

Welcome to the  
City Colleges of Chicago  
Reading-to-Write (RTW)  
English Placement  
Test Overview



# The CCC RTW English Placement Test



This test is designed to place you in the appropriate English course when you begin your studies with the City Colleges of Chicago.

# How the Placement Test Is Scored

- Each test is read by two or more trained English faculty members.
- There is no “pass” or “fail” for this test. Course placement reflects the strengths students already have and the areas they need to further develop.
- The test score is valid for one calendar year.
- Students are limited to one Reading to Write English test per year.

# Be Ready!

- The test has four parts.
- You have **three hours** to take the test.
- The test must be completed in one sitting.
- **Note:** You cannot save and come back later.

# The Four Parts of the Test

- 1) Background Information
- 2) Reading Comprehension
- 3) Essay Response
- 4) Self Placement

# 1) Background Information

- These questions are about your academic experiences, the languages you speak, and the goals you hope to achieve.
- This information tells us about you, but also provides us with additional examples of how you express yourself in writing.
- We recommend that you spend no more than **30 minutes** to complete this portion of the test.

## 2) Reading Comprehension

- You will read a 500-word, college-level reading passage and answer 5 multiple-choice questions about it.
- The same reading passage will be used for the multiple-choice comprehension questions AND the essay.
- We recommend that you spend **30 minutes** to complete this portion of the test.



# 3) Essay Response

- We recommend that you spend **90 minutes** to complete this portion of the test.
- Plan and write a well-organized, multi-paragraph essay on the following topic:

*In your own words, explain the author's most important argument. Do you agree or disagree with the author's ideas? Support your ideas by discussing the passage above as well as your own experience and knowledge.*



Before you begin the essay, take a moment to review the passage and think about the following questions:

- What is the passage about?
- What is the author's main point?
- What supporting evidence or details does the author use to make his or her point?
- Did the author convince you of his or her points?
- Do you agree or disagree with him or her? Why?
- Have you ever experienced what the author is discussing?

## 4) Self-Placement

- First, you will read descriptions of the different levels of English courses.
- Then, you will be asked to write a paragraph about which course level is best for you.
- We recommend that you spend **30 minutes** to complete this portion of the test.

# English Placement Test Tips

- Use multiple paragraphs in your essay and indent each paragraph.
- Refer to the reading passage in your essay.
- Don't write like you are sending a text message!
- Use your best English in every part of the test, including the Background and Self-Placement sections.
- Don't rush! Use the time allowed to submit your very best work.

# Academic Honesty

You may not use any outside sources while you are taking this placement test. All tests are checked for plagiarism. If plagiarism is found on any portion of your test, the test will become invalid and a CCC administrator will contact you.

Aim to do your **PERSONAL** best!

If you do your best, you can be assured that you will be placed into the course that **most benefits you.**

**Please note:** If you require special accommodations, please contact the **Disability Access Center** prior to taking the placement exam. Contact information and hours for the Disability Access Center can be found on the [Virtual Student Services web page](#).

**Thank you for your time  
and attention.**

**City Colleges of Chicago  
is happy to have you  
here!**