Test Description

The COMPASS Reading Placement Test is a computer-adaptive test designed to determine whether students have the reading skills necessary to succeed in standard entry-level college courses, or whether students may benefit from a developmental reading course. The emphasis is placed on the ability to construct meaning from what is read, and therefore the emphasis is on reading comprehension.

Items presented will be of two types: **multiple choice** and **text highlighting**. **Multiple choice** items require students to select the correct answer from among five alternatives. Multiple choice items are self-contained, and for these items the examinee needs to read through the passage to determine which is correct. **Text-highlighting** items pose a question and then ask examinees to locate within a passage a specific segment which answers the question.

Students will be presented a series of reading passages which are excerpts from copyrighted material or original works for COMPASS. Passages average 215 words in length. The reading level of all passages is approximately equal to that encountered during the first year of college, and much of the excerpted material comes from essays, journals, and magazines commonly used in entry-level courses. Passages are of four types: **Prose fiction**, which emphasizes the narration of events and the revelation of character; **Humanities**, which describe ideas or works of craft; **Natural Sciences**, which present a science topic along with an explanation of its significance; and, **Social Sciences**, which present information gathered by research.

After reading a passage, students will be presented with five reading comprehension items. Items are of two general categories: **referring** and **reasoning**.

**Referring** items pose questions about material explicitly stated in a passage. **Reasoning** items assess the reader’s proficiency at making appropriate inferences, developing a critical understanding of the test and determining the meanings of difficult, unfamiliar, or ambiguous words based on surrounding context. Subcategories for referring and reasoning items are shown below:

### Referring
- Recognizing the explicitly stated main idea of a passage with more than one paragraph
- Recognizing the explicitly stated main idea of a paragraph
- Locating explicit information in a passage that answers “who, what, when, why, or how”
- Recognizing sequential relationships
- Recognizing cause-effect relationships
- Recognizing comparative relationships
- Recognizing explicit evidence presented in support of a claim
- Recognizing stated assumptions

### Reasoning
- Inferring the main idea of a passage with more than one paragraph
- Inferring the main idea of a paragraph
- Showing how details are related to a main idea
- Inferring sequence

Please see other side...
Reasoning Continued

- Inferring cause-effect relationships
- Inferring unstated assumptions
- Drawing conclusions from the facts given
- Making comparisons using stated information
- Making appropriate generalizations
- Recognizing logical fallacies
- Recognizing stereotypes
- Recognizing various points of view
- Recognizing the scope of application of hypotheses, explanations, or conclusions
- Judging the relevance and appropriate application of new information
- Identifying the structure of an argument
- Recognizing relevant distinctions
- Distinguishing between supported and unsupported claims

In addition to referring and reasoning items, six prior knowledge items are also presented. Prior knowledge influences the quantity and quality of textual information that is retained and understood. Prior knowledge items are intended to provide a baseline measure of prior knowledge about the subject area and major concepts unique to each passage and its presented items. These items assist in the interpretation of placement scores. A high score on prior knowledge items indicates that low reading comprehension is not due to a lack of prior familiarity with the subject area. A low score on prior knowledge items may indicate that low reading comprehension is contributed to by a lack of familiarity with the topic area.

Free Online Reading Tutorials

http://www.palomar.edu/reading/Thomsons%20web/referencelinks.htm
http://academic.udayton.edu/crc/faculty/CriticalReadingLinks.htm
(These sites have lists of other Colleges and Universities that have helpful tips, exercises, etc.)

Hours of Operation

Fall and Spring Hours: Walk-in testing is from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students MUST be seated to begin testing by 3:30 p.m.

Summer Hours– May 14th to August 6th: Walk-in testing is from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students MUST be seated to begin testing by 3:30 p.m.

August Hours: Walk-in testing is from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students MUST be seated to begin testing by 3:30 p.m.

Contact Us

Location and Phone Number: The Assessment Center is located at 1005 Asp Avenue, in the Lissa & Cy Wagner Hall building, Room 270. If you have any additional questions, please contact us at (405) 325-4336.

The University of Oklahoma is an Equal Opportunity institution. Accommodations on the basis of disability can be made by calling The Assessment Center at 325-4336.