

ETS® Proficiency Profile

Sample Questions

While the measures are shown separately in the sample questions below, the content is not presented as separate sections to test takers.

WRITING

Question 1

Directions: The following question tests your ability to rewrite a given sentence. You will be told exactly how to revise your new sentence. Keep in mind that your new sentence should have the same meaning as the sentence given to you. In choosing an answer, follow the requirements of standard written English; that is, pay attention to acceptable usage in grammar, diction (choice of words), sentence construction and punctuation. Choose the best answer; this answer should be clear and exact, without awkwardness, ambiguity or redundancy.

Being a female jockey, she was often interviewed.

Rewrite, beginning with She was often interviewed

The next words will be

- (A) on account of she was
- (B) by her being
- (C) because she was
- (D) being as she was

Question 2

Directions: In the following sentence some part of the sentence or the entire sentence is underlined. Beneath the sentence you will find four ways of writing the underlined part. The first of these repeats the original, but the other three are all different. If you think the original sentence is better than any of the suggested changes, you should choose answer A; otherwise you should select one of the other choices.

In choosing an answer, follow the requirements of standard written English; that is, pay attention to acceptable usage in grammar, diction (choice of words), sentence construction and punctuation. Choose the answer that expresses most effectively what is presented in the original sentence; this answer should be clear and exact, without awkwardness, ambiguity or redundancy.

While waving goodbye to our friends, the airplane took off, and we watched it disappear in the sky.

- (A) While waving
- (B) Waving
- (C) As we were waving
- (D) While we are waving

READING AND CRITICAL THINKING

Directions: Each stimulus (a passage, poem, graph or table, for example) is followed by a question or questions based on that stimulus. Read each stimulus carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question following a stimulus.

Question 1

An increasing number of residents in Clarksville are rejecting conventional Western medicine and adopting alternative forms of medicine, particularly herbal remedies. Sales of herbal remedies, including Ginkgo Biloba, St. John's wort and echinacea, have increased dramatically over the last three years. Moreover, during this same three-year period, the number of patients treated at the local medical clinic has declined.

Which of the following would be most useful in evaluating whether the assertion made in the first sentence is true?

- (A) The number of different herbal remedies currently available at local health food stores
- (B) The total revenue generated by the sale of herbal remedies at local health food stores over the last three years
- (C) Whether the increase in sales of herbal remedies at local health food stores over the last three years reflects an increase in use
- (D) Whether herbal remedies are increasingly available in Clarksville at stores other than health food stores

Question 2

Certain literary theorists claim to see no difference between literature and criticism. They rest their case on two similarities between the genres: both are impassioned and both use “literary language.” The critical essays of John Ruskin (1819–1900) are surely impassioned, and surely full of literary language. However, we do recognize a difference, not in the use of language, but in the internal organization of parts between the literary genres (the novel, drama, poetry), which tend to be organized around a central, defining symbol or set of symbols, and the nonliterary ones (homily, criticism, the philosophical essay), which tend to be linear and discursive in nature. It is by some such structural principle, and not by any remarks about language, that we distinguish the critical essay from literary genres, such as poetry.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

- (A) analyze a major trend in recent literary theory
- (B) point out the distinguishing features of certain important literary genres
- (C) question the claim that there are significant differences between literary and nonliterary genres
- (D) identify a means of differentiating between literary and nonliterary genres

Question 3

Which of the following claims, if true, would be most difficult to reconcile with the argument made by the author of the passage?

- (A) Few essayists are as skilled in their use of literary language as Ruskin was.
- (B) Many prose poets tend to avoid the use of impassioned literary language in their work.
- (C) The use of the symbol as a structuring device in poetry is more common in certain literary periods than in others.
- (D) The essay form was invented in the late 16th century as a way for writers to articulate personal thoughts and feelings.

Note: Questions 1 and 3 measure critical thinking. Question 2 measures reading comprehension.

MATH

Directions: Solve each problem, using any available space on the page for scratch work. Then decide which is the best of the choices given and select that answer.

Question 1

A train traveled at a constant rate of f feet per second. How many feet did it travel in x minutes?

(A) $\frac{60f}{x}$

(B) $\frac{fx}{60}$

(C) $\frac{x}{60f}$

(D) $60fx$

Question 2

From 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. one morning, the temperature rose 7° F. From 7 a.m. to 8 a.m., the temperature rose 2° F, and from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., the temperature rose 3° F. If the temperature was 55° F at 9 a.m., what was the temperature at 6 a.m.?

(A) 43° F

(B) 53° F

(C) 57° F

(D) 67° F

Answer Key for Sample Questions

Writing	Reading and Critical Thinking	Math
1. C	1. C	1. D
2. C	2. D	2. A
	3. C	