PREPARING FOR THE PLACEMENT TEST

Introduction
Your placement test scores really matter; they determine where you can begin your course of study. It is important to brush up on material you have mastered in the past, which may come back to you with a little review, so that you do not unnecessarily add to the length of time it will take to reach your educational goals. However, trying to cram for the test to enter courses beyond your experience or easy recollection is not a good idea. Remember, placement tests are not intended to measure your ability. They are intended to determine placement into courses which are neither beyond nor beneath your current skill level.

Test Taking Tips
Tips you can follow to prepare for the test:

• Review basic concepts in reading, grammar, arithmetic, and elementary algebra
• Review basic concepts in any geometry, advanced algebra, and trigonometry courses you have successfully completed
• Take practice tests
• Get at least 7 to 9 hours of rest the night before the test
• Be sure to eat a balanced meal
• Use positive self-talk (i.e, “I will do the best I can.”)
Publications
• GED review book.
• SAT review books (publishers include: Arco, Kaplan, Nova and Barrons).
• New York State English Regents exam review book.

Internet Web Sites:
www.testprepreview.com/accuplacer_practice.htm

Sample Questions
The following section provides basic examples of the types of English questions on the placement test. Reviewing these questions does not guarantee an improved score but a thorough understanding of how each correct answer was derived is an excellent starting point. In addition to reviewing carefully and getting plenty of rest for these tests, be sure to take your time while testing and do your best. Your test results will determine your course assessment at MCC.

For additional resources:
Go to http://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/students.
Click on Free Sample Questions. Also see on this site information from the test publisher on contents of tests and how to prepare for them, including an iPhone app for purchase.
Reading Comprehension

The Reading Comprehension section contains 20-25 questions. Designed to measure how well you understand what you read, some questions will require reading passages of various lengths and answering a series of questions about the content in the passage. Other questions will require the tester to read two sentences and answer a question regarding the relationship of these two sentences.

Directions: Read the statement or passage and then choose the best answer to the question. Answer the question based on what is stated or implied in the statement or passage.

1. Myths are stories, the products of fertile imagination, sometimes simple, often containing profound truths. They are not meant to be taken too literally. Details may sometimes appear childish, but most myths express a culture’s most serious beliefs about human beings, eternity and God.

The main idea of this passage is that myths
A. are created primarily to entertain young children.
B. are purposely written for the reader who lacks imagination.
C. provide the reader with a means of escape from reality.
D. illustrate the values that are considered important to a society.

2. In the words of Thomas DeQuincy, “It is notorious that the memory strengthens as you lay burdens upon it.” If, like most people, you have trouble recalling the names of those you have just met, try this: The next time you are introduced, plan to remember the names. Say to yourself, “I’ll listen carefully; I’ll repeat each person’s name to be sure I’ve got it, and I will remember.” You’ll discover how effective this technique is and probably recall those names for the rest of your life.

The main idea of the paragraph maintains that the memory
A. always operates at peak efficiency.
B. breaks down under great strain.
C. improves if it is used often.
D. becomes unreliable if it tires.
3. The ultimate source of energy for all plants and animals is sunlight. But the sun’s energy can be harnessed by plants, through photosynthesis, and stored in molecules of carbohydrates. When animals eat these enzymes, large amounts of energy become available. Animals immediately convert this energy into molecules of high-energy ATP (adenosine triphosphate) – the universal currency of energy in living things. Excluding only the very first stages in carbohydrate breakdown, which are called glycolysis, the entire complicated process of energy transfer to ATP takes place within the mitochondria.

Glycolysis refers to
A. the initial stages of carbohydrate breakdown.
B. the process of plants producing oxygen and carbohydrates.
C. the production of ATP.
D. the production of body heat which occurs in the mitochondria.

4. Unemployment was the overriding fact of life when Franklin D. Roosevelt became President of the United States on March 4, 1933. An anomaly of the time was that the government did not systematically collect statistics of joblessness; actually it did not start doing so until 1940. The Bureau of Labor Statistics later estimated that 12,830,000 persons were out of work in 1933, about one-fourth of a civilian labor force of over 51,000,000.

Roosevelt signed the Federal Emergency Relief Act on May 12, 1933. The President selected Harry L. Hopkins, who headed the New York relief program, to run FERA. A gifted administrator, Hopkins quickly put the program into high gear. He gathered a small staff in Washington and brought the state relief organizations into the FERA system. While the agency tried to provide all the necessities, food came first. City dwellers usually got an allowance for fuel, and rent for one month was provided in case of eviction. FERA paid for medicine; some doctor bills, but no hospital costs; work-relief; sewing rooms; and renovated hand me-down clothing.

This passage is primarily about
A. unemployment in the 1930’s.
B. the effect of unemployment on United States families.
C. President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s presidency.
D. President Roosevelt’s FERA program.

5. It is said that a smile is universally understood. And nothing triggers a smile more universally than a taste of sugar. Nearly everyone loves
sugar. Infant studies indicate that humans are born with an innate love of sweets. Based on statistics, a lot of people in Great Britain must be smiling, because on average, every man, woman and child in that country consumes 95 pounds of sugar each year.

From this passage it seems safe to conclude that the English
   A. do not know that too much sugar is unhealthy.
   B. eat desserts at every meal.
   C. are fonder of sweets than most people.
   D. have more cavities than any other people.

6. With varying success, many women around the world today struggle for equal rights. Historically, women have achieved greater equality with men during periods of social adversity. The following factors initiated the greatest number of improvements for women: violent revolution, world war, and the rigors of pioneering in an undeveloped land. In all three cases, the essential element that improved the status of women was a shortage of men, which required women to perform many of society’s vital tasks.

We can conclude from the information in this passage that
   A. women today are highly successful in winning equal rights.
   B. only pioneer women have been considered equal to men.
   C. historically, women have only achieved equality through force.
   D. Historically, the principle of equality alone has not been enough to secure women equal rights.

7. Plastics are synthetic materials that are so common today that we barely notice them. The process of making plastics, called polymerization, is a little over a hundred years old. Vinyl chloride was polymerized in 1838, acrylics in 1843, and polyester in 1847. Oddly, those newly synthesized plastics languished in polymer laboratories for decades because no one had yet found a use for the new materials.

We can see from the information in this passage that
   A. commercial use of a material does not always rapidly follow its discovery.
   B. people had no need for plastics in the 1800s.
   C. the introduction of plastics in the 1800s would have upset the world economy.
   D. no practical types of plastics were invented until the 20th century.
8. Primitive people tended to be highly superstitious. Anything out of the ordinary that happened was regarded with superstitious fear. Most people throughout history have been right-handed. For that reason, left-handedness was regarded as an evil omen. The Latin word for left is sinister. Since many people regarded left-handedness as bad, the word sinister entered the English language meaning “evil.”

From this passage we can conclude that fear and superstition usually grew from
A. lack of knowledge.
B. left-handedness.
C. evil omens.
D. terrifying circumstances.

9. In 1848, Charles Burton of New York City made the first baby carriage, but people strongly objected to the vehicles because they said the carriage operators hit too many pedestrians. Still convinced that he had a good idea, Burton opened a factory in England. He obtained orders for the baby carriages from Queen Isabella II of Spain, Queen Victoria of England, and the Pasha of Egypt. The United States had to wait another ten years before it got a carriage factory, and the first year only 75 carriages were sold.

Even after the success of baby carriages in England,
A. Charles Burton was a poor man.
B. Americans were still reluctant to buy baby carriages.
C. Americans purchased thousands of baby carriages.
D. the United States bought more carriages than any other country.

10. All water molecules form six-sided structures as they freeze and become snow crystals. Temperature, vapor, and wind conditions in the upper atmosphere determine the shape of the crystal. Snow crystals are always symmetrical because these conditions affect all six sides simultaneously.

The purpose of the passage is to present
A. a personal observation.
B. a solution to a problem.
C. actual information.
D. opposing scientific theories.
Sentence Skills

The sentence skills section includes 20 - 25 questions. *Sentence Correction* questions ask you to choose a word or phrase to substitute for an underlined portion of a sentence. *Construction shift* questions ask that a sentence be rewritten in a specific way without changing the meaning.

**Directions:** Rewrite the underlined portions of each sentence. Keep in mind that your new sentence should be well written and should have essentially the same meaning as the sentence given to you. The first choice is the same as the original sentence. If you think the original sentence is best, choose the first answer.

1. She hoped to find a new job. One that would let her earn money during the school year.
   A. job. One that  
   B. job. The kind that  
   C. job, one that  
   D. job, so that it

2. Knocked sideways, the statue looked as if it would fall.
   A. Knocked sideways, the statue looked  
   B. The statue was knocked sideways, looked  
   C. The statue looked knocked sideways  
   D. The statue, looking knocked sideways,

3. When you cross the street in the middle of the block, this is an example of jaywalking.
   A. When you cross the street in the middle of the block, this  
   B. You cross the street in the middle of the block, this  
   C. Crossing the street in the middle of the block  
   D. The fact that you cross the street in the middle of the block
4. To walk, biking, and driving are Pat’s favorite ways of getting around.
   A. To walk, biking, and driving
   B. Walking, biking, and driving
   C. To walk, biking, and to drive
   D. To walk, to bike, and also driving

5. Walking, by the corner the other day, a child, I noticed, was watching for the light to change.
   A. a child, I noticed, was
   B. I noticed a child watching
   C. a child was watching, I noticed,
   D. there was, I noticed, a child watching

6. It is easy to carry solid objects without spilling them, but the same cannot be said of liquids. Rewrite, beginning with Unlike liquids... The next words will be
   A. it is easy to
   B. we can easily
   C. solid objects can easily be
   D. solid objects are easy to be

7. Excited children ran toward the loud music, and they told others about the ice cream truck outside. Rewrite, beginning with The excited children, who had run toward the loud... The next words will be
   A. music, they told
   B. music, told
   C. music, telling
   D. music and had told
8. If he had **enough** strength, Todd would move the boulder. Rewrite, beginning with Todd cannot move the boulder... The next words will be

A. when lacking  
B. because he  
C. although there  
D. without enough  

9. The band began to play, and then the real party started. Rewrite, beginning with The real party started... The next words will be

A. after the band began  
B. and the band began  
C. although the band began  
D. the band beginning  

10. Chris heard no **unusual** noises when he listened in the park. Rewrite, beginning with Listening in the park... The next words will be

A. no unusual noises could be heard  
B. when Chris heard no unusual noises  
C. and hearing no unusual noises  
D. , Chris heard no unusual noises
ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Reading Comprehension

1. D
2. C
3. A
4. D
5. C
6. D
7. A
8. A
9. B
10. C

Sentence Skills

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. B
5. B
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. D