

SAMPLE ESSAY PROMPT FOR THE CSN ENGLISH PLACEMENT EXAM

1. Prepare a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300-600 words on the topic below. Plan, write, review and edit. Read the prompt carefully before you begin to plan and write.

Many people are philanthropists, giving money to those in need. Also, many people believe that those who are rich—those who can afford to give—should contribute the most to charitable organizations. However, others disagree. Why should those who are more fortunate than others have more of a moral obligation to help those who are less fortunate? Write an essay about whether people who are more fortunate than others have more of a moral obligation to help those who are less fortunate.

(Adapted from Ron McDonald, *The Spirituality of community Life: When We Come 'Round Right'*)

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2. Prepare a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300-600 words on the topic below. Plan, write, review and edit. Read the prompt carefully before you begin to plan and write.

Some believe that society puts entirely too much emphasis on popular entertainment. Although people need to be distracted occasionally, if people spend a lot of time browsing their favorite websites, watching television, playing video games, or updating our social networking accounts, they are merely avoiding life's more important realities. Moreover, none of these activities help people develop any of the skills or acquire any of the knowledge they need to succeed in the real world. Write an essay about whether popular entertainment offers society anything of value or is it just a worthless distraction.

(Adapted from Ron McDonald, *The Spirituality of community Life: When We Come 'Round Right'*)

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3. Prepare a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300-600 words on the topic below. Plan, write, review and edit. Read the prompt carefully before you begin to plan and write.

Many are concerned that the state's requirements for core courses in mathematics, English, science, and social studies may prevent students from taking important elective courses like music, foreign languages, and vocational education. Many believe that electives like music, art and languages create a well-rounded individual. Others are worried that students aren't getting the basic education they need to be successful in life because there is not enough time in the school day to focus on the basics and electives. Write an essay about whether students should be required to take electives during the school year or they should only concentrate on basic education.

(Adapted from act.org, 2009)

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4. Prepare a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300-600 words on the topic below. Plan, write, review and edit. Read the prompt carefully before you begin to plan and write.

In some high schools, many teachers and parents have encouraged the administration to adopt a dress code that sets guidelines for what students can wear to school. Some teachers and parents support a dress code because they believe that such policies will improve the learning environment. Other teachers and parents do not support a dress code; they think it restricts an individual student's freedom of expression.

Write an essay about whether schools should adopt a dress code or students should be allowed to wear what they choose.

(Adapted from *The Real Act Prep Guide, 2008*)