

English Placement Test Tip Sheet

Definitions

Reading Comprehension

Term	Definition
Context clues	The content of a passage helps the reader determine the meaning of unfamiliar words through the use of clues like synonyms or antonyms.
Main idea	The main idea of a passage is the most important idea and is what the evidence in the writing supports/proves.
Metaphors	Metaphors compare two unlike things without using 'like' or 'as'.
Similes	Similes compare two unlike things using 'like' or 'as'.

Composition

Term	Definition
Audience and purpose	All writing is directed at particular readers (audience) to inform, persuade or entertain (purpose).
Point of view	There are three points of view. • First person is written from the perspective of the writer or from a group containing the writer. • Second person is written directly to another person(s). • Third person is written about another individual or group which does not include the writer.
Thesis	The thesis is the main idea of the entire essay. All supporting evidence in the paper proves the thesis statement is true. • An evaluative thesis assesses the value of or judges an idea(s)/object(s). • An explanatory thesis summarizes an idea(s)/position(s) without forming an opinion. • A persuasive thesis seeks to convince the reader of a particular position.

Hook	A hook is an idea, often a question or engaging fact, that interests the reader in the topic and appears at the beginning of an introduction.
Transitions	These words/phrases/sentences move a reader between different ideas in the paper by showing how those ideas relate to one another.
Topic sentences	Topic sentences contain the main idea of a paragraph. All other sentences in the paragraph tie directly to the topic sentence. In an essay, the topic sentence of each paragraph ties to the thesis.
Essay Types	There are several types of essays: · an analysis of a topic, which seeks to evaluate; · a summary of a topic, which explains the main points without an opinion; · a persuasive essay, which seeks to convince the reader; · a compare/contrast essay, which develops similarities and differences between two ideas/items.
In-text Citations	Writers use citations to give credit to the research source where information was found. These in-text citations will either be in MLA format (Author 123), or they will be in APA format (Author, 2020, p. 123).
Paraphrasing	Passages from research may be paraphrased, which means putting those passages into the writer's own words. A paraphrase contains the main ideas from the original source, though the paraphrase limits the number of words/phrases it copies word-for-word from the original and is followed by an in-text citation to avoid plagiarism.
Sources	Effective writers use credible research (sources) that contains facts and opinions from experts to prove their main idea/thesis.

Grammar and Punctuation

Term	Definition
Parts of speech	• Adjectives describe nouns. • Adverbs describe verbs, as well as adjectives, adverbs, or word groups. • Nouns name persons, places, or things. • Pronouns take the place of a noun (examples: I or me, they or them). • Verbs are actions.
Sentence Facts	• A sentence has a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. • The subject must agree with the verb, e.g. avoid 'He kick the ball'. • A sentence is written in active voice (Tim kicked the ball.) or passive voice (The ball was kicked by Tim.).
Fragment	A fragment is not a sentence because it is missing a subject, verb, or complete thought.
Run-on	A run-on sentence is incorrect because it has two or more complete thoughts without any punctuation between them.
Comma Splice	A comma splice is incorrect because it has two complete thoughts separated with only a comma.
Punctuation	• Apostrophes (') show contraction or ownership. • Semicolons (;) may join complete thoughts. • Commas (,) customarily indicate a brief pause; they are not as final as periods. Commas separate items in a series, separate two complete thoughts (with a coordinating conjunction), and follow introductory words/phrases.