Macon compares the plane he and Muriel are on with a bigger plane (lines 14–21), he is preparing for a:
- (A)  smooth takeoff
  - (B)  smooth flight
  - (C)  short flight
  - (D)  bumpy takeoff
5. Since "not so much as a curtain hid the cockpit," Macon's view of the instrument panel and the crew was:
- (A)  hidden
  - (B)  unobstructed
  - (C)  frightening
  - (D)  scenic

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

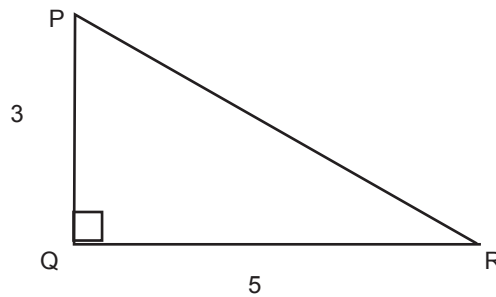
**TIPS FOR ANSWERING READING QUESTIONS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Math Test

**DIRECTIONS:** Solve each problem. Then decide which is the best of the choices given.

6. In  $\triangle PQR$  below,  $\square PQR$  is a right angle;  $\overline{PQ}$  is 3 units long; and  $\overline{QR}$  is 5 units long. How many units long is  $\overline{PR}$ ?



- (A)  2  
(B)   $2\sqrt{2}$   
(C)  4  
(D)   $\sqrt{34}$   
(E)  8

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

7. In the figure below, A, B, C, and D are collinear;  $\overline{AD}$  is 35 units long;  $\overline{AC}$  is 22 units long; and  $\overline{BD}$  is 29 units long. How many units long is  $\overline{BC}$ ?



- (A)  5  
(B)  6  
(C)  7  
(D)  13  
(E)  16

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

## Math Test continued

**DIRECTIONS:** Solve each problem. Then decide which is the best of the choices given.

8. If  $3x - 10 = 24$ , then  $x = ?$

- (A)  31
- (B)  18
- (C)   $11 \frac{1}{3}$
- (D)   $4 \frac{2}{3}$
- (E)  -2

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

9. A certain school's enrollment increased 5% this year over last year's enrollment. If the school now has 1,260 students enrolled, how many students were enrolled last year?

- (A)  1,020
- (B)  1,197
- (C)  1,200
- (D)  1,255
- (E)  1,323

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

**TIPS FOR ANSWERING MATH TEST QUESTIONS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Science Test

**Directions:** The passage below is followed by some questions. Choose the best answer to each question. Calculators are NOT allowed to be used on this section.

The following figures contain information about how solar energy can be collected through the window of a house. Figure 1 shows the percent of possible sunshine, Figure 2 the average outdoor temperature during the heating season, and Figure 3 the net heat gained (in British thermal units, Btu) per hour per square foot of window area.

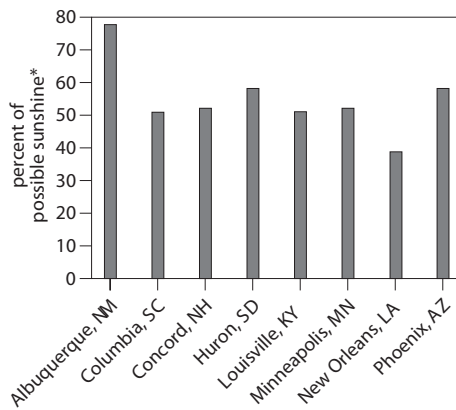


Figure 1

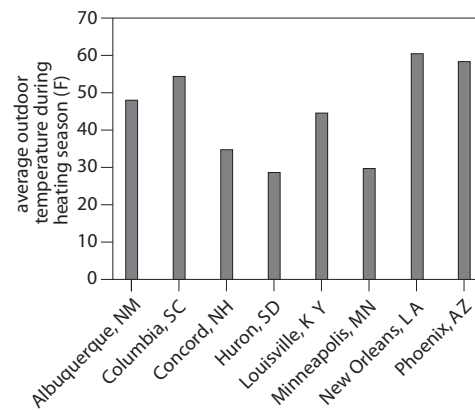


Figure 2

\*percent of possible sunshine =  $\frac{\text{actual hours of direct sunlight}}{\text{possible hours of sunlight}} \times 100$

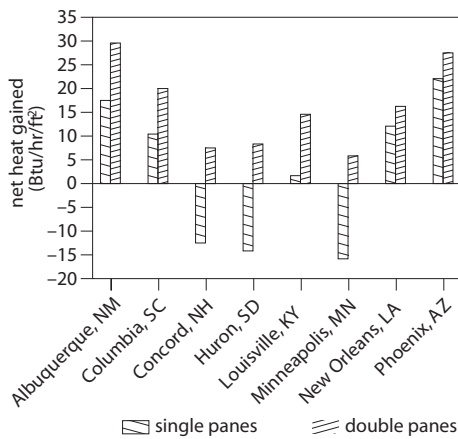


Figure 3

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)



## Science Test continued

**DIRECTIONS:** Solve each problem and mark your answer in the grid below.

10. According to the information in Figure 3, the greatest heat gained through double-pane glass occurs in which of the following cities?

- (A)  Albuquerque
- (B)  Minneapolis
- (C)  New Orleans
- (D)  Phoenix

SSource: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

11. Indianapolis, Indiana, receives 51% possible sunshine and has an average temperature of 40.3°F during the heating season. On the basis of the data presented, the net heat gained by a double-pane window in Indianapolis would be approximately?

- (A)  -15 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>
- (B)  7 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>
- (C)  11 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>
- (D)  27 Btu/hr/ft<sup>2</sup>

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

12. Which of the following hypotheses about the relationship between the percent of possible sunshine and average outdoor temperature during the heating season is best supported by the data?

- (A)  As the percent of possible sunshine increases, the average temperature decreases.
- (B)  As the percent of possible sunshine increases, the average temperature increases.
- (C)  The average temperature is not directly related to the percent of possible sunshine.
- (D)  The percent of possible sunshine depends on the length of the heating season, rather than the average temperature.

Source: [www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf](http://www.act.org/plan/pdf/sample.pdf)

**TIPS FOR ANSWERING SCIENCE TEST QUESTIONS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Post-High School Tests

### The **BIG** Idea

- What kinds of tests might I need to take after high school?

## AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up (10 minutes)
- II. Investigating Post-High School Tests: Two Examples (20 minutes)
- III. Sharing Information (10 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

## MATERIALS

- ❑ **PORTFOLIO PAGES:**
  - Portfolio pages 28–30, Grade 10 Skills Checklist (Taking Tests skills only)
- ❑ **STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:**
  - Student Handbook pages 66–67, So, What Do These Tests Test?
  - Student Handbook pages 68–71, FedEx Sample Test Questions
  - Student Handbook pages 72–77, NJATC Sample Test Questions
  - Student Handbook page 78, Check-up Questions
- ❑ **FACILITATOR PAGES:**
  - Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW, Taking Tests 3: Post-High School Tests
  - Facilitator Resource 2, Sample Questions Answer Key (one copy per group)
  - Facilitator Resource 3, So, What Do These Tests Test? Answer Key

## OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, student(s) will:

- Review an example of a test he or she might be required to take after high school, then list two ways that the test is like the ACT PLAN, and one way it is different.
- Recognize that students not planning on attending college may be required to take standardized tests to get a job or be promoted.

## OVERVIEW

Some non-college-bound students think that once they graduate from high school they can say good-bye to standardized tests like the ACT PLAN and the ACT. These students would be surprised to learn that many jobs require such tests for hiring or promotion. During this lesson, students learn about two such tests (FedEx's Basic Skills Test for couriers, and the National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee's (NJATC) Apprentice Aptitude Test for budding electricians), and see how these tests are similar and different from the ACT PLAN. In addition, they will look at sample questions from these tests, and learn why it's important to graduate from high school with strong academic skills.

## PREPARATION

- Write the **BIG IDEA** and the day's agenda on the board.
- Make a transparency of (or copy onto chart paper) **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW.**
- Make 15 copies of **Facilitator Resource 2, Sample Questions Answer Key.**
- Pair up academically stronger students with students who need more support. You could use the same pairs as during last week's lesson.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In addition to the two post-high school tests that are presented in detail in this lesson, the Basic Skills Test, required for some FedEx employment; and the Apprentice Aptitude Test, required by the NJATC, you may want to tell students about a few other examples of standardized tests they may encounter after high school.

## VOCABULARY

Ability-to-Benefit Tests: (Discussed in the Warm Up) Some students without degrees, (or with low grades and/or test scores who want to pursue a college education) may be asked to take one of several standardized tests called an Ability-to-Benefit test if they want to receive financial aid or loans from the government. Basically, these tests are a way for students to demonstrate

to colleges (and providers of financial aid) that they have the academic skills to benefit from a college education.

**Apprenticeships:** Apprenticeships in the skilled trades, such as plumbing, construction, and electrical work, are a wonderful way of learning new skills. Apprentices often earn while they learn, with wages increasing as their skill and productivity levels increase. Apprenticeship sponsors may pay most of the training costs. Such programs are often very competitive, so the organizations awarding them use tests to help them select the best candidates.

**Military:** Any high school student who wants to join the US Army needs to take the ASVAB (which stands for Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery). This standardized test is divided into four sections: math knowledge, arithmetic reasoning, word knowledge, and paragraph comprehension. Your score on the ASVAB determines your career options within the army.

## IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

### DO NOW:

(You may choose to begin the Warm Up activity as a written DO NOW. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards.)

#### Questions:

1. What test(s) do most colleges require as part of their admission process?
2. Why are these tests important to colleges?
3. True or False: People who deliver packages for FedEx have to take a test before they will be considered for an interview. (Explain your answer.)

[Give the students three minutes to answer these questions. Then start with the discussion in the Warm Up as written. Call on students to volunteer their answers when they are directly addressed in the discussion.]

In **Activity III**, if you think your students will have difficulty completing **Student Handbook pages 66-67, So, What Do These Tests Test?** in pairs, you may wish to create an overhead transparency and investigate one of the tests as a class. Students can then work on investigating the second test.

In **Activity III**, you may wish to have groups that finish early take a look at the second test.

## ACTIVITY STEPS

### I. WARM UP (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Tests are an unavoidable part of high school life. You might think that you can throw away those No. 2 pencils after you graduate... but don't! The truth is, there are many other standardized tests you might need to take after high school. For example, some colleges require an entrance exam to show you've mastered the basic skills needed to succeed.

Another place you might encounter standardized tests after graduation is during a job search. Imagine that you are the head of a big company, and you need to hire 50 new employees. What do you do if 500 people apply for these jobs? Who should you pick? Are you going to have time to interview all the candidates? One easy way to narrow down a big list of candidates is to give everyone a test, and then interview those people who do really well. Companies design special tests to measure the skills that employees will need on the job.

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Today we are going to look at two of these tests.

First we'll look at the Basic Skills Test given to people who want to work for FedEx. How many of you have heard of FedEx?

[Students respond.]

FedEx is a hugely successful company that is famous for sending packages overnight around the world. FedEx is also famous for decent salaries, excellent benefits, opportunities for promotion, and more.

To apply for some FedEx jobs, you have to do well on a standardized test. For example, to be hired as a FedEx courier — that's the person whose job is to pick up and deliver urgent packages — you have to take something called the Basic Skills Test. On their website, FedEx says, "The employment tests used by Federal Express were professionally developed for our jobs. Extensive research has shown that performance on these tests is significantly related to job performance."

In a few minutes, you'll get a sneak preview of some of the questions on that FedEx test.

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Today, we'll also look at a test given to students who want to become electricians. Anybody here think they might want to become an electrical worker? [Students respond.] Electrical workers install and fix equipment for telephone companies, cable companies, security camera companies, and lots more. Electricians are paid well for their special knowledge. But you probably don't know that there is a national apprentice program that pays bright, hard-working students to learn the skills to become electricians. You also get raises as your skills improve.

The apprenticeships for students who want to be electrical workers are highly competitive. In New York City, for example, approximately one in 10 applicants is selected for the program.

Later today, we'll look at sample questions from this test, too.

[Source for above information: National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee

<http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx> ]

## II. Investigating Post-High School Tests: TWO EXAMPLES (20 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now we're going to take a look at sample questions from both tests, the FedEx Basic Skills Test and the NJATC apprenticeship test. All the sample questions you see today came from the official FedEx and NJATC websites. This info is on the web for anybody who's interested in applying.

Our goal is to compare each set of test questions with the kinds of questions you found on the ACT PLAN. Later, we'll review what you can do now to get the skills you need to do well on tests of this type.

2. [Divide students into pairs, and assign each pair to one of the two tests.]
3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** You and your partner have been assigned either the FedEx test or the NJATC test. For this activity, you and your partner will need to carefully read through the test you have been assigned. Look over the whole test before you start answering the questions on the chart. When you finish your research, your pair will be responsible for describing your test to another team that looked at the test you didn't review.

To find the form you'll need to record your results, please turn to **Student Handbook pages 66–67, So, What Do These Tests Test?** Note that you and your partner are only responsible for completing the form for one of the tests.

The sample questions themselves are located on the pages immediately following the chart.

[Write the test names and page numbers on the board.]

4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** If you finish early, you may want to see how many of the questions you can answer. I'll leave the answer keys here [show where] so you can check your answers after you're done.

You'll have 20 minutes to complete this assignment. I'll give you a 10-minute and a five-minute warning before it's time to stop.

### III. Sharing Information (10 minutes)

1. [Bring class back together, and create teams of four by matching pairs who read about different tests. Each pair will have four minutes to present their information. List the questions below on an overhead projector or on chart paper. Direct your students' attention to the questions and explain that these are the questions you should be discussing in your groups.]

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- How was your test like the ACT PLAN?
- How was it different?
- What was surprising about your test?
- If your goal was to get a high score on this test, what could you do now to prepare?
- Who are some people who could help you achieve this goal?
- What other resources might you use to help you prepare for these kinds of tests?]



#### IV. WRAP UP (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Tests are a part of school life, and, as you've seen today, a part of life beyond school. Knowing the kinds of questions to expect can help you do well. More important, this is a perfect example of beginning with the end in mind. Knowing that colleges and future employers are going to depend on your ability to read and do math is an excellent reason to take your high school work seriously, starting today, if you're not doing so already.
2. [Have students turn to **Student Handbook page 78, Check-up Questions** and complete it before leaving class.]

#### SKILLS CHECKLIST

Direct students' attention to **Portfolio pages 28–30, Grade 10 Skills Checklist**.  
Have students complete the skills checklist questions for Taking Tests skills.

#### TAKING TESTS

##### I can...

Identify reasons why it's a good idea to take the PSAT or the ACT PLAN.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Identify strategies that will help me to maximize my test taking abilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well

## DO NOW .....

### Taking Tests 3: Post-High School Tests

**Directions:** You will have three minutes to read the questions below and write your responses.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What test(s) do most colleges require as part of their admission process?

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2. Why are these tests important to colleges?

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3. True or False: People who deliver packages for FedEx have to take a test before they will be considered for an interview. (Explain your answer.)

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## SAMPLE QUESTIONS ANSWER KEY



### Federal Express Test of Basic Skills Answer Key:

#### Applied Reading Demonstration

1. C

#### Map Reading Demonstration

1. D

#### Listening Demonstration

1. RIGHT
2. WRONG
3. RIGHT

#### Sorting Demonstration

1. A
2. G
3. E
4. A
5. E
6. K
7. B
8. H

## NJATC



### Apprenticeship Aptitude Test Answer Key:

#### Algebra and Functions

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



#### Reading Comprehension

6. C
7. D
8. C



## SO, WHAT DO THESE TESTS TEST? (and WHY SHOULD I CARE?)

**Directions:** Your mission is to review sample questions from **one** of the two tests listed below. Then you and your partner will answer the questions in the column below the test you reviewed. When you've finished, you will share your results with another pair who reviewed the other test.

If you finish early, you may want to try some of the questions to see if you're ready for a great job after high school.

	<p><b>FedEx</b>  <b>Basic Skills Test</b></p> 	<p><b>NJATC Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Aptitude Test</b></p> 
<p><b>1.</b> Why would someone want to take this test?          [Inference question]</p>	<p>Anyone who wants to be a courier, someone who delivers packages for FedEx, would need to take this test. This basic skills test is a required part of the application process.</p>	<p>Anyone who wants to qualify for an apprenticeship for a job in the electrical industry needs to take this test. This test is required for consideration for the apprenticeship.</p>
<p><b>2.</b> What skills are tested?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading comprehension.</li> <li>• Ability to read maps correctly.</li> <li>• Ability to listen and take notes effectively.</li> <li>• Ability to sort packages correctly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to add, subtract, multiply, divide, and use algebraic formulas.</li> <li>• Ability to read and understand graphs, charts and diagrams.</li> <li>• Reading comprehension.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b> What skills on this test are <b>not</b> on the ACT PLAN?</p>	<p>The ACT PLAN does not test on reading maps, or listening and taking notes. While sorting packages is not directly tested, this topic falls under reading comprehension and analyzing charts. Both of those skills are tested on the ACT PLAN.</p>	<p>All of the skills above are tested on the ACT PLAN.</p>



## SO, WHAT DO THESE TESTS TEST? (and WHY SHOULD I CARE?) *cont'd*

	<p><b>FedEx</b>  <b>Basic Skills Test</b></p> 	<p><b>NJATC Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Aptitude Test</b></p> 
<p><b>4.</b> Example of a hard question from this test</p>	<p>There is not one right answer!</p>	<p>There is not one right answer!</p>
<p><b>5.</b> Ways you might prepare for this test during high school      [Inference Question]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention in English class.</li> <li>• Read more books and longer magazine articles.</li> <li>• Practice taking effective notes in class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention in English class.</li> <li>• Read more books and longer magazine articles.</li> <li>• Pay attention in math class.</li> <li>• Go to tutoring if you are struggling in math or English.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.</b> Why do the companies give this test?      [Inference Question]</p>	<p>FedEx gives this test to make sure that their couriers are competent to do the tasks of the job. The specific skills are being able to: understand written directions/documents, correctly read maps, write effective notes from oral messages, and correctly sort packages.</p>	<p>NJATC gives this test to assess whether the applicant has the basic aptitudes to perform functions necessary for an electrician. Electricians need to be proficient in basic math and English skills.</p>
<p><b>7.</b> What happens if you do really well on this test?      [Inference Question]</p>	<p>You could either be selected for an interview or chosen for a job.</p>	<p>You could be selected for the apprenticeship with the NJATC.</p>



## SO, WHAT DO THESE TESTS TEST? (and WHY SHOULD I CARE?)

**Directions:** Your mission is to review sample questions from **one** of the two tests listed below. Then you and your partner will answer the questions in the column below the test you reviewed. When you've finished, you will share your results with another pair who reviewed the other test.

If you finish early, you may want to try some of the questions to see if you're ready for a great job after high school.

<p><b>1. Why would someone want to take this test?</b>                  [Inference question- the answer is not found in the text. You have to make your own predictions.]</p>	<p><b>FedEx</b>  <b>Basic Skills Test</b></p> 	<p><b>NJATC Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Aptitude Test</b></p> 
<p><b>2. What skills are tested?</b></p>		
<p><b>3. What skills on this test are <b>not</b> on the ACT PLAN?</b></p>		

## SO, WHAT DO THESE TESTS TEST? (and WHY SHOULD I CARE?) *cont'd*

	<p><b>FedEx</b>  <b>Basic Skills Test</b></p> 	<p><b>NJATC Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Apprenticeship</b>  <b>Aptitude Test</b></p> 
<p><b>4.</b> Example of a hard question from this test</p>		
<p><b>5.</b> Ways you might prepare for this test during high school                  [Inference Question]</p>		
<p><b>6.</b> Why do the companies give this test?                  [Inference Question]</p>		
<p><b>7.</b> What happens if you do really well on this test?                  [Inference Question]</p>		





## Job Summary

A FedEx Courier is responsible for courteous and efficient pickup and delivery of packages. Candidates work an average of 17.5 to 30 hours a week. **Pay rate is \$14.42/hr.**

## General Requirements

At least 21 years of age, high school diploma/GED; valid state driver's license; able to lift 75 lbs. and maneuver packages weighing above 75 lbs. with appropriate equipment; successfully pass all basic and recurrency training; demonstrate good human relations and verbal communication skills; and maintain a neat appearance.

## Sample Questions

### Skill Tested: Applied Reading Demonstration

**Directions:** Read the passage. Select the most correct answer based on the passage. To indicate your answer, mark the letter of your answer.

Customer contact employees should advise customers on how to properly prepare their package for shipment using the following guidelines.

- Place address labels on three sides of the package, and put another one inside the package.
- Don't secure packages with string or rope.
- Seal packages securely with plastic tape. Don't use household cellophane tape, masking tape, or water-activated tape.

1. Address labels should be placed on how many side(s) of a package?

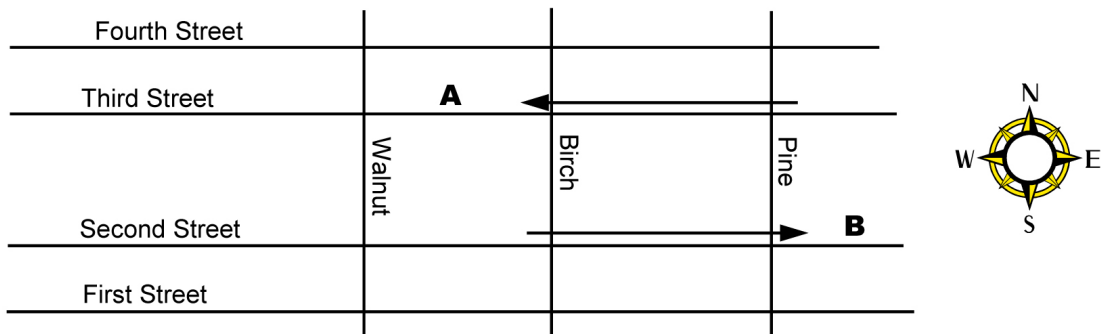
- (A)  One side
- (B)  Two sides
- (C)  Three sides
- (D)  Four sides

SOURCE: All information regarding FedEx job requirements and the Test of Basic Skills is available on their website, [http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST\\_Flyer\\_Verbiage.pdf?link=4](http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST_Flyer_Verbiage.pdf?link=4).



**Skill Tested: Map Reading Demonstration**

**Directions:** Using the map below, answer the following question without breaking any traffic laws. All streets on the map are two way unless marked by an arrow.



1. Which of the following is the shortest route from location A to location B?

- (A)  East on Third Street, turn right on Pine, turn left on Second Street
- (B)  East on Third Street, turn right on Birch, turn left on Second Street
- (C)  West on Third Street, turn right on Birch, turn left on Second Street
- (D)  West on Third Street, turn left on Walnut, turn left on Second Street

SOURCE: All information regarding FedEx job requirements and the Test of Basic Skills is available on their website, [http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST\\_Flyer\\_Verbiage.pdf?link=4](http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST_Flyer_Verbiage.pdf?link=4).



**Skill Tested: Listening Demonstration**

**Directions:** You will hear spoken information that is recorded on tape, and you will then answer questions about what you heard. You will be able to take notes while you listen.

**Example Message:**

“Go to the supply room and get 6 shipping boxes and a package of shipping forms. Take them to the front office and give them to Cindy, who is waiting for you. Ask her if she needs any help in packaging the employee files being sent to Memphis, and help her with them if she says she does.”

After you listen to the message, you will listen to statements. If the statement is correct, based on what was said in the message, check the line next to RIGHT. If the statement is not correct, based on what was said in the message, then check the line next to WRONG.

1. The employee files are being shipped to Memphis.

\_\_\_RIGHT \_\_\_ WRONG

2. You are to get 6 shipping forms from the supply room.

\_\_\_RIGHT \_\_\_ WRONG

3. The boxes and forms are to be taken to Cindy, who is in the front office.

\_\_\_RIGHT \_\_\_ WRONG

SOURCE: All information regarding FedEx job requirements and the Test of Basic Skills is available on their website, [http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST\\_Flyer\\_Verbiage.pdf?link=4](http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST_Flyer_Verbiage.pdf?link=4).



**Skill Tested: Sorting Demonstration**

**Directions:** Packages are marked with a shipping code that is used to sort packages. Packages are taken to a location within a depot depending on the first two numbers of the shipping code. The following location chart shows the locations to which packages with each of the sorting codes are taken. For example, packages beginning with the numbers 00 through 10 all go to location A. A package whose sorting code is followed by either “(DANGEROUS)” or “(PRIORITY)” is marked for one of our two special services. Packages marked for a special service are always placed in the appropriate special service location, regardless of what the first two numbers of its shipping code are.

LOCATION CHART			
SHIPPING CODE (First two numbers only)	LOCATION	SHIPPING CODE (First two numbers only)	LOCATION
00-10	A	65-85	G
11-25	B	86-93	H
26	C	94-99	I
27	D	Special Services	
28-45	E	DANGEROUS	J
46-65	F	PRIORITY	K

Mark the correct letter location for the problems below. The first two shipping codes have already been done for you.

SHIPPING CODE	LOCATION
1. 02BZT	<input checked="" type="radio"/> A B C D E F G H I J K
2. 81TNM	A B C D E F <input checked="" type="radio"/> G H I J K
3. 38JSV	A B C D E F G H I J K
4. 07MMN	A B C D E F G H I J K

SHIPPING CODE	LOCATION
5. 43CPH	A B C D E F G H I J K
6. 90LUA (PRIORITY)	A B C D E F G H I J K
7. 22CCK	A B C D E F G H I J K
8. 92DAY	A B C D E F G H I J K

SOURCE: All information regarding FedEx job requirements and the Test of Basic Skills is available on their website, [http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST\\_Flyer\\_Verbiage.pdf?link=4](http://images.fedex.com/images/ascend/careers/BST_Flyer_Verbiage.pdf?link=4).



### Apprenticeship Summary

The National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) jointly sponsor apprenticeship training programs that offer you the opportunity to earn wages and benefits while you learn the skills needed for a trade that can be both challenging and rewarding. You will have the chance to use your mind, as well as your physical skills, to complete work in a variety of settings with the constant opportunity to learn something new.

The sample questions are designed to help you prepare for the NJATC Aptitude Test. This test is a mandatory part of the application process.

Apprenticeship programs range from three to five years. For a list of electrical specialties and the skills needed for this kind of work, see...  
<http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx> .

### General Requirements

- Minimum age 18
- High School Education
- One Year of High School Algebra
- [Qualifying Score on an Aptitude Test](#)
- Drug Free

SOURCE: All information regarding NJATC apprenticeships and testing is available on their website, <http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx>.



## SAMPLE QUESTIONS: Math Ability Skills

1. Consider the following formula:  $A = B + 3(4 - C)$

If B equals 5 and C equals 2, what is the value of A?

- (A)  7  
(B)  11  
(C)  12  
(D)  17

2. Consider the following formula:  $y = 3(x + 5)(x - 2)$

Which of the following formulas is equivalent to this one?

- (A)   $y = 3x^2 + 9x - 30$   
(B)   $y = x^2 + 3x - 10$   
(C)   $y = 3x^2 + 3x - 10$   
(D)   $y = 3x^2 + 3x - 30$

SOURCE: All information regarding NJATC apprenticeships and testing is available on their website, <http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx>.



## SAMPLE QUESTIONS: Math Ability Skills

3. Consider the following pattern of numbers: 110, 112, 107, 109, 104

What is the next number in the pattern?

- (A)  97
- (B)  99
- (C)  106
- (D)  109
4. Consider the following formula:  $a = \frac{1}{2}b - 4$
- Which of the following statements is true for this formula?
- (A)  When the value of  $b$  is less than 8,  $a$  is negative.
- (B)  When the value of  $b$  is greater than 8,  $a$  is negative.
- (C)  When the value of  $b$  is less than 8,  $a$  is positive.
- (D)  When the value of  $b$  is greater than 4,  $a$  is positive.

SOURCE: All information regarding NJATC apprenticeships and testing is available on their website, <http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx>.



### SKILL: Competency with Graphs, Charts, and Diagrams

5. Consider the following table:

X	Y
0	-5
1	-4
2	-3
3	-2
4	-1
5	0
6	1

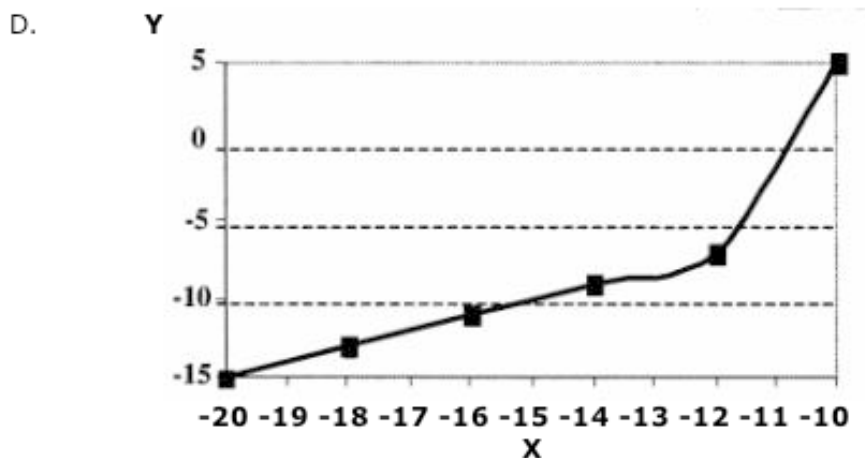
Which of the following choices represents the same relationship as demonstrated in this table?

A.

X	Y
10	-40
20	-30
30	-20
40	-10

B.  $Y = x/2 - 5$

C. Y is equivalent to the difference between the value of X and a constant C, where C equals 5.



SOURCE: All information regarding NJATC apprenticeships and testing is available on their website, <http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx>.





## Sample Reading Comprehension

This test measures your ability to obtain information from written passages. You will be presented with a passage followed by a number of questions about it. A sample passage is shown below, followed by three sample questions. This passage is shorter than those on the actual test.

### Passage

The timing of New Year's Day has changed with customs and calendars. The Mayan civilization, on what is now called the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, celebrated the New Year on one of the two days when the noonday sun is directly overhead. In the equatorial regions of the earth, between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the sun is in this position twice a year, once on its passage southward, and once on its passage northward. At the early Mayan city of Izapa in the southern Yucatan, the overhead date for the sun on its southward passage was August 13. The Mayans celebrated this as the date for the beginning of the New Year. Later at the more northerly Mayan site at Edzna, the corresponding overhead date is July 26. Analyses of Mayan pictorial calendars indicate that they celebrated the New Year on August 13 prior to 150 AD, and on July 26 after that year. This change has been explained by archaeological dating showing that 150 AD was the time that the Mayans moved the hub of their civilization from the southern to the northern site.

6. According to the passage, the sun at Edzna was directly overhead at noon on:

- (A)  July 26 only
- (B)  August 13 only
- (C)  July 26 and one other date
- (D)  August 13 and one other date



## Sample Reading Comprehension

7. If the Mayans had moved their civilization's center south of Izapa, their new date for celebration of the New Year would probably have been closest to which of the following dates?

- (A)  January 1  
(B)  February 20  
(C)  March 25  
(D)  September 15

SOURCE: All information regarding NJATC apprenticeships and testing is available on their website, <http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx>.

8. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following statements is true?

- (A)  Mayans made Edzna the capital because it was more temperate than Izapa.  
(B)  All Mayans moved to Edzna in 150 AD.  
(C)  Mayans used calendars to mark the passage of time.  
(D)  The Mayan city of Izapa was destroyed in 150 AD.

SOURCE: All information regarding NJATC apprenticeships and testing is available on their website, <http://www.njatc.org/training/apprenticeship/index.aspx>.

## CHECK-UP QUESTIONS

1. Of the three tests we looked at during the last three weeks, which do you think you would you be most interested in taking?

- The ACT PLAN
- The FedEx Basic Skills Test
- The NJATC Apprenticeship Test

2. What's one thing you could do between now and high school graduation to make sure you do well on this type of test?

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