



English Guided Self-Placement (GSP) Questionnaire

READING SAMPLE:

For decades, California has innovated and prospered while its public education system has drifted downward. Once known for its quality public schools, in the 2015-2016 academic year, California ranked 41st among all states in cost-of-living-adjusted per-pupil spending. Now, as inequality grows and living here becomes increasingly unaffordable, reversing the decline in public education is not about idealism — it is about the state’s survival. It feels like a now-or-never moment, a final chance to commit to the public schools that have been eroded by politics, racial wariness and insufficient and invidious alternatives like charter schools. California’s view of its own schools started souring in the late ’70s, when voters passed Proposition 13, a state initiative billed as “tax reform” that froze property tax rates and dealt a serious blow to local school funding. The anti-tax/anti-big-government sentiment driving the measure was part of a conservative backlash that had been building since the Supreme Court’s 1954 decision to desegregate public schools. Public school was no longer another site of opportunity and advancement in California, but a public space being contested by black people. Los Angeles and California shifted from being theoretically golden for all to being golden for a deserving few.

From “Saving Public Education Isn’t About Idealism, but Survival” by Erin Aubry Kaplan. *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 2019

1. How comfortable are you with reading at this level?

- A. I can read the paragraph and discuss the ideas in it if I have **a lot of help** with vocabulary and understanding the meaning from my instructor.
- B. I can read the paragraph and discuss the ideas in it with **a little help** with vocabulary and understanding the meaning from my instructor.
- C. I can read the paragraph and discuss the ideas in it pretty well **on my own**.

2. How comfortable are you with these writing skills?

-spelling

-complete sentences/paragraph-thesis development

-correct verb-agreement and verb-tense usage

-punctuation use (commas, colons, semi-colons, hyphens, etc.)

- A. I know I need a lot of help with *at least three* of them.
- B. I could use some help with *one or two* of them.
- C. I feel pretty confident with these writing skills.

WRITING SAMPLE—[English 1A student essay, Fall 2018]

Many ideas of transcendentalism are present in Henry David Thoreau’s book *Walden*, however, self-reliance is the most frequent one which can be found in the chapters, “Economy”, “Solitude”, and the “Conclusion”. The author writes about his simple and solo life during the two years at the Walden Pond. He got rid of all material and superfluous property and earned a living on his own to acquire the small necessities. He never felt alone in solitude as he was content with nature and his own thoughts which he claims helped him cultivate his mind to become a better and more powerful man. By the end of his book, he concluded that reliance upon oneself in both a philosophical sense and a physical sense is necessary for a happy existence. Perhaps the readers of his book should take a step back and notice what they have compared to what they need, as well as appreciating solitude as a way to harvest your mind.

3. Can you write something like this?

- A. I’m not ready to write like this yet.
- B. I could write at this level with significant help from my instructor.
- C. Yes, I can write about like this.

4. In ENG 1A you will be expected to write about five 4-page essays and a 6-page research paper as well as read literary essays, argumentative essays, and at least one complete book.

- A. I do not feel ready for this amount of work.
- B. I could do the work with a lot of support in class.
- C. I think that I can handle this amount of work mostly on my own.

English Course Recommendation According to the GSP			
Student Response	COA	Merritt	Laney
At least three “A” selections	English 201B*	English 264	English 264*
At least three “C” selections	English 1A	English 1A	English 1A
All other responses	English 1AS (1A with support)	English 1A + 508ABC (non-credit)	English 1A + 508ABC (non-credit)

*At both COA and Laney, enrollment in English 269 (one section available) will be determined in conversation with a counselor.