



English Placement Test (EPT) Study Guide

WHAT IS THE ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST (EPT)?

The English Placement Test is an assessment used to determine the course that best matches the level of English knowledge and academic abilities of a student. There is no 'good' or 'bad' score in the placement test. The English course in which you will be placed will help you improve your skills building on what you already know.

Students are placed based on their EPT score:

English Placement Test Scoring Table	
Score	Course
0 – 28	ESL Pathway
29 – 43	ENGL 096
44 – 58	ENGL 097
59 – 73	ENGL 098
74 – 88	ENGL 099
89 – 100	ENGL 100

The EPT has five parts: Listening, Vocabulary, Reading, Writing, and Speaking.

The EPT takes a total of 95 minutes: The first 90 minutes includes Listening, Vocabulary, Reading, and Writing. The Speaking section takes 5 minutes.

PART I: LISTENING

Students listen to several passages and excerpts and answer the questions following them. Students can use any notes they have written to complete the integrated listening questions. They must be able to preview, identify main ideas and details, cope with unknown vocabulary, and synthesize information. There is a total of 18 multiple-choice items.

Example of test type questions:

Part I:

- 1.1 Listen to the beginning of a talk show about eating habits and health. Check the best prediction of what will be discussed on the show.
- A. The problem of obesity in Canada
 - B. Reasons why people's eating habits are changing
 - C. Ways to prevent obesity
 - D. Why the obesity epidemic is increasing in the world



1.2 Now listen to the entire talk show. Use the information to choose the correct answers.

2. The show is mainly about _____.
 A. how children learn eating habits from a very young age
 B. why parents need to teach their children to make healthy food choices
 C. how people's new eating habits have caused the obesity epidemic to rise
 D. why adults are responsible for the obesity epidemic

3. What did Doctor Jones say was the best way to have a healthier diet?
 A. learn delicious food recipes made with nutritious ingredients
 B. make sure to understand that our life span will be shortened if we don't take care of our diet.
 C. take small steps, making small changes one day at a time
 D. completely stop going to fast food restaurants

4. How did Martha Smith feel after losing weight?
 A. much more active
 B. happier
 C. more attractive
 D. angry and upset

5. Peter Meyers thinks that _____.
 A. worrying about weight is superficial
 B. people need to be more concerned about their health
 C. learning how to cook is essential
 D. being healthy is not connected to food habits

6. What else does Doctor Jones recommend people to do to be healthy?
 A. take daily 30 minute walks
 B. use the stairs instead of the elevator
 C. drink eight glasses of water per day
 D. avoid watching television or playing video games for longer than one hour per day

7. Why does Martha Smith say "you can bet on it!"
 A. she wants to reassure Doctor Jones that she will follow his recommendations
 B. she wants to gamble with Doctor Jones
 C. she wants Doctor Jones to help her to be healthier
 D. she doesn't trust Doctor Jones

Part II:

1.3 Listen to the excerpt “How Sleep Affects Your Health.” Use the information from this listening and the listening in Part 1.2 to complete the activity. Check Sleep if the health benefit comes from sleep, or Eating Habit if the health benefit comes from eating habits.

Health Benefit	Sleep	Eating Habit	Both
8. more energy			
9. alertness			
10. better memory			
11. live longer			

LISTENING STUDY RESOURCES:

Below is a list of websites you can visit to practice your listening skills:

- <http://www.esl-lab.com/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/>
- <http://www.newsinlevels.com/level-3/simpleenglishstories/>
- <http://www.dailyesl.com/>
- <http://www.5minuteenglish.com/listening.htm>
- <http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com/eslvideo/>
- <http://www.esolcourses.com/content/topicsmenu/listening.html>
- <http://www.englishvoices.org/>
- <http://learningenglish.voanews.com/>
- <http://www.simpleenglishnews.com/>
- <http://www.eslfast.com/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssuiqtreiBg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEQhDeNyM8s>



PART II: VOCABULARY

Students fill in the blank in sentences with the corresponding word. They must show that they understand the meaning of a word and the part of speech of a word. There is a total of 18 multiple-choice items.

Example of test type questions:

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
A. inflation	B. inflate	C. inflated	
D. drama		E. dramatic	F. dramatically
G. trust	H. trust	I. trusting	J. trustingly

1. Many people believe _____ is the most important thing in a healthy relationship.
2. The transportation prices increased _____ from last year. They tripled from \$30 to \$90 in a very short time.
3. The candidate had a/an _____ ego and didn't realize his experience and qualifications were not as impressive as he thought.

Answers: 1. G, 2. F, 3. C

VOCABULARY STUDY RESOURCES:

Below is a list of websites you can visit to help you learn new vocabulary:

- <http://www.pearsonlongman.com/ae/keystone/natl/pdf/AcademicWordList.pdf>
- <http://speakspeak.com/resources/vocabulary-elementary-pre-intermediate/70-common-irregular-verbs>
- <http://www.worldclasslearning.com/english/list-of-verbs-nouns-adjectives-adverbs.html>
- http://www.eslgold.com/vocabulary/word_forms.html
- <http://public.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/academia.html>
- <http://www.english.com/confusing-words-affect-effect-compliment-complement-and-more/>
- <http://www.english.com/basic-rules-to-improve-your-spelling/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F158xq9oP7g>

PART III: READING

Students read several passages and excerpts and answer the questions following them. They must be able to preview, identify the main ideas and the details, make inferences, understand meaning from context, synthesize ideas and extract information accurately. There is a total of 18 multiple-choice items.

Example of test type questions:

1.1 Read the beginning of the story about Mark Jones. Check the best prediction of what Mark will do. There is only one right answer.

Mark Jones had always been interested in learning about human anatomy¹. By the time he was twelve years old, he knew almost all of the names of the bones in the body. When he has fifteen, he memorized the parts of the brain and learned how each one works. Mark loved all his school courses in which he got to learn about how the body functions. Mark's parents admired his interest, and they encouraged him to study Medicine and become a doctor. But Mark was not interested in being a doctor. "Doctors", he said, "are too distant² from their patients". Mark wanted to use his knowledge to heal people, but he also wanted to work closely with people. So, he made the decision to become a nurse.

¹ **human anatomy:** the physical structure of a person's body

² **distant:** not close in a relationship

_____ A. have many patients

B. _____ become a doctor

_____ C. work as a brain surgeon

D. _____ study to become a nurse

1.2 Now read the entire story. Use the information to choose the correct answers.

Mark had always been interested in learning about human anatomy¹. By the time he was twelve years old, he knew almost all of the names of the bones in the body. When he has fifteen, he memorized the parts of the brain and learned how each one works. Mark loved all his school courses in which he got to learn about how the body functions. Mark's parents admired his interest, and they encouraged him to study Medicine and become a doctor. But Mark was not interested in being a doctor. "Doctors", he said, "are too distant² from their patients". Mark wanted to use his knowledge to heal people, but he also wanted to work closely with people. So, he made the decision to become a nurse.

Initially, when Mark told his parents about his decision to study nursing at university, they were disappointed. Nursing, they thought, was a job for women, not for men. "Go to any hospital, and you will see that most nurses are women!" his father told him. "Why do you want to have a woman's job?" His mother asked. Mark worked very hard to convince³ his parents that he was



making the right choice. He explained that nurses have high salaries and good benefits. He told them that nurses can do different types of work within their profession and that they have many choices. Finally, he explained that he just wanted to have more personal contact with the people that he was helping. After many long talks, his parents decided to support his choice, even though they did not agree with it. They were not happy, but they wanted their son to be happy. Secretly, they still wished their son had chosen to become a doctor rather than a nurse.

¹ **human anatomy:** the physical structure of a person's body

² **distant:** not close in a relationship

³ **convince:** to persuade somebody to believe something

Check the best answer to complete each sentence.

2. The main idea from this passage is _____.
 - A. Mark wants to do a woman's job
 - B. Mark decided to study Medicine to make his parents happy
 - C. Mark wants to be close to his patients
 - D. Mark's parents weren't happy that their son wanted to have a career which is usually chosen by women

3. From this story, we can infer or guess that _____.
 - A. Mark will not do well as a nurse because he doesn't have his parent's support
 - B. Nurses can do different types of work
 - C. Mark believes that gender is not a factor in career choice
 - D. Mark is too lazy to study Medicine

4. From this story, we can infer or guess that _____.
 - A. Mark's parents want their son to be happy
 - B. Mark's parents want him to enroll in a nursing program
 - C. Mark's parents admire his interest in human anatomy
 - D. Mark's parents would think a woman doctor was doing a man's job

5. The best title for this story is _____.
 - A. Nurses and Doctors Have A lot in Common
 - B. Mark Makes a Tough Career Choice
 - C. Do What You Want
 - D. Mark and His Parents Have a Disagreement

6. One reason Mark gives his parents to explain why he is making the right career choice is _____.
- A. Nursing is a high paying job
 - B. He wants to heal people
 - C. Being a doctor doesn't offer good benefits
 - D. Medicine is not as interesting as nursing

1.3 Read the passage below. Use this reading and the reading from Part 1.2 to complete the exercise. Check the box under the person who has the corresponding opinion: Mark, Anabel or both.

Anabel Anderson grew up with her grandparents in Vancouver. She had a close relationship with both of them but spent more time with her 'Gramps', which is what she called her grandfather. Gramps was a mechanic, and he had an auto repair shop in his garage. Anabel often observed him while he worked, and she learned all there was about fixing cars from talking to him and watching him and his staff. When Anabel became a teenager, she started working for her grandfather on the weekends. By the time she was sixteen, she also worked almost every day after school.

All this experience helped Anabel to become a very skilled mechanic. Customers trusted her work, and often requested that she specifically work on their vehicle. When Anabel finished high school, she decided to open her own auto repair shop. Her grandparents offered to pay for her university education and encouraged her to study, but Anabel was sure that she had already found the right career for her. When she told her grandparents she wanted to be a car mechanic, they felt proud that she had decided to follow in her grandfather's footsteps.

Opinion	Mark A	Anabel B	Both C
7. Gender is not important when choosing a career.			
8. My family feels that having the same job as a parent or grandparent is a positive thing.			
9. I need to go to university to have a good career.			
10. A job that pays well is a good job.			

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

READING STUDY RESOURCES:

Below is a list of websites you can visit to practice your reading skills:

- <http://www.5minuteenglish.com/reading.htm>
- <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/>
- <http://www.elcivics.com/worksheets/reading.html>
- <http://www.eslfast.com/>



Alexander College

- <http://www.eslgold.com/reading/exercises.html>
- http://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/reading.php
- <https://news.google.ca/>
- <http://www.cbc.ca/news>
- <http://www.ctvnews.ca/>
- <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/>
- <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/>



PART IV: WRITING

Students will read a passage and then be prompted to write about a topic related to the passage. Their writing should:

- address the topic and respond to all aspects of the task
- demonstrate critical and in-depth thinking
- show a command of sentence structure and grammar
- show proper use of vocabulary
- smoothly integrate information and show appropriate synthesis of ideas
- be coherently organized and developed:
 - o The introduction must have a clear thesis statement
 - o Each body paragraph must have clear topic sentences related to the thesis
 - o Each topic sentence must be supported with examples and details
 - o The conclusion must appropriately signal the end of the writing

Example of test type question:

Part 1: Re-read the story about Mark from Part 1.1.

Mark had always been interested in learning about human anatomy¹. By the time he was twelve years old, he knew almost all of the names of the bones in the body. When he was fifteen, he memorized the parts of the brain and learned how each one works. Mark loved all his school courses in which he got to learn about how the body functions. Mark's parents admired his interest, and they encouraged him to study Medicine and become a doctor. But Mark was not interested in being a doctor. "Doctors", he said, "are too distant² from their patients". Mark wanted to use his knowledge to heal people, but he also wanted to work closely with people. So, he made the decision to become a nurse.

Initially, when Mark told his parents about his decision to study nursing at university, they were disappointed. Nursing, they thought, was a job for women, not for men. "Go to any hospital, and you will see that most nurses are women!" his father told him. "Why do you want to have a woman's job?" His mother asked. Mark worked very hard to convince³ his parents that he was making the right choice. He explained that nurses have high salaries and good benefits. He told them that nurses can do different types of work within their profession and that they have many choices. Finally, he explained that he just wanted to have more personal contact with the people that he was helping. After many long talks, his parents decided to support his choice, even though they did not agree with it. They were not happy, but they wanted their son to be happy. Secretly, they still wished their son had chosen to become a doctor rather than a nurse.

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² **distant:** not close in a relationship

³ **convince:** to persuade somebody to believe something



Part 2: Write an essay: Some people believe some jobs are more appropriate for women and some are better for men. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view? Does gender¹ matter when choosing a career?

¹gender: being a man or a woman

- Support your opinion by discussing ideas about Mark's career choice
- Support your opinion with examples from your own experience and knowledge
- Include an introduction and a conclusion
- Do not copy phrases or sentences from the reading passage
- Write one full page or longer

WRITING STUDY RESOURCES:

Below is a list of websites you can visit to practice your writing skills:

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/01/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgkRoYPLhts>
- <http://www.eslflow.com/AcademicWritng.html>
- http://esl.fis.edu/learners/writing/misc/index_color.htm
- <https://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/writing/comma>
- <http://www.engvid.com/how-to-write-an-effective-essay/>
- <http://www.engvid.com/topic/grammar/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dEGoJdb6O0>

PART V: SPEAKING

Students answer questions about themselves. Then they are prompted to describe a picture-story and answer follow-up questions related to the story. Students are assessed in fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Below is a list of websites you can visit to help you with your speaking skills:

- <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/exams/speaking-exams/describe-photo-or-picture>
- <http://www.englishtown.com/blog/10-top-tips-improving-spoken-english/>
- <http://www.ilac.com/blog/10-tips-for-improving-your-english-speaking-skills/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssuiqtreiBg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVWFGlyNswI>
- <http://www.howcast.com/videos/432501-how-to-improve-your-communication-skills-by-speaking-better-english/>
- <http://www.5minuteenglish.com/30.htm>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATxdWAp4LE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhJLLGuJCQ8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqtFCGkSTM4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seztHctwOJO>

Example of test type question:

Now, I am going to give you some pictures. There are six pictures, and they are all connected to tell one story. Take a moment to look at the six pictures. Then I'd like you to tell me the story by describing each picture from 1 to 6.



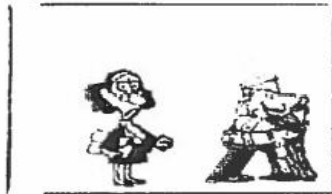
1



2



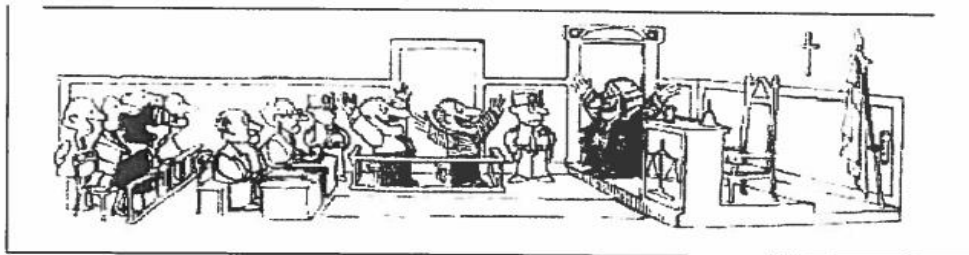
3



4



5



6

Possible follow-up questions (one of the following):

For beginner and intermediate-level students:

1. What will the judge do?
2. What happened to the thief after picture 4?
3. How does the woman feel in picture 6?

For advanced-level students:

1. What point does this story want to make?
2. What is one way corruption could be prevented in the legal system?
3. Will this woman get justice? Why?