

Nelson-Denny Reading Test Practice Questions

Your reading placement will be based on how you score on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. This is a two-part *timed* test, Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension.

Vocabulary

You will have 15 minutes to answer 80 vocabulary words. You will be required to read a word and then find the answer that *best* matches the definition of that word. The words are similar to what you would see in an 11th grade English test and to the words below:

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| - belligerent | - festive | - accumulate |
| - inundate | - obtuse | - negate |
| - mathematics | - preclude | - meander |
| - hinder | - query | - tributary |
| - validate | - abode | - pedigree |
| - constrict | - detract | - accolade |
| - deduct | - vague | - vignette |
| - resist | - futile | - hypothetical |
| - global | - meritorious | - plethora |
| - terse | - preclude | - vigorous |

These are sample words ONLY. They **are not** the exact words you will find on the test. We highly recommend you use these as a guide, study a variety of words, and work diligently to improve your vocabulary. Maybe look up the synonyms and antonyms of the words above to get you started, and when you come across a word you do not know, look up its definition.

- (1) An implausible agreement would be:
a. possible b. hard to believe c. imaginary d. historical e. funny
- (2) A calamity is a:
a. storm b. party c. conference d. disaster e. failure
- (3) Dependable means:
a. friendly b. changeable c. serious d. reliable e. dull
- (4) A rigorous teacher is:
a. righteous b. hard to believe c. satisfying d. strict e. direct
- (5) Tactics are:
a. hopes b. A request c. battles d. reactions e. methods
- (6) Absorption means:
a. regret b. interest c. haste d. relaxation e. pain

ANSWERS: (1) b (2) d (3) d (4) d (5) e (6) b

Reading Comprehension

The second half of the test will require you to read 7 passages and then answer 4 to 5 questions for each passage. The best way to study for this portion is to read books, magazines, and newspapers to exercise your brain. The time limit for this section is 20 minutes. The passages were chosen from Humanities, Science, and Social Science texts. The questions test both your literal and inferential comprehension.

Sample Passage

In the sixteenth century, an age of great marine and terrestrial exploration, Ferdinand Magellan led the first expedition to sail around the world. As a young Portuguese noble, he served the king of Portugal, but he became involved in the quagmire of political intrigue at court and lost the king's favor. After he was dismissed from service to the king of Portugal, he offered to serve the future Emperor Charles V of Spain.

A papal decree of 1493 had assigned all land in the New World west of 50 degrees W longitude to Spain and all the land east of that line to Portugal. Magellan offered to prove that the East Indies fell under Spanish authority. On September 20, 1519, Magellan set sail from Spain with five ships. More than a year later, one of these ships was exploring the topography of South America in search of a water route across the continent. This ship sank, but the remaining four ships searched along the southern peninsula of South America. Finally, they found the passage they sought near a latitude of 50 degrees S. Magellan named this passage the Strait of all Saints, but today we know it as the Strait of Magellan.

One ship deserted while in this passage and returned to Spain, so fewer sailors were privileged to gaze at that first panorama of the Pacific Ocean. Those who remained crossed the meridian we now call the International Date Line in the early spring of 1521 after ninety-eight days on the Pacific Ocean. During those long days at sea, many of Magellan's men died of starvation and disease. Later Magellan became involved in an insular conflict in the Philippines and was killed in a tribal battle.

Only one ship and seventeen sailors under the command of the Basque navigator Elcano survived to complete the westward journey to Spain and thus prove once and for all that the world is round, with no precipice at the edge.

- (1) Magellan lost the favor of the king of Portugal when he became involved in the political _____.
a. entanglement b. discussion c. negotiation d. problems e. none of the above
- (2) Four of the ships sought passage along a southern _____.
a. coast b. inland c. body of land with water on three sides d. border e. answer not available
- (3) The passage was found near 50 degrees S of _____.
a. Greenwich b. the equator c. Spain d. Portugal e. Madrid
- (4) The sixteenth century was an age of great _____ exploration.
a. cosmic b. land and sea c. mental d. common man e. none of the above
- (5) One of Magellan's ships explored the _____ of South America for a passage across the continent.
a. coastline b. mountain range c. physical features d. islands e. none of the above

ANSWERS: (1) a (2) c (3) b (4) b (5) c