

Q. & A.

What can the COMPASS do for me?

The American College Testing Program's COMPASS has been developed to help persons entering two-year community and technical colleges succeed in their educational goals. The main purpose of this skills assessment is to help you identify your strengths and needs to build a solid plan for success in your education.

When is the COMPASS given?

For your convenience, COMPASS sessions are held daily.

All applicants must schedule an appointment. Please be present 15 minutes prior to your scheduled session. If you have any questions, please contact the Assessment Director at (803) 535-1225. A picture ID must be shown to be admitted for testing.

What if I fail the COMPASS?

First and foremost, the COMPASS is not pass or fail; it is a course placement program. In other words, your scores will indicate where your strengths and weaknesses lie in relation to college-level work. Should you require assistance in meeting academic requirements, we offer classes in math, reading, and English. The Student Transitional Education Program (STEP) provides tutoring sessions. Applicants must meet an established minimum reading score to be admitted to specific Associate Degree and Diploma Programs. Applicants who do not possess minimum reading competencies for selected programs may require further assessment or referral to other community agencies prior to enrollment at OCtech.

Is the COMPASS timed?

No.
Note: The timed paper/pencil version (ASSET) is administered in extreme circumstances by appointment only.

May I retest?

Yes. Applicants who do not achieve the minimum scores for curricula entrance may retest once within five (5) years. There is a \$5 charge for the retest.

Applicants who retake the assessment test and remain ineligible for placement into their curricula are advised to enroll and successfully complete selected prerequisite courses.

Note - The Elementary Algebra section is not given during the ASSET administration at secondary schools.

When will I receive the results of the COMPASS?

The COMPASS is scored at the end of each session. You must see an admissions counselor to receive your scores. Test results are not revealed via telephone.

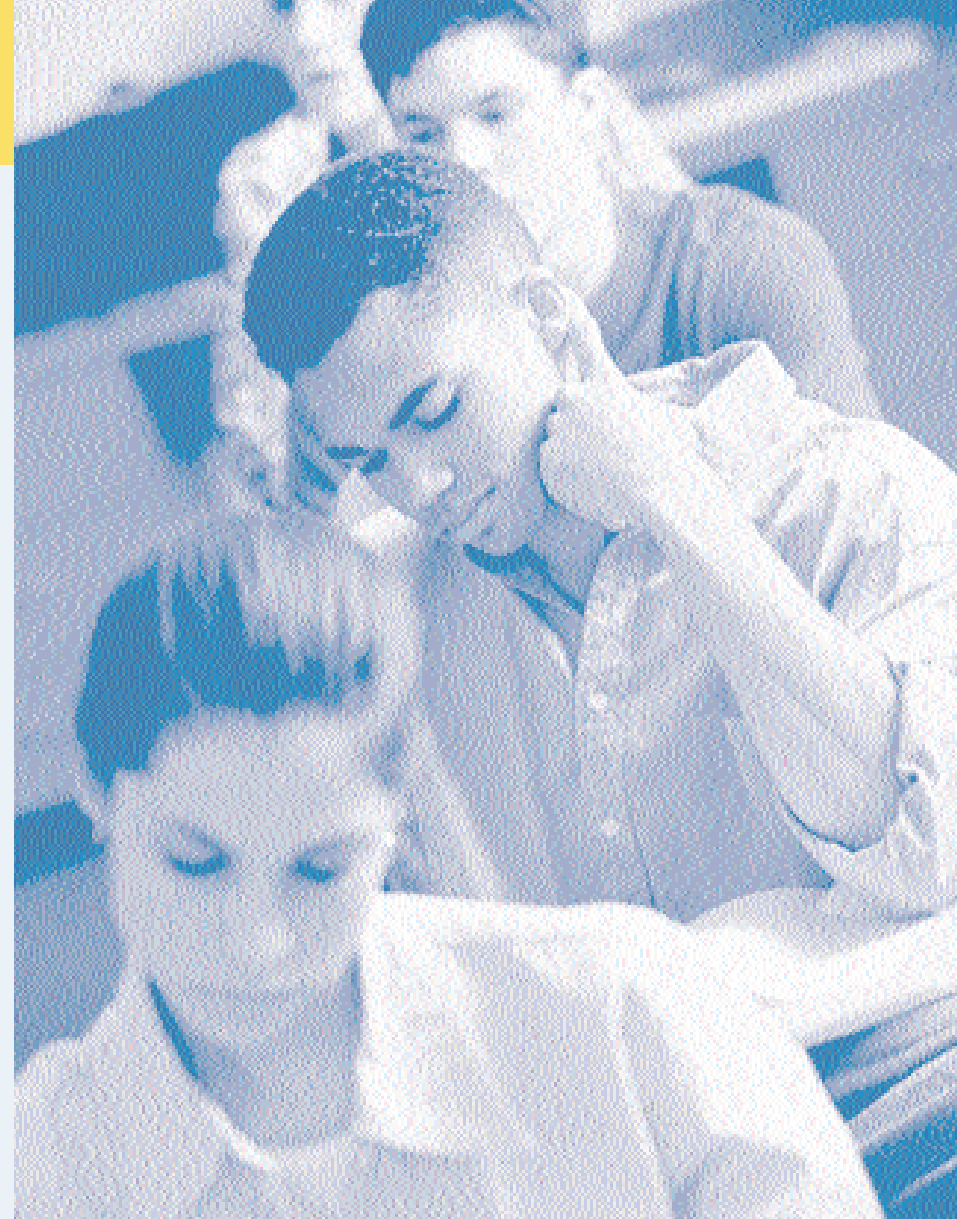
To schedule a COMPASS test or for more information on admissions please call the Admissions Office at (803) 535-1224



3250 St. Matthews Road, Orangeburg, SC 29118
(803) 536-0311 1-800-813-6519
www.octech.edu

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and equal access in student services programs and student employment and in faculty and staff personnel administration without discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, political affiliation, legally identified disabilities, veteran, or marital status. Title IX and Section 504, Compliance Officer: Tyrone Russell, 3250 St. Matthews Road, Orangeburg, SC 29118-8299. Telephone: (803) 535-1207.



COMPASS:



You took a test to drive a car.

Now take one that will really take you places.

Compass Testing



Orangeburg Calhoun
Technical College

Sample Questions:

Sample Essay: Writing Skills Placement

An increasing number of lakes and rivers in the northern United States is being invaded by a mussel no larger than a fingernail.

The zebra mussel probably steamed aboard a transatlantic ship sometime in the mid-1980s from the Caspian Sea into U.S. waters. Despite its growth was explosive, partly because the species was preyed upon by very few native predators in its new environment. As a consequence, the zebra mussels did find a plentiful food supply. They eat huge amounts of phytoplankton, which tiny free-floating sea organisms that dwell in water. Scientists are concerned when the mussels may compete aggressively with other species that depend on the same food supply.

Others concerned by the invading species are industry, public utilities, and boat owners. Zebra mussels cluster in huge colonies, being anchored themselves to any hard surface. These colonies can clog your water intake pipes of electric and water treatment plants. Fishery specialists are currently casting about and baiting their hooks to gun down control methods that will cause the lowest amount of damage to water supplies and other aquatic species. Two of the alternatives exploring are interrupting the species reproductive cycle and finding a bacterium harmful only to zebra mussels.

Instructions: Pick the answer that best fits the essay.

Basic Grammar and Usage: Ensuring Grammatical Agreement Segment 1

- A. An increasing number of lakes and rivers
- B. An increasingly number of lakes and rivers
- C. A number increasing of lakes and rivers
- D. A number increasingly of lakes and rivers
- E. An increasing of lakes and rivers

Style: Avoiding Redundancy Segment 2

- A. was preyed upon by very few native predators in its new environment.
- B. found very few predators in its new environment.
- C. found very few native predators and was seldom eaten in its new environment.
- D. was preyed on by very few native predator species in its new environment.
- E. was seldom eaten or preyed on by native predator species in its new environment.

Sentence Structure: Relating Clauses Segment 3

- A. Scientists are concerned when the mussels
- B. Scientists are concerned that if the mussels
- C. Scientists are concerned wherein the mussels
- D. Scientists are concerned that the mussels
- E. Scientists are concerned as if the mussels

Strategy: Making Decisions about Cohesive Devices

Item 4 (end-of-passage)

The writer wishes to add a sentence at the end of Paragraph 1 that will serve as a transition between Paragraphs 1 and 2 and will establish the main focus of the essay. Which of the following sentences most effectively fulfills that purpose?

- A. The zebra mussel will provide a difficult challenge for public utility managers.
- B. The zebra mussel is only the latest in a series of newly introduced species to thrive in the U.S.
- C. No one knows how far south and west the zebra mussel is likely to spread, but scientists think they may be on the trail of important clues.
- D. Although small in size, the zebra mussel may become a huge problem for pleasure boat owners in North American waterways.
- E. Despite its size, however, the zebra mussel may have a dramatic effect on North American waterways.

Answers:
1. A 2. B 3. D 4. E

Sample Practical Reading Passage: Reading Placement

Regular tune-ups of your heating system will cut heating costs and will most likely increase the lifetime and safety of the system. When a service technician performs a tune-up, he or she should test the efficiency of your heating system.

The technician should measure the efficiency of your system both before and after servicing it and provide you with a copy of the results. Combustion efficiency is determined indirectly, based on some of the following tests: 1) temperature of the flue (or chimney); 2) percent carbon dioxide or percent oxygen in the atmosphere; 3) presence of carbon monoxide in the atmosphere; and 4) draft. Incomplete combustion of fuel is the main contributor to low efficiency. If the technician cannot raise the combustion efficiency up to at least 75% after tuning your heating system, you should consider installing a new system or at least modifying your present system to increase its efficiency.

Adapted from Alex Wilson and John Morrill, Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings. ©1993 by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.

Reasoning

- 1. The passage suggests that the presence of carbon monoxide in the atmosphere:
 - A. can provide information regarding combustion efficiency.
 - B. is found in 75% of heating systems tested.
 - C. can be reduced by decreasing heating system draft.
 - D. is the main cause of low efficiency in heating systems.
 - E. is more reliable than flue temperature as an indicator of combustion efficiency.

Referring

- 2. According to the passage, when performing a tune-up of a heating system, the service technician should:
 - A. ensure that the combustion efficiency is at least 25%.
 - B. modify the heating system before initially measuring efficiency.
 - C. measure combustion efficiency both before and after servicing the system.
 - D. provide his or her supervisor with a written report of the system's efficiency.
 - E. ignore the age of the heating system.

Answers:
1. A 2. C

Numerical Skills/Prealgebra Placement

Averages: Means, Medians, and Modes

- 1. What is the average (arithmetic mean) of 8, 7, 7, 5, 3, 2, and 2?
 - A. $3\frac{4}{7}$
 - B. $4\frac{5}{6}$
 - C. $4\frac{6}{7}$
 - D. 5
 - E. $6\frac{4}{5}$

Basic Operations with Decimals

- 2. Ben is making wooden toys for the next arts and crafts sale. Each toy costs Ben \$1.80 to make. If he sells the toys for \$3.00 each, how many will he have to sell to make a profit of exactly \$36.00 ?
 - A. 12
 - B. 20
 - C. 30
 - D. 60
 - E. 108

Basic Operations with Fractions

- 3. How many yards of material from a 24-yard length of cloth remain after 3 pieces, each $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards long, and 5 pieces, each $2\frac{1}{4}$ yards long, are removed?
 - A. $2\frac{1}{4}$
 - B. $4\frac{1}{4}$
 - C. $4\frac{5}{6}$
 - D. $10\frac{1}{4}$
 - E. $10\frac{5}{6}$



Percentages

- 4. Phillip charged \$400 worth of goods on his credit card. On his first bill, he was not charged any interest, and he made a payment of \$20. He then charged another \$18 worth of goods. On his second bill a month later, he was charged 2% interest on his entire unpaid balance. How much interest was Phillip charged on his second bill?
 - A. \$8.76
 - B. \$7.96
 - C. \$7.60
 - D. \$7.24
 - E. \$6.63

Answers:
1. C 2. C 3. A 4. B

Algebra Placement

Elementary Algebra: Linear Equations in One Variable

- 1. A student has earned scores of 87, 81, and 88 on the first 3 of 4 tests. If the student wants an average (arithmetic mean) of exactly 87, what score must she earn on the fourth test?
 - A. 85
 - B. 86
 - C. 87
 - D. 92
 - E. 93

Elementary Algebra: Basic Operations with Polynomials

- 2. Which of the following expressions represents the product of 3 less than twice x and 2 more than the quantity 3 times x ?
 - A. $-6x^2 + 25x + 6$
 - B. $6x^2 + 5x + 6$
 - C. $6x^2 - 5x + 6$
 - D. $6x^2 - 5x - 6$
 - E. $6x^2 - 13x - 6$

Elementary Algebra: Substituting Values into Algebraic Expressions

- 3. If $x = -1$ and $y = 2$, what is the value of the expression $2x^3 - 3xy$?
 - A. 8
 - B. 4
 - C. -1
 - D. -4
 - E. -8

Answers:
1. D 2. D 3. B