

DSST[®] PRINCIPLES OF ADVANCED ENGLISH COMPOSITION

EXAM INFORMATION

This exam was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by students taking the course. This exam covers topics such as types of writing; elements of effective writing; reading and writing arguments and using secondary sources.

The exam contains 64 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

I. Types of Writing – 4%

- a. Narrative
- b. Informative
- c. Argumentative and Persuasive
- d. Critical response

II. Elements of Effective Writing – 32%

- a. Audience and purpose analysis
- b. Pre-Writing strategies / Content generation
 - i. Reading, thinking, analyzing, discussion
 - ii. Invention techniques: (Brainstorming, Free Writing, questioning, hypothesizing)
 - iii. Organizing ideas: mind mapping, clustering, outlining.
- c. Drafting
 - i. Paper organization
 - ii. Paragraph Structure
- d. Revising and Editing

III. Reading and Writing Arguments – 32%

- a. Identifying elements of Arguments
 - i. Claims
 1. Thesis (Main claim)
 2. Main Points (Sub claim)
 - ii. Claims support
- b. Analyzing Arguments
 - i. Types of evidence
 1. Logic
 2. Anecdote
 3. Sources
 - ii. Identifying key terms
 - iii. Warrants / Assumptions

IV. Using Secondary Sources – 32%

- a. Finding sources
 - i. Appropriate sources
 - ii. Types of sources
- b. Evaluating sources
 - i. Relevance
 - ii. Credibility
- c. Using sources
 - i. Summary
 - ii. Paraphrase
 - iii. Quotation
- d. Citing and documenting
 - i. Choosing a documentation style (MLA, APA and CMS)
 - ii. Using style manuals
 - iii. In-text

REFERENCES

Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You may reference either the current edition of these titles or textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference

more than one textbook on the topics outlined in this fact sheet.

You should begin by checking textbook content against the content outline provided before selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study.

Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:

1. Rottenberg, Annette T. Winchell, Donna Haisty (2014): Elements of Argument: 11th Edition: Bedford/St Martins.
2. Hacker, Diane. Sommers, Nancy (2014): A Writer's Reference: 8th Edition: Bedford/St Martin's.
3. Wilhoit, Stephen (2015): A Brief Guide to Writing from Readings: 7th Edition: Pearson
4. Bullock, Richard. Daly Goggin, Maureen (2016): The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings and Handbook: 4th Edition: W.W. Norton & Company
5. Aaron, Jane E. (2016): LB Brief: 6th Edition: Pearson

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. The following are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam.

1. An author would summarize a text when
 - (A) a source's ideas are being reordered
 - (B) a source's ideas are being restated.
 - (C) a lengthy passage is being condensed.
 - (D) a lengthy passage is being quoted.
2. Papers written in MLA style should be formatted using
 - (A) single spacing.
 - (B) a title page.

- (C) a centered title.
- (D) Roman numeral page numbering.

3. . A paraphrase
 - (A) may reorder a source's ideas.
 - (B) compares and contrasts ideas from various sources.
 - (C) condenses a lengthy passage into one sentence.
 - (D) states a main idea simply and briefly.
4. The term used to refer to the relationship between writer and audience is
 - (A) rhetorical.
 - (B) referential.
 - (C) contextual.
 - (D) positional.
5. When an author is using a source to support a claim, it is typically effective to cite the passage that
 - (A) restates the claim in a similar fashion as the author.
 - (B) demonstrates the importance of the related issue.
 - (C) presents related reasons or evidence.
 - (D) explains how related evidence or data was obtained.

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course

Equivalent:

Principles of Advanced English Composition

Level: Lower-level baccalaureate

Amount of Credit: Three (3) semester
hours

Minimum Score: 400

Source: American Council on
Education – College Credit
Recommendation Service

Answers to sample questions:

1-C, 2-C, 3-A, 4-A, 5-C

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