

Test Information  
Guide:  
College-Level  
Examination  
Program<sup>®</sup>

2015-16

American Literature

# CLEP TEST INFORMATION GUIDE FOR ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING LITERATURE

## History of CLEP

Since 1967, the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP®) has provided over six million people with the opportunity to reach their educational goals. CLEP participants have received college credit for knowledge and expertise they have gained through prior course work, independent study or work and life experience.

Over the years, the CLEP examinations have evolved to keep pace with changing curricula and pedagogy. Typically, the examinations represent material taught in introductory college-level courses from all areas of the college curriculum. Students may choose from 33 different subject areas in which to demonstrate their mastery of college-level material.

Today, more than 2,900 colleges and universities recognize and grant credit for CLEP.

## Philosophy of CLEP

Promoting access to higher education is CLEP's foundation. CLEP offers students an opportunity to demonstrate and receive validation of their college-level skills and knowledge. Students who achieve an appropriate score on a CLEP exam can enrich their college experience with higher-level courses in their major field of study, expand their horizons by taking a wider array of electives and avoid repetition of material that they already know.

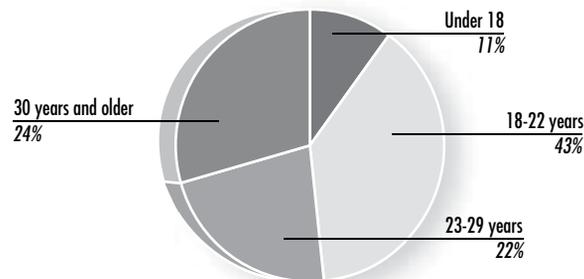
## CLEP Participants

CLEP's test-taking population includes people of all ages and walks of life. Traditional 18- to 22-year-old students, adults just entering or returning to school, high-school students, home-schoolers and international students who need to quantify their knowledge have all been assisted by CLEP in earning their college degrees. Currently, 59 percent of CLEP's National (civilian) test-takers are women and 46 percent are 23 years of age or older.

For over 30 years, the College Board has worked to provide government-funded credit-by-exam opportunities to the military through CLEP. Military service members are fully funded for their CLEP exam

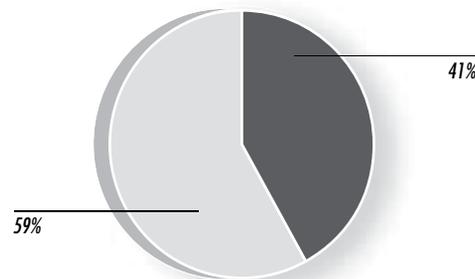
fees. Exams are administered at military installations worldwide through computer-based testing programs. Approximately one-third of all CLEP candidates are military service members.

2014-15 National CLEP Candidates by Age\*



\* These data are based on 100% of CLEP test-takers who responded to this survey question during their examinations.

2014-15 National CLEP Candidates by Gender



## Computer-Based CLEP Testing

The computer-based format of CLEP exams allows for a number of key features. These include:

- a variety of question formats that ensure effective assessment
- real-time score reporting that gives students and colleges the ability to make immediate credit-granting decisions (except for College Composition, which requires faculty scoring of essays twice a month)
- a uniform recommended credit-granting score of 50 for all exams
- “rights-only” scoring, which awards one point per correct answer
- pretest questions that are not scored but provide current candidate population data and allow for rapid expansion of question pools

## CLEP Exam Development

Content development for each of the CLEP exams is directed by a test development committee. Each committee is composed of faculty from a wide variety of institutions who are currently teaching the relevant college undergraduate courses. The committee members establish the test specifications based on feedback from a national curriculum survey; recommend credit-granting scores and standards; develop and select test questions; review statistical data and prepare descriptive material for use by faculty (*Test Information Guides*) and students planning to take the tests (*CLEP Official Study Guide*).

College faculty also participate in CLEP in other ways: they convene periodically as part of standard-setting panels to determine the recommended level of student competency for the granting of college credit; they are called upon to write exam questions and to review exam forms; and they help to ensure the continuing relevance of the CLEP examinations through the curriculum surveys.

## The Curriculum Survey

The first step in the construction of a CLEP exam is a curriculum survey. Its main purpose is to obtain information needed to develop test-content specifications that reflect the current college curriculum and to recognize anticipated changes in the field. The surveys of college faculty are conducted in each subject every few years depending on the discipline. Specifically, the survey gathers information on:

- the major content and skill areas covered in the equivalent course and the proportion of the course devoted to each area
- specific topics taught and the emphasis given to each topic
- specific skills students are expected to acquire and the relative emphasis given to them
- recent and anticipated changes in course content, skills and topics
- the primary textbooks and supplementary learning resources used
- titles and lengths of college courses that correspond to the CLEP exam

## The Committee

The College Board appoints standing committees of college faculty for each test title in the CLEP battery. Committee members usually serve a term of up to four years. Each committee works with content specialists at Educational Testing Service to establish test specifications and develop the tests. Listed below are the current committee members and their institutional affiliations.

Robin Inboden, <i>Chair</i>	Wittenberg University
Robert F. Darcy	University of Nebraska at Omaha
Verner Mitchell	University of Memphis

The primary objective of the committee is to produce tests with good content validity. CLEP tests must be rigorous and relevant to the discipline and the appropriate courses. While the consensus of the committee members is that this test has high content validity for a typical general undergraduate literature course or curriculum, the validity of the content for a specific course or curriculum is best determined locally through careful review and comparison of test content, with instructional content covered in a particular course or curriculum.

## The Committee Meeting

The exam is developed from a pool of questions written by committee members and outside question writers. All questions that will be scored on a CLEP exam have been pretested; those that pass a rigorous statistical analysis for content relevance, difficulty, fairness and correlation with assessment criteria are added to the pool. These questions are compiled by test development specialists according to the test specifications, and are presented to all the committee members for a final review. Before convening at a two- or three-day committee meeting, the members have a chance to review the test specifications and the pool of questions available for possible inclusion in the exam.

At the meeting, the committee determines whether the questions are appropriate for the test and, if not, whether they need to be reworked and pretested again to ensure that they are accurate and unambiguous. Finally, draft forms of the exam are reviewed to ensure comparable levels of difficulty and content specifications on the various test forms. The committee is also responsible for writing and developing pretest questions. These questions are administered to candidates who take the examination and provide valuable statistical feedback on student performance under operational conditions.

Once the questions are developed and pretested, tests are assembled in one of two ways. In some cases, test forms are assembled in their entirety. These forms are of comparable difficulty and are therefore interchangeable. More commonly, questions are assembled into smaller, content-specific units called testlets, which can then be combined in different ways to create multiple test forms. This method allows many different forms to be assembled from a pool of questions.

## Test Specifications

Test content specifications are determined primarily through the curriculum survey, the expertise of the committee and test development specialists, the recommendations of appropriate councils and conferences, textbook reviews and other appropriate sources of information. Content specifications take into account:

- the purpose of the test
- the intended test-taker population
- the titles and descriptions of courses the test is designed to reflect
- the specific subject matter and abilities to be tested
- the length of the test, types of questions and instructions to be used

## Recommendation of the American Council on Education (ACE)

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated CLEP processes and procedures for developing, administering and scoring the exams. Effective July 2001, ACE recommended a uniform credit-granting score of 50 across all subjects (with additional Level-2 recommendations for the world language examinations), representing the performance of students who earn a grade of C in the corresponding course. Every test title has a minimum score of **20**, a maximum score of **80** and a cut score of **50**. However, these score values cannot be compared across exams. The score scale is set so that a score of **50** represents the performance expected of a typical C student, which may differ from one subject to another. The score scale is not based on actual performance of test-takers. It is derived from the judgment of a panel of experts (college faculty who teach the course) who provide information on the level of student performance that would be necessary to receive college credit in the course.

Over the years, the CLEP examinations have been adapted to adjust to changes in curricula and pedagogy. As academic disciplines evolve, college faculty incorporate new methods and theory into their courses. CLEP examinations are revised to reflect those changes so the examinations continue to meet the needs of colleges and students. The CLEP program's most recent ACE CREDIT review was held in June 2015.

The American Council on Education, the major coordinating body for all the nation's higher education institutions, seeks to provide leadership and a unifying voice on key higher education issues and to influence public policy through advocacy, research and program initiatives. For more information, visit the ACE CREDIT website at [www.acenet.edu/acecredit](http://www.acenet.edu/acecredit).

## CLEP Credit Granting

CLEP uses a common recommended credit-granting score of 50 for all CLEP exams.

This common credit-granting score does not mean, however, that the standards for all CLEP exams are the same. When a new or revised version of a test is introduced, the program conducts a standard setting to determine the recommended credit-granting score (“cut score”).

A standard-setting panel, consisting of 15–20 faculty members from colleges and universities across the country who are currently teaching the course, is appointed to give its expert judgment on the level of student performance that would be necessary to receive college credit in the course. The panel reviews the test and test specifications and defines

the capabilities of the typical A student, as well as those of the typical B, C and D students.\* Expected individual student performance is rated by each panelist on each question. The combined average of the ratings is used to determine a recommended number of examination questions that must be answered correctly to mirror classroom performance of typical B and C students in the related course. The panel’s findings are given to members of the test development committee who, with the help of Educational Testing Service and College Board psychometric specialists, make a final determination on which raw scores are equivalent to B and C levels of performance.

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\*Student performance for the language exams (French, German and Spanish) is defined only at the B and C levels.

# American Literature

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## Description of the Examination

The American Literature examination covers material that is usually taught in a survey course at the college level. It deals with the prose and poetry written in the United States from colonial times to the present. It is primarily a test of knowledge about literary works — their content, their background and their authors — but also requires an ability to interpret poetry, fiction and nonfiction prose, as well as a familiarity with the terminology used by literary critics and historians. The examination emphasizes fiction and poetry and deals to a lesser degree with the essay, drama and autobiography.

In both coverage and approach, the examination resembles the chronologically organized survey of American literature offered by many colleges. It assumes that candidates have read widely and developed an appreciation of American literature, know the basic literary periods, and have a sense of the historical development of American literature.

The test contains approximately 100 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored. Any time candidates spend on tutorials and providing personal information is in addition to the actual testing time.

An optional essay section can be taken in addition to the multiple-choice test. The essay section requires that two essays be written during a total time of 90 minutes. For the first essay, a common theme in American literature and a list of major American authors are provided. Candidates are asked to write a well-organized essay discussing the way that theme is handled in works by any two of those authors. For the second essay, candidates are asked to respond to one of two topics — one requiring analysis of a poem, the other requiring analysis of a prose excerpt. In each case, the specific poem or prose excerpt is provided and questions are offered for guidance.

Candidates are expected to write well-organized essays in clear and precise prose. The essay section is scored by faculty at the institution that requests it and is still administered in paper-and-pencil format. There is an additional fee for taking this section, payable to the institution that administers the exam.

## Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the American Literature examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities in the approximate proportions indicated.

**45–60% Knowledge of particular literary works, including:**

- Authors
- Characters
- Plots
- Setting
- Style
- Themes

**25–40% Ability to understand and interpret:**

- Short poems
- Excerpts from long poems
- Excerpts from prose works

**10–15% Knowledge of:**

- The historical and social settings of specific works
- Relations between literary works
- Relations of specific works to literary traditions
- Influences on authors

**5–10% Familiarity with:**

- Critical terms
- Verse forms
- Literary devices

The subject matter of the American Literature examination is drawn from the following chronological periods. The percentages indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions from each period.

- 15%**    **The Colonial and Early National Period (Beginnings–1830)**
- 25%**    **The Romantic Period (1830–1870)**
- 20%**    **The Period of Realism and Naturalism (1870–1910)**
- 25%**    **The Modernist Period (1910–1945)**
- 15%**    **The Contemporary Period (1945–Present)**

### Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. Knowing the correct answers to all of the sample questions is not a guarantee of satisfactory performance on the exam.

**Directions:** Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case. Some questions will require you to match terms with one another or to put a list in chronological order.

1. Make me, O Lord, thy Spining Wheele compleate.  
 Thy Holy Worde my Distaff make for mee.  
 Make mine Affections thy Swift Flyers neat  
 And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee.  
 My Conversation make to be thy Reelee  
 And reele the yarn thereon spun of thy Wheele.

The passage above is notable chiefly for

- (A) irony of statement
  - (B) pathetic fallacy
  - (C) a literary conceit
  - (D) a paradox
  - (E) a simile
2. In *The Federalist*, No. X, James Madison proposed that the dangers of factions be controlled by a
    - (A) republican form of government
    - (B) pure democracy
    - (C) curtailment of individual liberty
    - (D) reapportionment of property
    - (E) clause for emergency rule by a minority

3. Sky Woman, Wolverine, and Turtle are all important figures in which of the following types of literature?

- (A) Puritan allegorical tales
- (B) Frontier tall tales
- (C) African American animal fables
- (D) Native American oral tales
- (E) Hispanic American magical-realist stories

**Questions 4–5**

Thou ill-formed offspring of my feeble brain,  
 Who after birth didst by my side remain,  
 Till snatched from thence by friends, less

- Line* wise than true,  
 (5) Who thee abroad, exposed to public view,  
 Made thee in rags, halting to th' press  
 to trudge,  
 Where errors were not lessened (all  
 may judge).  
 (10) At thy return my blushing was not small,  
 My rambling brat (in print) should  
 mother call,  
 I cast thee by as one unfit for light,  
 Thy visage was so irksome in my sight.

4. In line 1, “offspring” most probably refers to the author’s

- (A) philosophy
- (B) book of poems
- (C) unwanted child
- (D) despair
- (E) intelligence

5. “My rambling brat” (line 11) is an example of

- (A) epigram
- (B) alliteration
- (C) onomatopoeia
- (D) personification
- (E) hyperbole

6. Place the name of each of these Colonial era figures beside the British colony with which he is most closely associated.

- Roger Williams
- John Smith
- John Winthrop

- \_\_\_\_\_ The Virginia Colony
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Massachusetts Bay Colony
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Colony of Rhode Island

7. Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell, than a spider’s web would have to stop a falling rock.

The passage above is an example of

- (A) Puritanism
- (B) Transcendentalism
- (C) Naturalism
- (D) Realism
- (E) Deism

8. Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* had a direct influence on which of the following Revolutionary era works?

- (A) *The Autobiography of John Adams*
- (B) Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer*
- (C) Jefferson’s *Declaration of Independence*
- (D) Franklin’s “The Way to Wealth”
- (E) Freneau’s “On the Causes of Political Degeneracy”

9. Besides, what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men—and what multitudes of them they knew not. Neither could they as it were, go up to the top of Pisgah to view from this wilderness a more goodly country to feed their hopes; for which way soever they turned their eyes (save upward to the heavens) they could have little solace or content in respect of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a weather-beaten face, and the whole country, full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue.

The passage above is from

- (A) William Bradford's *The History of Plimouth Plantation*
- (B) Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
- (C) James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers*
- (D) Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle"
- (E) Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*

10. All of the following are writers of the Colonial era EXCEPT

- (A) Anne Bradstreet
- (B) Margaret Fuller
- (C) Cotton Mather
- (D) Phillis Wheatley
- (E) Benjamin Franklin

11. Which of the following colonial American writers was NOT the author of an autobiographical narrative?

- (A) Samson Occom
- (B) Benjamin Franklin
- (C) Mary Rowlandson
- (D) Elizabeth Ashbridge
- (E) Edward Taylor

**Questions 12–14**

That minds are not alike, full well I know,  
 This truth each day's experience will show;  
 To heights surprising some great spirits soar,  
 With inborn strength mysterious depths explore;  
 (5) Their eager gaze surveys the path of light,  
 Confest it stood to Newton's piercing sight.  
 Deep science, like a bashful maid retires,  
 And but the *ardent* breast her worth inspires;  
 By perseverance the coy fair is won.  
 (10) And Genius, led by Study, wears the crown.

12. Line 3 is distinctive for its use of

- (A) alliteration
- (B) assonance
- (C) oxymoron
- (D) enjambment
- (E) iambic tetrameter

13. The "*ardent* breast" (line 8) serves to

- (A) foster love
- (B) promote greed
- (C) further discovery
- (D) instill wisdom
- (E) invoke confidence

14. The rhyme scheme in the excerpt is

- (A) aabbccdeff
- (B) aabbccddee
- (C) aabcabcddee
- (D) aabbccdede
- (E) aabbcdddee

**Questions 15–16**

BEHOLD her stretched upon the mournful bier!—Behold her silently descend to the grave!—Soon the wild weeds spring afresh round the *little hillock*, as if to shelter the remains of betrayed innocence—and the friends of her youth shun even the spot which conceals her relicks.

SUCH is the consequence of SEDUCTION, but it is not the only consequence.

15. The passage would best be described as an example of

- (A) Postmodernism
- (B) Naturalism
- (C) Realism
- (D) Sentimentalism
- (E) Regionalism

16. The first paragraph of the passage provides an example of which of the following figures of speech?

- (A) Satire
- (B) Simile
- (C) Apostrophe
- (D) Synecdoche
- (E) Personification

17. Which of the following best describes a theme of Whitman’s poem “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking”?

- (A) The desire of the poet to retreat to the protected life of the child
- (B) The grief that overwhelmed America at Lincoln’s death
- (C) The celebration of America as the hope of the world
- (D) The anguish of a man confronted by war
- (E) The awakening of the poet to his vocation

18. Which of the following did NOT write a slave narrative?

- (A) Olaudah Equiano
- (B) William Wells Brown
- (C) Frederick Douglass
- (D) Charles Brockden Brown
- (E) Harriet Jacobs

**Questions 19–20**

The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.

To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust.

I had three pieces of limestone on my desk, but I was terrified to find that they required to be dusted daily, when the furniture of my mind was all undusted still, and I threw them out the window in disgust.

19. The sentences are taken from the opening pages of
- (A) Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The House of the Seven Gables*
  - (B) Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “Nature”
  - (C) Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Philosophy of Composition”
  - (D) Walt Whitman’s *Democratic Vistas*
  - (E) Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden*
20. The phrase “the furniture of my mind was all undusted still” can best be paraphrased by which of the following?
- (A) I had become morose and antisocial.
  - (B) I had not examined my ideas and beliefs.
  - (C) I needed a change of scene.
  - (D) I was intellectually and emotionally exhausted.
  - (E) I had become so lazy that I could not work.

**Questions 21–23**

Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. . . . It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world.

21. The passage is excerpted from
- (A) Henry David Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience”
  - (B) Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “Self-Reliance”
  - (C) James Russell Lowell’s “Democracy”
  - (D) Henry James’s *The American*
  - (E) Oliver Wendell Holmes’s *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*
22. The sentence beginning “He who would gather immortal palms . . .” is best interpreted to mean which of the following?
- (A) Anyone who wishes to achieve greatness must examine society’s fundamental values.
  - (B) A person worthy of emulation need not be good.
  - (C) A love of goodness usually stands in the way of great achievements.
  - (D) Immortality is denied to the individual who opposes conventional values.
  - (E) The means an individual uses to achieve a worthy goal are not important.

23. The philosophy expressed in the passage is best paraphrased by which of the following statements?

- (A) Doing deliberate evil is preferable to surrendering freedom.
- (B) The ideal relationship between the individual and society strikes a balance between total conformity and excessive nonconformity.
- (C) Society and individuality are at odds, so those seeking to be individuals must define their own terms for living.
- (D) Each individual is threatened by society but finally must compromise for the greater good.
- (E) Some people surrender their integrity to society, but they must choose to set themselves against it.

24. The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison. . . . But, on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-bush.

In the passage above, the images of the cemetery, prison, and rose-bush set the tone for which of the following works?

- (A) Jonathan Edwards' *Freedom of the Will*
- (B) Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*
- (C) Herman Melville's *Typee*
- (D) Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"
- (E) Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher"

25. The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

The statement above represents a deliberate rewriting of which important political text?

- (A) The Gettysburg Address
- (B) The Declaration of Independence
- (C) The Preamble to the United States Constitution
- (D) The Bill of Rights
- (E) *Common Sense*

26. The "unpardonable sin" committed by Ethan Brand is

- (A) allowing one's intellectual curiosity to violate the privacy of others
- (B) any mortal transgression not followed by repentance
- (C) the attempt to improve upon God's handiwork
- (D) loss of faith in God
- (E) ambition deteriorating into a lust for power

27. It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art—the limit of a single sitting—and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, (demanding no unity,) this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem.

The passage is taken from which of the following?

- (A) Herman Melville’s “Hawthorne and His Mosses”
- (B) Walt Whitman’s Preface 1855—*Leaves of Grass*
- (C) Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “The Poet”
- (D) Theodore Dreiser’s “True Art Speaks Plainly”
- (E) Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Philosophy of Composition”

28. Which of the following writers, born into a family of New England ministers, achieved popular success with an abolitionist novel?

- (A) Mary Wilkins Freeman
- (B) Sarah Orne Jewett
- (C) Harriet Beecher Stowe
- (D) Rebecca Harding Davis
- (E) Louisa May Alcott

29. So it came to pass that as he trudged from the place of blood and wrath his soul changed. He came from hot plowshares to prospects of clover tranquilly, and it was as if hot plowshares were not. Scars faded as flowers.

It rained. The procession of weary soldiers became a bedraggled train, despondent and muttering, marching with churning effort in a trough of liquid brown mud under a low, wretched sky. Yet the youth smiled, for he saw that the world was a world for him, though many discovered it to be made of oaths and walking sticks. He had rid himself of the red sickness of battle. The sultry nightmare was in the past.

The name of the central character in the work from which the passage above is taken is

- (A) Thomas Sutpen
- (B) Henry Fleming
- (C) Clyde Griffiths
- (D) Frederic Henry
- (E) Nick Carraway

30. “I would prefer not to” is a statement often made by a character in which of the following?

- (A) “My Kinsman, Major Molineux”
- (B) “The Minister’s Black Veil”
- (C) “Rappaccini’s Daughter”
- (D) “Bartleby the Scrivener”
- (E) “Benito Cereno”

31. Which of the following authors wrote *Ragged Dick*, a best-selling novel that chronicles a young man’s rise from poverty and obscurity to wealth and social prominence and that led to a popular series of similar rags-to-riches stories?

- (A) Herman Melville
- (B) Louisa May Alcott
- (C) Mark Twain
- (D) Horatio Alger
- (E) Rebecca Harding Davis

**Questions 32–35**

Six weeks is a long time to wait, and a still longer time for a girl to keep a secret; but Jo did both, and was just beginning to give up all hope of ever seeing her manuscript again, when a letter arrived which almost took her breath away; for on opening it, a check for a hundred dollars fell into her lap. For a minute she stared at it as if it had been a snake, then she read her letter and began to cry. If the amiable gentleman who wrote that kindly note could have known what intense happiness he was giving a fellow-creature, I think he would devote his leisure hours, if he has any, to that amusement; for Jo valued the letter more than the money, because it was encouraging; and after years of effort it was *so* pleasant to find that she had learned to do something, though it was only to write a sensation story.

32. The narrator’s attitude toward Jo can best be described as
- (A) scornful and mocking
  - (B) benevolent and sympathetic
  - (C) eager and expectant
  - (D) critical and guarded
  - (E) clinical and detached
33. The primary purpose of the phrase “after years of effort it was *so* pleasant to find that she had learned to do something, though it was only to write a sensation story” is to
- (A) illustrate Jo’s unshakable self-confidence
  - (B) convey a mixture of modesty and pride on Jo’s part
  - (C) emphasize the ultimate futility of Jo’s accomplishment
  - (D) reveal Jo’s deep-seated shame about being published
  - (E) describe Jo’s lifelong history of failure and disappointment
34. The preceding passage, taken from the story of a young woman who aspires to a life as a writer, can be found in which of the following works?
- (A) “Life in the Iron Mills”
  - (B) “The Yellow Wallpaper”
  - (C) *The Scarlet Letter*
  - (D) *Little Women*
  - (E) *The Lamplighter*
35. The passage was written by
- (A) Harriet Beecher Stowe
  - (B) Harriet Jacobs
  - (C) Emily Dickinson
  - (D) Charlotte Perkins Gilman
  - (E) Louisa May Alcott

36. The title character of Henry James's *Daisy Miller* finally
- (A) adjusts to the mores of international society in Europe
  - (B) chooses the life of an artist rather than marriage
  - (C) enters a convent in France
  - (D) dies as the result of a night visit to the Colosseum
  - (E) marries an Italian nobleman
37. Which of the following best states the theme of Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat"?
- (A) Human beings are largely responsible for their own fate.
  - (B) By acts of courage, people may overcome inherent weakness.
  - (C) Nature, though seemingly hostile, is actually indifferent to human beings.
  - (D) Through perseverance, a world of peace and harmony will ultimately be achieved.
  - (E) In any struggle, the strongest are fated to survive.
38. The King and the Duke in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are
- (A) aristocrats
  - (B) confidence men
  - (C) slaves
  - (D) tradesmen
  - (E) slave traders

39. There is one point at which the moral sense and the artistic sense lie very near together; that is, in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer. In proportion as that mind is rich and noble, will the novel, the picture, the statue, partake of the substance of beauty and truth. To be constituted of such elements is, to my vision, to have purpose enough. No good novel will ever proceed from a superficial mind; that seems to me an axiom which, for the artist in fiction, will cover all needful moral ground: if the youthful aspirant take it to heart, it will illuminate for him many of the mysteries of "purpose."

The central argument of the passage is that

- (A) a creative work reflects the intelligence of the artist
- (B) only writers of unimpeachable moral character produce great novels
- (C) concern with morality always reflects a superficial mind
- (D) fiction, as a creative art, is superior to painting or sculpture
- (E) fiction is often more true than the reality it seeks to depict

**Questions 40–42**

The morning was one peculiar to that coast. Everything was mute and calm; everything gray. The sea, though undulated into long roods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter’s mould. The sky seemed a gray surtout. Flights of troubled gray fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled gray vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows before storms. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.

40. The primary purpose of the passage is to
- (A) introduce a main character
  - (B) resolve a mystery
  - (C) establish a setting
  - (D) relate a climactic event
  - (E) display a narrator’s unreliability
41. In the passage, the word “gray” is an example of
- (A) a metaphor
  - (B) a motif
  - (C) an allusion
  - (D) understatement
  - (E) onomatopoeia
42. The tone of the passage would best be described as
- (A) optimistic
  - (B) sarcastic
  - (C) portentous
  - (D) distraught
  - (E) resentful
43. Which of the following does NOT appear in a poem by Emily Dickinson?
- (A) A fly in a still room making an “uncertain stumbling buzz”
  - (B) A slanted ray of late-afternoon winter sunlight
  - (C) A rain-filled red wheelbarrow “beside the white chickens”
  - (D) A train metaphorically described in terms of a horse
  - (E) A saddened person who “never lost as much but twice”
44. Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, and Henry James are commonly described by literary historians as
- (A) transcendentalists
  - (B) symbolists
  - (C) realists
  - (D) romantics
  - (E) naturalists
45. Which of the following writers was particularly important in the development of the short story as a literary form?
- (A) James Fenimore Cooper
  - (B) Harriet Beecher Stowe
  - (C) Frederick Douglass
  - (D) Edgar Allan Poe
  - (E) Edith Wharton
46. Which of the following authors wrote extensively about her experiences attending a government-run boarding school?
- (A) Sui Sin Far
  - (B) Joy Harjo
  - (C) Willa Cather
  - (D) Diane Glancy
  - (E) Zitkala-Ša

47. Which of the following was a writer of feminist essays and Utopian novels who achieved widespread recognition with the publication of her fictionalized account of depression and mental breakdown?
- (A) Edith Wharton  
 (B) Sojourner Truth  
 (C) Lydia Maria Child  
 (D) Mary Wilkins Freeman  
 (E) Charlotte Perkins Gilman
48. Place the name of each of the following authors beside the city with which he is most closely identified.
- Theodore Dreiser  
 George Washington Cable  
 Bret Harte
- \_\_\_\_\_ New Orleans  
 \_\_\_\_\_ San Francisco  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Chicago
49. Emma Lazarus' poem "The New Colossus" refers to
- (A) The Statue of Liberty  
 (B) The Lincoln Memorial  
 (C) Mount Rushmore  
 (D) The Brooklyn Bridge  
 (E) The Washington Monument
50. *The House Behind the Cedars* and *The Marrow of Tradition*, two novels addressing difficulties faced by upwardly mobile African Americans in the South during the late nineteenth century, were both written by
- (A) Mark Twain  
 (B) Frederick Douglass  
 (C) Theodore Dreiser  
 (D) Charles W. Chesnutt  
 (E) Paul Laurence Dunbar
51. Which of the following best describes people as they are portrayed in the fiction of Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, and Frank Norris?
- (A) Victims of original sin  
 (B) Self-determining entities  
 (C) Creatures shaped by biological, social, and economic factors  
 (D) Beings whose biological natures are fixed, but who are able to manipulate their environments  
 (E) Individuals who must be awakened to the fact that their wills are free
52. John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* depicts
- (A) the plight of dispossessed farmers who migrate to California  
 (B) prison conditions in turn-of-the-century America  
 (C) a wounded soldier who tries in vain to escape the effects of war  
 (D) racial problems in a small farming town in Oklahoma  
 (E) a drifter and his friend who dream hopelessly of better lives
53. Which of the following statements summarizes Booker T. Washington's message in a well-known speech delivered in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1895 and later included in his autobiography, *Up From Slavery*?
- (A) Educational opportunities in the liberal arts are the key to social and economic advancement for African Americans.  
 (B) Progress for both the African American and the White communities requires cooperation in developing commercial and industrial opportunities.  
 (C) African Americans need to better understand their African cultural roots.  
 (D) The economic interests of the African American and White communities will inevitably develop separately.  
 (E) African Americans demand immediate and full equality in all aspects of life that are purely social.

**Questions 54–55**

All went well, until a platter was passed with a kind of meat that was strange to me. Some mischievous instinct told me that it was ham—forbidden food; and I, the liberal, the free, was afraid to touch it! I had a terrible moment of surprise, mortification, self-contempt; but I helped myself to a slice of ham, nevertheless, and hung my head over my plate to hide my confusion. I was furious with myself for my weakness. I to be afraid of a pink piece of pig’s flesh, who had defied at least two religions in defence of free thought! And I began to reduce my ham to indivisible atoms, determined to eat more of it than anybody at the table. Alas! I learned that to eat in defence of principles was not so easy as to talk. I ate, but only a newly abnegated Jew can understand with what squirming, what protesting of the inner man, what exquisite abhorrence of myself. That Spartan boy who allowed the stolen fox hidden in his bosom to consume his vitals rather than be detected in the theft, showed no such miracle of self-control as I did, sitting there at my friend’s tea-table, eating unjewish meat.

54. Why does the narrator call ham “forbidden food”?

- (A) She is Jewish and is not allowed to eat ham.
- (B) She is vegetarian and does not eat meat.
- (C) She is afraid of unfamiliar foods and is reluctant to eat foods that are “strange.”
- (D) She is fasting for religious reasons and is not permitted to eat.
- (E) She is dieting and is not allowed to eat fatty foods.

55. The narrator likens her situation to that of the Spartan boy in a well-known parable in order to illustrate her

- (A) ability to mask extreme physical discomfort in public
- (B) ability to exercise restraint in uncomfortable circumstances
- (C) willingness to lie to her friends about her dietary preferences
- (D) desire to consume more ham than the other people at tea do
- (E) eagerness to embrace new and unfamiliar experiences

**Questions 56–57**

Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me. They possess and enjoy early, and it does something to them, makes them soft where we are hard, and cynical where we are trustful, in a way that, unless you were born rich, it is very difficult to understand. They think, deep in their hearts, that they are better than we are because we had to discover the compensations and refuges of life for ourselves. Even when they enter deep into our world or sink below us, they still think that they are better than we are. They are different.

56. In the passage, which of the following best describes the speaker’s attitude toward the very rich?
- (A) He finds their cynicism alarming and unwarranted.
  - (B) He believes that, because of their advantages and experiences, the rich know more than others do.
  - (C) He is envious of their moral superiority.
  - (D) He thinks that he understands their psychology even though he has not shared their advantages.
  - (E) He finds them so different from the rest of society as to be practically unknowable.
57. The passage was written by
- (A) F. Scott Fitzgerald
  - (B) John P. Marquand
  - (C) John Steinbeck
  - (D) Sinclair Lewis
  - (E) Theodore Dreiser

58. A demand for political, civic, and educational equality is voiced in *The Souls of Black Folk* by
- (A) W. E. B. Du Bois
  - (B) Richard Wright
  - (C) Harriet Tubman
  - (D) Langston Hughes
  - (E) Jean Toomer
59. Ezra Pound’s short poem “In a Station of the Metro” is considered a classic example of
- (A) Romanticism
  - (B) Surrealism
  - (C) Futurism
  - (D) Imagism
  - (E) Postmodernism
60. Which of the following writers was a part of the Harlem Renaissance?
- (A) Frederick Douglass
  - (B) Zora Neale Hurston
  - (C) Phillis Wheatley
  - (D) Alice Walker
  - (E) James Baldwin
61. Place the name of each of the following writers beside the region that figures most prominently in her writing.
- Sarah Orne Jewett  
 Willa Cather  
 Flannery O’Connor
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Great Plains  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The Deep South  
 \_\_\_\_\_ New England

62. Place the name of each of the following novels beside the war during which it is set.

*The Things They Carried*

*The Naked and the Dead*

*For Whom the Bell Tolls*

\_\_\_\_\_ The Spanish Civil War  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The Second World War  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The Vietnam War

63. Characters with the last names of Snopes, Compson, and Sartoris figure prominently in the fiction of

- (A) Eudora Welty
- (B) Flannery O'Connor
- (C) Thomas Wolfe
- (D) William Faulkner
- (E) Robert Penn Warren

64. Which of the following poets is best known for sonnets that combine a traditional verse form with a concern for women's issues?

- (A) Edna St. Vincent Millay
- (B) Gertrude Stein
- (C) Marianne Moore
- (D) H. D.
- (E) Amy Lowell

65. Which of the following poets derived the title, the plan, and much of the symbolism of one of his or her major poems from Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*?

- (A) Wallace Stevens
- (B) T. S. Eliot
- (C) Robert Frost
- (D) Marianne Moore
- (E) Langston Hughes

66. As part of a series of dramas chronicling the lives of African Americans in each decade of the twentieth century, Pulitzer Prize winner August Wilson has written which of the following pairs of plays?

- (A) *The Crucible . . . A View from the Bridge*
- (B) *The Piano Lesson . . . Fences*
- (C) *The Iceman Cometh . . . Desire Under the Elms*
- (D) *Dutchman . . . The Slave*
- (E) *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof . . . Sweet Bird of Youth*

67. Place the name of each of the following writers beside the genre with which he is most closely associated.

O. Henry  
 Frank Norris  
 Eugene O'Neill

\_\_\_\_\_ Drama  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The short story  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The novel

68. “You’ve just seen a prince walk by. A fine, troubled prince. A hard-working, unappreciated prince. A pal, you understand? Always for his boys.”

In which of the following modern American plays is the principal character described above?

- (A) *The Glass Menagerie*
- (B) *The Hairy Ape*
- (C) *Trifles*
- (D) *A Raisin in the Sun*
- (E) *Death of a Salesman*

69. Which of the following cities is Carl Sandburg noted for celebrating?

- (A) New York
- (B) Chicago
- (C) Los Angeles
- (D) New Orleans
- (E) Pittsburgh

70. Bigger Thomas is the central character in

- (A) Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*
- (B) Carson McCullers’ *The Ballad of the Sad Café*
- (C) Richard Wright’s *Native Son*
- (D) Nella Larsen’s *Passing*
- (E) Thomas Wolfe’s *Look Homeward, Angel*

71. “I wish that you were my sister, I’d teach you to have some confidence in yourself. The different people are not like other people, but being different is nothing to be ashamed of . . . Other people are . . . one hundred times one thousand. You’re one times one! They walk all over the earth. You just stay here. They’re common as—weeds, but—you—well, you’re Blue Roses.”

In the passage above from Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie*, the term “Blue Roses” is a metaphor for the young woman’s

- (A) favorite flowers
- (B) profession as a dancer
- (C) vivacious personality
- (D) shyness and sensitivity
- (E) unusual taste in fashion

**Questions 72–75**

The extraordinary patience of things!  
This beautiful place defaced with a crop of  
suburban houses—

- Line* How beautiful when we first beheld it,  
(5) Unbroken field of poppy and lupin walled with  
clean cliffs;  
No intrusion but two or three horses pasturing,  
Or a few milch cows rubbing their flanks on the  
outcrop rockheads—  
(10) Now the spoiler has come: does it care?  
Not faintly. It has all time. It knows the people  
are a tide  
That swells and in time will ebb, and all  
Their works dissolve. Meanwhile the image of  
(15) the pristine beauty  
Lives in the very grain of the granite,  
Safe as the endless ocean that climbs our  
cliff.—As for us:  
We must uncenter our minds from ourselves;  
(20) We must unhumanize our views a little, and  
become confident  
As the rock and ocean that we were made from.

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72. In line 10, the word “it” refers to
- (A) “The extraordinary patience of things” (line 1)
  - (B) “This beautiful place” (line 2)
  - (C) “a crop of suburban houses” (lines 2–3)
  - (D) “the spoiler” (line 10)
  - (E) “a tide / That swells” (lines 12–13)

73. In lines 11–14, the discussion of “the people” emphasizes their
- (A) foresight
  - (B) dignity
  - (C) timidity
  - (D) transience
  - (E) greed
74. The primary contrast in the poem is between
- (A) the land and the sea
  - (B) urban and suburban landscapes
  - (C) animals and people
  - (D) past and future
  - (E) nature and humankind
75. The poem is written in which verse form?
- (A) Ballad
  - (B) Blank verse
  - (C) Free verse
  - (D) Italian sonnet
  - (E) Shakespearean sonnet

76. The short story collection *The Golden Apples* was written by which of the following writers?
- (A) Eudora Welty
  - (B) Sherwood Anderson
  - (C) Dorothy Parker
  - (D) John Cheever
  - (E) Katherine Anne Porter
77. Which of the following is the first-person narrator of Harper Lee's 1960 novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*?
- (A) Jem
  - (B) Dill
  - (C) Scout
  - (D) Calpurnia
  - (E) Mayella
78. Which of the following novels chronicles the experiences of an African American protagonist?
- (A) *All the King's Men*
  - (B) *The Age of Innocence*
  - (C) *Henderson the Rain King*
  - (D) *Invisible Man*
  - (E) *The Catcher in the Rye*
79. At the end of Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," the grandmother does which of the following?
- (A) She ponders the truth of Red Sammy's words, "a good man is hard to find."
  - (B) She collapses in the street after being hit by a woman she has insulted.
  - (C) She dies after being shot by an escaped convict, the Misfit.
  - (D) She marries a Bible salesman who is also a con artist.
  - (E) She sits in a roadside diner, abandoned by the drifter she has befriended.
80. Place the following novels in their correct chronological order by date of publication:
- I. *Mumbo Jumbo*
  - II. *If He Hollers Let Him Go*
  - III. *Beloved*
- (A) I, II, III
  - (B) III, I, II
  - (C) II, I, III
  - (D) III, II, I
  - (E) I, III, II

81. When we Chinese girls listened to the adults talk-story, we learned that we failed if we grew up to be but wives or slaves. We could be heroines, swordswomen. Even if she had to rage across all China, a swordswoman got even with anybody who hurt her family. Perhaps women were once so dangerous that they had to have their feet bound. . . .

My mother told [stories] that followed swordswomen through woods and palaces for years. Night after night my mother would talk-story until we fell asleep. I couldn't tell where the stories left off and dreams began, her voice the voice of the heroines in my sleep. . . .

At last I saw that I too had been in the presence of great power, my mother talking-story.

In the passage above, the discussion of “talk-story” helps to express the speaker’s

- (A) acceptance of having outgrown the stories of her childhood
- (B) development of her own capacity for writing through practice in storytelling
- (C) sense that storytelling was a way that her mother transmitted strength
- (D) desire to pursue an active life rather than tell stories like her mother
- (E) confusion about her mother’s ultimate purpose in telling stories

82. The characters Shug Avery, Celie, and Mister appear in which of the following novels?

- (A) *The Color Purple*
- (B) *The Crying of Lot 49*
- (C) *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- (D) *Go Tell It on the Mountain*
- (E) *Light in August*

**Questions 83–84**

my mamma moved among the days  
 like a dreamwalker in a field;  
 seemed like what she touched was hers  
 seemed like what touched her couldn't hold,  
 Line (5) she got us almost through the high grass  
 then seemed like she turned around and ran  
 right back in  
 right back on in

Lucille Clifton, “my mamma moved among the days” from *Good Woman: Poems and a Memoir 1969-80*. Copyright © 1987 by Lucille Clifton. Used by permission of BOA Editions, Ltd., www.boaeditions.org.

83. Lines 1–4 suggest that the speaker viewed the mother as

- (A) reverent
- (B) indomitable
- (C) absentminded
- (D) ineffectual
- (E) unrealistic

84. The poem makes use of all of the following EXCEPT

- (A) first-person perspective
- (B) extended metaphor
- (C) repetition
- (D) simile
- (E) satire

85. All of the following were written by Toni Morrison EXCEPT

- (A) *Song of Solomon*
- (B) *Beloved*
- (C) *The Bluest Eye*
- (D) *Sula*
- (E) *Tell Me a Riddle*

86. The Native American author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *House Made of Dawn* is

- (A) N. Scott Momaday
- (B) Louise Erdrich
- (C) Leslie Marmon Silko
- (D) Toni Cade Bambara
- (E) Jack Kerouac

87. Which of the following novels, set during the Holocaust, helped propel the graphic novel to critical prominence?

- (A) *The Crying of Lot 49*
- (B) *Night*
- (C) *Slaughterhouse-Five*
- (D) *Maus*
- (E) *Ceremony*

88. Match the playwright with the correct play.

Paula Vogel  
 Tony Kushner  
 Suzan-Lori Parks

\_\_\_\_\_ *How I Learned to Drive*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Topdog/Underdog*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *Angels in America*

### Study Resources

To prepare for the American Literature exam, you should read critically the contents of at least one anthology, which you can find in most college bookstores. Most textbook anthologies contain a representative sample of readings as well as discussions of historical background, literary styles and devices characteristic of various authors and periods, and other material relevant to the test. The anthologies do vary somewhat in their content, approach and emphases; you are advised to consult more than one or to consult some specialized books on major authors, periods, and literary forms and terminology. You should also read some of the longer works that are mentioned or excerpted in the anthologies. You can probably obtain an extensive reading list and sample syllabi of American literature from a college English department, library or bookstore.

Visit [clep.collegeboard.org/test-preparation](http://clep.collegeboard.org/test-preparation) for additional American literature study resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

### Answer Key

- |              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. C         | 45. D             |
| 2. A         | 46. E             |
| 3. D         | 47. E             |
| 4. B         | 48. See next page |
| 5. D         | 49. A             |
| 6. See below | 50. D             |
| 7. A         | 51. C             |
| 8. C         | 52. A             |
| 9. A         | 53. B             |
| 10. B        | 54. A             |
| 11. E        | 55. B             |
| 12. A        | 56. D             |
| 13. C        | 57. A             |
| 14. B        | 58. A             |
| 15. D        | 59. D             |
| 16. C        | 60. B             |
| 17. E        | 61. See next page |
| 18. D        | 62. See next page |
| 19. E        | 63. D             |
| 20. B        | 64. A             |
| 21. B        | 65. B             |
| 22. A        | 66. B             |
| 23. C        | 67. See next page |
| 24. B        | 68. E             |
| 25. B        | 69. B             |
| 26. A        | 70. C             |
| 27. E        | 71. D             |
| 28. C        | 72. B             |
| 29. B        | 73. D             |
| 30. D        | 74. E             |
| 31. D        | 75. C             |
| 32. B        | 76. A             |
| 33. B        | 77. C             |
| 34. D        | 78. D             |
| 35. E        | 79. C             |
| 36. D        | 80. C             |
| 37. C        | 81. C             |
| 38. B        | 82. A             |
| 39. A        | 83. B             |
| 40. C        | 84. E             |
| 41. B        | 85. E             |
| 42. C        | 86. A             |
| 43. C        | 87. D             |
| 44. C        | 88. See next page |

6. John Smith — The Virginia Colony  
 John Winthrop — The Massachusetts Bay Colony  
 Roger Williams — The Colony of Rhode Island

48. George Washington Cable — New Orleans  
Bret Harte — San Francisco  
Theodore Dreiser — Chicago
61. Willa Cather — The Great Plains  
Flannery O'Connor — The Deep South  
Sarah Orne Jewett — New England
62. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* — The Spanish Civil War  
*The Naked and the Dead* — The Second World War  
*The Things They Carried* — The Vietnam War
67. Eugene O'Neill — Drama  
O. Henry — The short story  
Frank Norris — The novel
88. Paula Vogel — *How I Learned to Drive*  
Suzan-Lori Parks — *Topdog/Underdog*  
Tony Kushner — *Angels in America*

## Test Measurement Overview

### Format

There are multiple forms of the computer-based test, each containing a predetermined set of scored questions. The examinations are not adaptive. There may be some overlap between different forms of a test: any of the forms may have a few questions, many questions, or no questions in common. Some overlap may be necessary for statistical reasons.

In the computer-based test, not all questions contribute to the candidate’s score. Some of the questions presented to the candidate are being pretested for use in future editions of the tests and will not count toward his or her score.

### Scoring Information

CLEP examinations are scored without a penalty for incorrect guessing. The candidate’s raw score is simply the number of questions answered correctly. However, this raw score is not reported; the raw scores are translated into a scaled score by a process that adjusts for differences in the difficulty of the questions on the various forms of the test.

### Scaled Scores

The scaled scores are reported on a scale of 20–80. Because the different forms of the tests are not always exactly equal in difficulty, raw-to-scale conversions may in some cases differ from form to form. The easier a form is judged to be, the higher the raw score required to attain a given scaled score. **Table 1** indicates the relationship between number correct (raw score) and scaled score across all forms.

### The Recommended Credit-Granting Score

Table 1 also indicates the recommended credit-granting score, which represents the performance of students earning a grade of C in the corresponding course. The recommended B-level score represents B-level performance in equivalent course work. These scores were established as the result of a Standard Setting Study, the most recent having been conducted in 2014. The recommended credit-granting scores are based upon the judgments of a panel of experts currently teaching equivalent courses at various colleges and universities. These experts evaluate each question in order to determine

the raw scores that would correspond to B and C levels of performance. Their judgments are then reviewed by a test development committee, which, in consultation with test content and psychometric specialists, makes a final determination. The standard-setting study is described more fully in the earlier section entitled “CLEP Credit Granting” on page 5.

Panel members participating in the most recent study were:

Crystal Alberts	University of North Dakota
Jim Bloom	Muhlenberg College
Sandra Burr	Northern Michigan University
Paige Byam Soliday	Northern Kentucky University
Warren Carson	University of South Carolina Upstate
Dean Coolegge	University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Jay Curlin	Ouachita Baptist University
Richard Dennison	Saint Joseph’s College
Beverly Forsyth	Odessa College
Holly French-Hart	Bossier Parrish Community College
Caroline Gebhard	Tuskegee University
Annemarie Hamlin	Central Oregon Community College
Tamara Harvey	George Mason University
Eileen Hinders	University of Memphis
Glen Macleod	University of Connecticut
John Nelson	Dakota State University
Laurie Olson- Horswill	North Idaho College
Ann Pelelo	Clarke University
Michael Schroeder	Savannah State University
Michael Schwartz	Moreno Valley College
Claudia Slate	Florida Southern College
Lisa Tatonetti	Kansas State University
Aviva Taubenfeld	SUNY, Purchase College
Josef Vice	American Public University

After the recommended credit-granting scores are determined, a statistical procedure called scaling is applied to establish the exact correspondences between raw and scaled scores. Note that a scaled score of 50 is assigned to the raw score that corresponds to the recommended credit-granting score for C-level performance, and a high but usually less-than-perfect raw score is selected and assigned a scaled score of 80.

**Table 1: American Literature Interpretive Score Data**

American Council on Education (ACE) Recommended Number of Semester Hours of Credit: 3

Course Grade	Scaled Score	Number Correct
	80	78-80
	79	-
	78	-
	77	-
	76	77-78
	75	-
	74	76-77
	73	76-77
	72	76
	71	75-76
	70	74-75
	69	-
	68	73-74
	67	72-73
	66	71-72
	65	70-71
	64	69-70
	63	68-69
	62	67-68
	61	65-67
	60	64-66
	59	62-64
	58	61-63
	57	59-61
	56	57-59
	55	55-57
	54	54-55
<b>B</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>52-54</b>
	52	50-51
	51	47-49
<b>C</b>	<b>50*</b>	<b>45-47</b>
	49	43-45
	48	41-43
	47	39-41
	46	37-39
	45	35-37
	44	33-35
	43	32-33
	42	30-31
	41	28-29
	40	27-28
	39	25-26
	38	24-25
	37	23
	36	22
	35	21
	34	20
	33	19
	32	18
	31	17
	30	16-17
	29	16
	28	15
	27	15
	26	14
	25	14
	24	-
	23	13
	22	13
	21	-
	20	0-12

\*Credit-granting score recommended by ACE.

**Note:** The number-correct scores for each scaled score on different forms may vary depending on form difficulty.

## Validity

Validity is a characteristic of a particular use of the test scores of a group of examinees. If the scores are used to make inferences about the examinees' knowledge of a particular subject, the validity of the scores for that purpose is the extent to which those inferences can be trusted to be accurate.

One type of evidence for the validity of test scores is called content-related evidence of validity. It is usually based upon the judgments of a set of experts who evaluate the extent to which the content of the test is appropriate for the inferences to be made about the examinees' knowledge. The committee that developed the CLEP American Literature examination selected the content of the test to reflect the content of American Literature courses at most colleges, as determined by a curriculum survey. Since colleges differ somewhat in the content of the courses they offer, faculty members should, and are urged to, review the content outline and the sample questions to ensure that the test covers core content appropriate to the courses at their college.

Another type of evidence for test-score validity is called criterion-related evidence of validity. It consists of statistical evidence that examinees who score high on the test also do well on other measures of the knowledge or skills the test is being used to measure. Criterion-related evidence for the validity of CLEP scores can be obtained by studies comparing students' CLEP scores with the grades they received in corresponding classes, or other measures of achievement or ability. CLEP and the College Board conduct these studies, called Admitted Class Evaluation Service or ACES, for individual colleges that meet certain criteria at the college's request. Please contact CLEP for more information.

## Reliability

The reliability of the test scores of a group of examinees is commonly described by two statistics: the reliability coefficient and the standard error of measurement (SEM). The reliability coefficient is the correlation between the scores those examinees get (or would get) on two independent replications of the measurement process. The reliability coefficient is intended to indicate the

stability/consistency of the candidates' test scores, and is often expressed as a number ranging from .00 to 1.00. A value of .00 indicates total lack of stability, while a value of 1.00 indicates perfect stability. The reliability coefficient can be interpreted as the correlation between the scores examinees would earn on two forms of the test that had no questions in common.

Statisticians use an internal-consistency measure to calculate the reliability coefficients for the CLEP exam.<sup>1</sup> This involves looking at the statistical relationships among responses to individual multiple-choice questions to estimate the reliability of the total test score. The SEM is an estimate of the amount by which a typical test-taker's score differs from the average of the scores that a test-taker would have gotten on all possible editions of the test. It is expressed in score units of the test. Intervals extending one standard error above and below the true score for a test-taker will include 68 percent of that test-taker's obtained scores. Similarly, intervals extending two standard errors above and below the true score will include 95 percent of the test-taker's obtained scores. The standard error of measurement is inversely related to the reliability coefficient. If the reliability of the test were 1.00 (if it perfectly measured the candidate's knowledge), the standard error of measurement would be zero.

An additional index of reliability is the conditional standard of error of measurement (CSEM). Since different editions of this exam contain different questions, a test-taker's score would not be exactly the same on all possible editions of the exam. The CSEM indicates how much those scores would vary. It is the typical distance of those scores (all for the same test-taker) from their average. A test-taker's CSEM on a test cannot be computed, but by using the data from many test-takers, it can be estimated. The CSEM estimate reported here is for a test-taker whose average score, over all possible forms of the exam, would be equal to the recommended C-level credit-granting score.

*Scores on the CLEP examination in American Literature are estimated to have a reliability coefficient of 0.91. The standard error of measurement is 3.89 scaled-score points. The conditional standard error of measurement at the recommended C-level credit-granting score is 4.27 scaled-score points.*

<sup>1</sup> The formula used is known as Kuder-Richardson 20, or KR-20, which is equivalent to a more general formula called coefficient alpha.