

THE ACT: STUDYING & TEST- TAKING STRATEGIES

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WHAT IS THE ACT?

- An entrance exam required at most 4-year colleges/universities
- Not required for admission at GCCC
- Taken typically junior yr./senior yr. (before fall scholarship priority deadlines!)
- Math, reading, English, & science reasoning
- Scored: 1-36
- It's timed – just under 3 hours



DID YOU KNOW?

- The ACT national average is 21.
- The KS average is 18.
- KS public universities/colleges require that you either score a 21 on the ACT or graduate in the top 1/3 of your class
- Even if your college of choice doesn't require an ACT score, some scholarships might ask for one.



ACT SCORES AFFECT ADMISSION?

- A lot?
- Some-
what?
- Not at
all?
- All of the
above?

STUDYING 4 THE ACT

DO:

- Create a study schedule.
- Take it seriously.
- Make the initiative to complete timed practice tests.
- Relax the evening before your test and get a good night's rest, too.

DON'T:

- Wing it.
- Take it too seriously.
- Skip the timing part – timing is a huge part of studying/test-taking.
- Sleep in and miss your test. (Yes, it happens.)

ACT English

- **Don't misjudge:** Paragraphs broken up to align with questions – pay close attention!
- **Don't spend too much time on a hard questions :** Simple questions = same points as more complex questions
- **Consider 'no change':** historically, *15-18 questions that are correct as they are*
- **Read each answer choice carefully:** If the answer isn't 100% right it is 100% wrong – cross it off

ACT ENGLISH

- 75 questions
- 45 min total
- 36 sec per question
- 5 passages to review
- Usage/mechanics (punctuation, grammar, sentence structure)
- Rhetorical skills (Strategy, organization, style)

English Question for Monday, March 10th, 2014

[4]

Yet even in the midst of such anarchy,

some commercial possibilities and organizations

8

saw clearly of a medium whose regulation seemed

8

imminent. In 1926, RCA paid the American

Telephone & Telegraph Company one million dollars

for station WEAF in New York City—and NBC was

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Choose the best alternative for the underlined part 8.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. some saw clearly the commercial possibilities and organizations
- H. some organizations saw clearly the commercial possibilities
- J. organizations saw clearly some possible commercials

DID YOU
KNOW?
The ACT
offers a
“Question
of the Day”
every day!

ACT Math

- **What's on the test?**
 - 33 Algebra ?s
 - 23 Geometry ?s
 - 4 Trig ?s
- **Use the answers to your advantage:**
 - Sometimes easier to plug in the answers (e.g., for a variable)
- **Stick to the time frame:**
 - Again – you get the same points for easy questions & hard questions!
- **Don't forget simple math rules**
 - Test-makers rely on your mistakes to create wrong answer choices. Don't let them fool you!
- **Memorize your formulas**
 - Sorry – you don't get a cheat sheet.

ACT MATH

- 60 questions
- 60 min total
- 1 min per question
- Math skills up to end of 11th grade
- Pre-Algebra & Elem. Algebra
- Intermediate Algebra & Coordinate Geometry
- Plane Geometry & Trigonometry

SAMPLE MATH ACT ?S

1. A car averages 27 miles per gallon. If gas costs \$4.04 per gallon, which of the following is closest to how much the gas would cost for this car to travel 2,727 typical miles?

- A. \$ 44.44
- B. \$109.08
- C. \$118.80
- D. \$408.04
- E. \$444.40

3. What is the value of x when $2x + 3 = 3x - 4$?

- A. -7
- B. $-\frac{1}{5}$
- C. 1
- D. $\frac{1}{5}$
- E. 7

4. What is the greatest common factor of 42, 126, and 210 ?

- F. 2
- G. 6
- H. 14
- J. 21
- K. 42

DID YOU KNOW?

While you can use a calculator on the ACT math test, none of the problems *require* a calculator to solve.

It is your responsibility to make sure the calculator you use is allowed. See the [ACT calculator policy](#) for more.

ACT Reading

- You **HAVE** to time yourself – bring a watch.
- Read the easiest passage first – order doesn't matter!!
 - Social Studies
 - Natural Sciences
 - Literary Narrative/Prose fiction
 - Humanities
- Scan the questions before reading
- **Cover up** multiple-choice answers when answering (to avoid *distractors*)
- **Underline & summarize**
 - Underline important nouns & verbs
 - Jot down (in 2-3 words) each paragraph – this helps with main idea ?s

ACT READING

- 40 questions
- 35 minutes
- 4 passages to read
- Under one minute per question



DID YOU KNOW?

Reading every day makes you

- a faster reader
- a better writer
- and a more critical thinker.

People who read are more likely to vote, to exercise, and to get ahead in their personal and career goals.

Find things you enjoy to read: magazines, graphic novels, fiction, or news articles – it doesn't matter!

ACT Science Reasoning

- 7 different passages:
 - Data Representation – Do these first: least amount of reading required!
 - Conflicting Viewpoints
 - Research summaries
- Make *shorthand notes* in the conflicting viewpoints passages to jog your memory
- Cross out information you don't need
- Pay attention to numbers/details: e.g., mL vs. meters

ACT SCIENCE

- 40 questions
- 35 minutes
- Tests you on interpreting, analyzing, & evaluating data; problem solving; and understanding conflicting viewpoints.
- You CANNOT use a calculator on the science, reading, or English tests – only on the math test.

SAMPLE SCIENCE ACT ?s

Passage I

Unmanned spacecraft taking images of Jupiter's moon Europa have found its surface to be very smooth with few meteorite craters. Europa's surface ice shows evidence of being continually resmoothed and reshaped. Cracks, dark bands, and *pressure ridges* (created when water or slush is squeezed up between 2 slabs of ice) are commonly seen in images of the surface. Two scientists express their views as to whether the presence of a deep ocean beneath the surface is responsible for Europa's surface features.

Scientist 1

A deep ocean of liquid water exists on Europa. Jupiter's gravitational field produces tides within Europa that can cause heating of the subsurface to a point where liquid water can exist. The numerous cracks and dark bands in the surface ice closely resemble the appearance of thawing ice covering the polar oceans on Earth. Only a substantial amount of circulating liquid water can crack and rotate such large slabs of ice. The few meteorite craters that exist are shallow and have been smoothed by liquid water that oozed up into the crater from the subsurface and then quickly froze.

Jupiter's magnetic field, sweeping past Europa, would interact with the salty, deep ocean and produce a second magnetic field around Europa. The spacecraft has found evidence of this second magnetic field.

Scientist 2

No deep, liquid water ocean exists on Europa. The heat generated by gravitational tides is quickly lost to space because of

1. Which of the following best describes how the 2 scientists explain how craters are removed from Europa's surface?

	Scientist 1	Scientist 2
A.	Sublimation	Filled in by water
B.	Filled in by water	Sublimation
C.	Worn smooth by wind	Sublimation
D.	Worn smooth by wind	Filled in by water

2. According to the information provided, which of the following descriptions of Europa would be accepted by both scientists?

- F. Europa has a larger diameter than does Jupiter.
- G. Europa has a surface made of rocky material.
- H. Europa has a surface temperature of 20°C.
- J. Europa is completely covered by a layer of ice.

3. With which of the following statements about the conditions on Europa or the evolution of Europa's surface would both Scientist 1 and Scientist 2 most likely agree? The surface of Europa:

- A. is being shaped by the movement of ice.
- B. is covered with millions of meteorite craters.
- C. is the same temperature as the surface of the Arctic Ocean on Earth.
- D. has remained unchanged for millions of years.

4. Which of the following statements about meteorite craters on Europa would be most consistent with both scientists' views?

- F. No meteorites have struck Europa for millions of years.
- G. Meteorite craters, once formed, are then smoothed or removed by Europa's surface processes.
- H. Meteorite craters, once formed on Europa, remain unchanged for billions of years.
- J. Meteorites frequently strike Europa's surface but do not leave any craters.

DID YOU KNOW?

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to score high on the ACT science reasoning test. **You just have to pay attention to details, watch your time, and practice, practice, practice before your test.**

MORE TEST-TAKING RESOURCES

■ TEST-TAKING TIPS:

- [General test-taking tips from ACT](#)
- [The best choice when it comes to multiple-choice \(strategies\)](#)
- FREE test prep/practice questions
 - [From ACT](#)
 - [Number2.com](#) – Use me (shajia.ahmad@gcccks.edu) as your “coach”

■ ON TEST DAY:

- [Test-day checklist](#)
- [Things you absolutely cannot do during the test](#)
- [Can I use my calculator on the test?](#)

■ For ETS students:

- ACT prep books & online prep available for check out
- Tutoring
 - After school: We can help you get your questions answered.
 - Online: You can use [tutor.com](#) to get your questions answered at home.