

ACT ENGLISH & READING PREP

Targeted Practice Sets

Grades 10–12

COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE INCLUDES:

- ✓ 5 Full-Length ACT-Style English Passages (175 Questions)
- ✓ 5 Complete ACT Reading Passages Across All Genres (200 Questions)
- ✓ Detailed Answer Keys with Full Explanations
- ✓ Pacing Strategy Guide for Time Management
- ✓ Time-Management Worksheet
- ✓ Score Improvement Tracker

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: Advanced High School (Grades 10-12)

UM Printables

Premium Test Prep Resources

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PART 1: PACING STRATEGY GUIDE

Master Your Time, Master the Test

Time management is one of the most critical skills for ACT success. Many students know the material but struggle to complete sections within the allotted time. This guide provides proven strategies to help you pace yourself effectively and maximize your score.

ACT ENGLISH SECTION PACING

Section Overview:

- Total Time: 45 minutes
- Total Questions: 75 questions
- Number of Passages: 5 passages
- Time Per Question: Approximately 36 seconds
- Time Per Passage: Approximately 9 minutes

English Pacing Strategies:

- Read the passage naturally first—don't hunt for errors before understanding context.
- Answer easier questions immediately; mark difficult ones to return to later.
- Use the 'NO CHANGE' option strategically—it's correct approximately 20-25% of the time.
- For rhetorical questions (organization, style), read the surrounding sentences for context.
- Budget your time: aim for 8 minutes per passage, leaving 5 minutes for review.

Task	Recommended Time	Cumulative Time
Read passage (skimming)	2 minutes	2 minutes
Answer Questions 1-15	6 minutes	8 minutes
Review flagged questions	1 minute	9 minutes
Buffer time	0-1 minute	9-10 minutes

ACT READING SECTION PACING

Section Overview:

- Total Time: 35 minutes
- Total Questions: 40 questions
- Number of Passages: 4 passages
- Time Per Question: Approximately 52 seconds
- Time Per Passage: Approximately 8-9 minutes
- Questions Per Passage: 10 questions

Reading Pacing Strategies:

- Skim the passage first (2-3 minutes) to understand structure, not details.
- Read questions before deep reading—know what you're looking for.
- Answer line-reference questions first—they're easier to locate.
- For main idea questions, check the first and last paragraphs.
- Eliminate obviously wrong answers before choosing the best one.
- Never leave a question blank—there's no penalty for guessing.

UNDERSTANDING READING PASSAGE TYPES

Passage Type	Content Focus	Key Strategies
Prose Fiction (1st passage)	Short stories, novels, character development	Track characters, themes, and emotional shifts
Social Science (2nd passage)	History, economics, sociology, psychology	Identify main arguments and supporting evidence
Humanities (3rd passage)	Art, music, philosophy, literature criticism	Note author's perspective and tone
Natural Science (4th passage)	Biology, chemistry, physics, earth science	Focus on processes, cause-effect relationships

READING QUESTION TYPES

- **Main Idea Questions:** Ask about the central theme or purpose of the passage.
- **Detail Questions:** Require locating specific information mentioned in the text.
- **Inference Questions:** Ask you to draw conclusions based on textual evidence.
- **Vocabulary-in-Context:** Test understanding of how words are used in context.
- **Author's Purpose/Tone:** Require analyzing why the author wrote something.
- **Structure Questions:** Ask about the organization and development of ideas.

COMMON PACING MISTAKES TO AVOID

Mistake	Consequence	Solution
Spending too long on one question	Running out of time for easier questions	Mark it, move on, return later
Reading every word at the same speed	Wasting time on less important details	Adjust reading speed based on content
Second-guessing correct answers	Changing right answers to wrong ones	Trust your first instinct unless certain
Not using process of elimination	Taking longer to find correct answers	Cross out wrong answers systematically
Skipping passages out of order	Confusion and time lost tracking progress	Complete passages in order unless strategic

PART 2: TIME-MANAGEMENT WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to practice and track your pacing during timed practice sessions. Record your start and end times for each passage, then analyze your results to identify areas for improvement.

ENGLISH SECTION TIMING LOG

Passage #	Start Time	End Time	Time Used	Target: 9 min	Questions Completed	Questions Correct
Passage 1				✓ or ✗	/15	/15
Passage 2				✓ or ✗	/15	/15
Passage 3				✓ or ✗	/15	/15
Passage 4				✓ or ✗	/15	/15
Passage 5				✓ or ✗	/15	/15
TOTAL			/45 min		/75	/75

READING SECTION TIMING LOG

Passage #	Type	Start Time	End Time	Time Used	Target: 8.5 min	Correct
Passage 1	Prose Fiction				✓ or ✗	/10
Passage 2	Social Science				✓ or ✗	/10
Passage 3	Humanities				✓ or ✗	/10
Passage 4	Natural Science				✓ or ✗	/10
TOTAL				/35 min		/40

PACING ANALYSIS

Question 111 — Answer: B

The first paragraph explains that classical theories 'began to break down' as scientists 'probed the realm of the very small,' prompting the need for a new framework (quantum physics).

Question 112 — Answer: C

Wave-particle duality is defined as the concept that light can behave like particles and electrons can behave like waves, meaning quantum entities possess characteristics of both.

Question 113 — Answer: B

The Heisenberg uncertainty principle is explicitly defined as the impossibility of knowing 'both the exact position and the exact momentum of a particle' simultaneously.

Question 114 — Answer: C

The passage contrasts classical mechanics, which 'predicts definite outcomes,' with the Schrödinger equation, which 'predicts the likelihood' (probability) of states.

Question 115 — Answer: B

Einstein's quote about God not playing dice is introduced as an objection to the 'probabilistic interpretation' of quantum mechanics. He believed the universe should be deterministic, not random.

Question 116 — Answer: C

The thought experiment is introduced to highlight the 'strange implications of quantum superposition,' specifically the paradox of a cat being simultaneously alive and dead.

Question 117 — Answer: C

The passage lists Transistors, Lasers, MRI machines, and GPS systems as applications. Nuclear power plants are not mentioned in the text.

Question 118 — Answer: B

In the context of 'harnessing these principles for revolutionary technologies,' the word means utilizing or controlling something effectively for a specific purpose.

Question 119 — Answer: A

The passage states that quantum computing aims to 'use quantum bits, or qubits, to perform calculations exponentially faster than classical computers.'

Question 120 — Answer: C

Feynman's quote suggests that quantum mechanics is so counterintuitive that believing one fully understands it is a sign of actual misunderstanding, emphasizing its complexity.

PASSAGE 5: The Letter (Prose Fiction)

Detailed Explanations

Question 121 — Answer: B

The first paragraph explains that the book was the only item requested because 'they had read it together, chapter by chapter, during the long summer evenings of Elias's childhood.'

Question 122 — Answer: C

The handwriting is described in the second paragraph as 'sharp, angular letters that looked as if they had been scratched rather than written.'

Question 123 — Answer: A

The phrase 'held him in a thrall' indicates a state of being captivated, fascinated, or held in the power of something, preventing him from doing other tasks.

Question 124 — Answer: C

Upon reading the cryptic words, Elias initially suspects it might be a 'draft for a story, something his grandfather had written.' He connects the letter to his grandfather initially.

Question 125 — Answer: B

The metaphor of the ladder and the lonely view from the top warns that achieving high professional success (climbing the ladder) might result in isolation and a lack of fulfillment ('lonely,' 'air is thin').

Question 126 — Answer: C

The text explicitly lists 'the promotion he was chasing, the late nights at the office, the weekends sacrificed' as evidence of his focus on ambition.

Question 127 — Answer: B

The metaphor 'check your footing' implies pausing to evaluate stability and direction. In the context of the letter, it means reevaluating his life's path and motivations ('why you are climbing').

Question 128 — Answer: B

Elias initially feels 'spooked' and tries to rationalize the letter as a mistake or draft (skepticism). By the end, he reflects on its meaning and decides to make a small life change (quiet reflection).

Question 129 — Answer: C

The conclusion shows Elias planning to continue his work ('give his presentation') but also to make a small, personal change ('stop at the art supply store'). He balances his career with a rekindled personal interest.

Question 130 — Answer: C

The passage contrasts Elias's high-pressure career with the letter's wisdom about a more balanced life. The central conflict is between his professional ambition and his need for personal fulfillment.

READING SECTION SCORING GUIDE

Use the table below to convert your raw score (number of correct answers out of 50) to an estimated ACT Reading scale score. Note: The actual ACT Reading section has 40 questions; this chart has been adapted for the 50-question practice set.

Raw Score (out of 50)	Scale Score	Raw Score (out of 50)	Scale Score
48-50	36	24-25	22
46-47	35	22-23	21
44-45	34	20-21	19-20
42-43	33	18-19	17-18
40-41	32	16-17	15-16
38-39	30-31	14-15	13-14
36-37	28-29	12-13	11-12
34-35	26-27	10-11	9-10
32-33	25	8-9	7-8
30-31	24	6-7	5-6
28-29	23	0-5	1-4
26-27	22-23		

SCORE IMPROVEMENT TRACKER

Track your progress across multiple practice sessions. Record your scores for each section to identify trends and areas needing improvement.

ENGLISH SECTION TRACKER

Date	Passages Completed	Raw Score (/80)	Scale Score	Time Used (min)	Notes

READING SECTION TRACKER

Date	Passages Completed	Raw Score (/50)	Scale Score	Time Used (min)	Notes

PROGRESS VISUALIZATION

Plot your scale scores below to visualize your improvement over time.

36						
----	--	--	--	--	--	--

30						
24						
18						
12						
6						
1						
	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Test 4	Test 5	Test 6
						Test 7

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING UM PRINTABLES!

We hope this resource has been valuable in your ACT preparation journey. Our goal is to provide high-quality, rigorous materials that help students achieve their academic goals.

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Good luck on the ACT!