

Contents at a Glance

Introduction	1
Part I: Coming to Terms with Reality: An Overview of the ACT	7
Chapter 1: Getting Your ACT Together: The Format.....	9
Chapter 2: Succeeding on the ACT.....	15
Chapter 3: Reading the Admissions Committee’s Mind: What Colleges Want	21
Part II: Serving Your “Sentence”: English Review and Test	25
Chapter 4: Glamour Grammar: The Five-Star Review	27
Chapter 5: Misspellers of the World, Untie! Mastering the English Test.....	41
Chapter 6: It’s Not What You Say, It’s How You Say It: English Practice Questions.....	47
Part III: Writing the Writing Test Rightly: You Have a Choice	53
Chapter 7: ACT Write: The First Words on Essay Writing	55
Chapter 8: Write Right: The Writing Test Review	65
Chapter 9: Practicing Promptly with Practice Prompts: Essay Practice Examples.....	75
Part IV: Don’t Count Yourself Out: The Math Review and Mini-Test	77
Chapter 10: Ogling More Figures than a Beauty Pageant Judge: Geometry Review.....	79
Chapter 11: Catching Some (X’s, Y’s, and) Z’s: Algebra and Other Sleeping Aids	99
Chapter 12: Reviewing Miscellaneous Math You Probably Already Know	117
Chapter 13: Numb and Number: Acing the Mathematics Test	131
Chapter 14: More Fun Than a Root Canal: Mathematics Practice Questions.....	137
Part V: Time to Read the Riot ACT: The Reading Test	143
Chapter 15: This, Too, Shall Pass(age): Sailing through the Reading Test	145
Chapter 16: Where Are CliffsNotes When You Need Them? Reading Practice Questions.....	151
Part VI: Proven to Cause Brain Defects in Laboratory Rats: The Science Reasoning Test	157
Chapter 17: Frankenstein to Einstein: Excelling on the Science Reasoning Test.....	159
Chapter 18: Faking Atomic Ache Won’t Get You Out of This: Science Practice Questions.....	169
Part VII: I’d Rather Wait for the Movie: Full-Length Practice ACTs	179
Chapter 19: How to Ruin a Perfectly Good Day, Part I: Practice Exam 1.....	181
Chapter 20: Practice Exam 1: Answers and Explanations	227
Chapter 21: How to Ruin a Perfectly Good Day, Part II: Practice Exam 2.....	265
Chapter 22: Practice Exam 2: Answers and Explanations.....	311

<i>Part VIII: The Part of Tens</i>	351
Chapter 23: Ten Wrong Rumors About the ACT	353
Chapter 24: Ten Differences between the ACT and the SAT	357
<i>Index</i>	359

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

About This Book.....	1
You Can Run, but You Can't Hide.....	1
How This Book Is Organized.....	2
Part I: Coming to Terms with Reality: An Overview of the ACT.....	2
Part II: Serving Your "Sentence": English Review and Test.....	2
Part III: Writing the Writing Test Rightly: You Have a Choice.....	3
Part IV: Don't Count Yourself Out: The Math Review and Mini-Test.....	3
Part V: Time to Read the Riot ACT: The Reading Test.....	3
Part VI: Proven to Cause Brain Defects in Laboratory Rats: The Science Reasoning Test.....	3
Part VII: I'd Rather Wait for the Movie: Full-Length Practice ACTs.....	3
Part VIII: The Part of Tens.....	3
Icons Used in This Book.....	4
Where to Go from Here.....	4
Making a Commitment.....	5

Part 1: Coming to Terms with Reality: An Overview of the ACT 7

Chapter 1: Getting Your ACT Together: The Format 9

I'd Forget My Head If It Wasn't Attached: What to Take to the ACT.....	9
What Not to Take to the ACT.....	10
Normal Is Boring: Unusual Circumstances.....	11
Anything's Better than Nothing: Guessing for Points.....	11
Your Number's Up: Scoring.....	12
So How Do I Know that I'm a Genius? What Scores Mean.....	12
What Do They Want from Me? What Is Tested?.....	12
Practice Makes Perfect: Repeating the Test.....	13

Chapter 2: Succeeding on the ACT 15

Four Stress-Busters to Help You Survive the ACT.....	15
Counting to four.....	15
Stretching.....	15
Practicing visualization.....	16
Thinking positively.....	16
Nine Points to Always Double-Check.....	16
Exponents.....	16
Common-sense connections.....	16
Decimal places.....	17
Operations signs.....	17
Political correctness.....	17
-ing and other beware! words.....	17
Context.....	17
Grammar.....	17
Completed answer grid.....	17
Ten Dumb Things You Can Do to Mess Up Your ACT.....	18
Losing concentration.....	18
Panicking over time.....	18
Messing up numbering on the answer grid.....	18



Rubbernecking.....	19
Cheating.....	19
Worrying about previous sections.....	19
Worrying about the hard problems.....	19
Transferring information from problem to problem or section to section.....	20
Forgetting to double-check.....	20
Looking back and doing “coulda-shoulda”.....	20

Chapter 3: Reading the Admissions Committee’s Mind: What Colleges Want21

What’s the Number One Thing That Colleges Look For?.....	21
How Important Is the ACT, Really?.....	21
Do Schools Care Whether I Repeat the ACT?.....	22
Can I Take the ACT Instead of the SAT I?.....	22
If I Mess Up Big-Time on the ACT, What Can I Do to Compensate?.....	22
What Classes Do You Recommend That I Take as a Senior? Junior? Sophomore?.....	22
How Helpful Are Charity Work and Sports?.....	23
What Should I Say on the College Essay?.....	23
What Will They Ask Me in the Interview, and What Should I Say?.....	23
How Can I Decide Which School Is Best for Me?.....	24
What’s the Biggest Mistake Most Students Make in College Planning?.....	24

Part II: Serving Your “Sentence”: English Review and Test25

Chapter 4: Glamour Grammar: The Five-Star Review27

Subject-Verb Agreement.....	27
Pronouns.....	29
Adjectives and Adverbs.....	30
Sentence Structure.....	31
Parallelism.....	32
Comparisons.....	32
Diction.....	33
affect/effect.....	33
amount/number.....	33
anxious/eager.....	34
assure/ensure.....	34
between/among.....	34
complement/compliment.....	35
eminent/immanent/imminent.....	35
everyday/every day.....	35
farther/further.....	35
flaunt/flout.....	36
founder/flounder.....	36
good/well.....	36
if/whether.....	36
imply/infer.....	37
it’s/its.....	37
less/fewer.....	37
lie/lay.....	37
phase/faze.....	38
prescribe/proscribe.....	38
principle/principal.....	38
rise/raze/raise.....	39
stationary/stationery.....	39
who/whom.....	39

Miscellaneous Mistakes	39
hardly	39
hopefully.....	40
if . . . would	40
in regards to . . . in regard to.....	40
where . . . that	40
Chapter 5: Misspellers of the World, Untie! Mastering the English Test.....	41
Seeing Is Believing: The Format of the Test.....	41
The passages.....	41
The questions	42
The answer choices	42
Being Boxed In: The Box Questions.....	42
What Do They Want Outta Me? What the English Usage Questions Test	43
Maximizing the Gain, Minimizing the Pain: Questions Worth Looking For	44
Looking for short, diction-type questions	44
Going for pure grammar	44
Ignoring superfluous info	45
Their Pain, Your Gain: Traps That Others Have Fallen Into	46
Chapter 6: It's Not What You Say, It's How You Say It: English Practice Questions	47
 <i>Part III: Writing the Writing Test Rightly: You Have a Choice</i>	 <i>53</i>
Chapter 7: ACT Write: The First Words on Essay Writing	55
Rattle Your Writing with Some Loose Screws.....	55
Thought diarrhea: Writing before you think.....	56
The attack of the clock: Panicking about time	56
Being too relaxed: Not noticing your time limit	56
Expressing your inner poet: Using creativity as a crutch	56
Big words with big consequences: Using words you don't know	56
Expecting perfection in 30 minutes: Being overcritical of yourself	57
Speaking another language: Dude, they want to read English	57
Being a wimp: Not taking a solid stand	57
You are not an island: Forgetting that people really read this stuff.....	57
Do not do not repeat yourself: 'nuff said.....	58
Leaving the bathroom with TP on your shoe: Not editing your essay.....	58
Making the Grade: How the ACT Folks Are Going to Score You.....	58
Example Essays and Their Scores	58
1 — 1 is the loneliest number: How not to be a 1	59
2 — 2 little 2 late: Steer clear of coming in second	59
3 — Still on the wrong side of the tracks	60
4 — The grass is greener on this side.....	60
5 — Star material: Five-star winners	61
6 — You unlocked the code: A perfect score.....	62
Chapter 8: Write Right: The Writing Test Review	65
Keeping It Simple: Making a Judgment.....	65
Fightin' with Their Words: Incorporating the Question	66
Putting Up Your Dukes: Deciding Your Position and Writing About It	67
Throwing a Good First Punch: The Hook.....	67

The Proof Is in the Pudding: Proving Yourself.....	69
Specific examples	69
Variety of examples	69
Hamburger Writing: The Organization of the Essay	70
Top Bun: The introduction.....	70
The Three Meats: Example paragraphs.....	70
Transitions	71
The Bottom Bun: Conclusion.....	71
Wielding the Red Pen: Editing and Proofing	72
Relax, you've already learned it	72
Top four editing techniques.....	72
This Was Not a Prescription: Handwriting.....	73

Chapter 9: Practicing Promptly with Practice Prompts: Essay Practice Examples.....	75
Writing Prompt #1	75
Writing Prompt #2.....	76

Part IV: Don't Count Yourself Out: The Math Review and Mini-Test **77**

Chapter 10: Ogling More Figures than a Beauty Pageant Judge: Geometry Review	79
You Gotta Have an Angle.....	79
Triangle Trauma.....	82
Similar figures	84
Area	85
Pythagorean theorem	85
Pythagorean triples.....	86
Thanks 4 Nothing: Quadrilaterals	87
Quaint quads: Bizarre quadrilaterals.....	89
Leftovers again: Shaded-area problems	89
Missing Parrots and Other Polly-Gones	90
One interior angle.....	90
Volume	91
Total surface area (TSA).....	92
I'm Too Much of a Klutz for Coordinate Geometry.....	93
Running Around in Circles	94

Chapter 11: Catching Some (X's, Y's, and) Z's: Algebra and Other Sleeping Aids....	99
The Powers That Be: Bases and Exponents	99
Keep It in Proportion: Ratios	101
Things Aren't What They Seem: Symbolism.....	102
Abracadabra: Algebra.....	105
Solve for x in an equation.....	105
Curses! FOILED again.....	106
Fact-or Fiction: Factoring	108
Too Hip to Be Square: Roots and Radicals	108
Addition and subtraction	109
Multiplication and division	109
Inside out.....	110

Probably Probability.....	110
Rule 1: Create a fraction	110
Rule 2: Multiply consecutive probabilities.....	111
The Stats Don't Lie: Statistics.....	111
Median	112
Mode	112
Range	112
Don't Soak Your Head: SOH CAH TOA.....	113
How to Use All This Junk: Trigonometric Ratios of Angles	115
No Nervous Breakdowns, Please	116
Chapter 12: Reviewing Miscellaneous Math You Probably Already Know	117
DIRTY Math: Time, Rate, and Distance	117
It All Averages Out: Averages	118
Missing term average problem	119
Weighted averages	119
Percentage Panic.....	120
Ready, Sets, Go: Number Sets.....	122
Prime and Composite Numbers	123
I'm All Mixed Up: Mixture Problems	124
Greed Is Great: Interest Problems	124
All Work and No Play: Work Problems	125
Smooth Operator: Order of Operations	126
Measuring Up: Units of Measurement	126
Broken Hearts, Broken Numbers: Fractions	128
Adding or subtracting fractions	128
Multiplying fractions.....	128
Dividing fractions	129
Working with mixed numbers.....	129
Chapter 13: Numb and Number: Acing the Mathematics Test	131
What You See Is What You Get: The Format and Breakdown.....	131
Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder: What Isn't on the Mathematics Test.....	132
Getting into the Grind: The Approach.....	133
Time Flies When You're Having Fun: Timing Tips.....	134
Skim for your favorite questions.....	134
Start in the middle when plugging in the answer choices	134
Kindly refrain from showing off everything you know	134
Put aside two minutes to fill in the remaining ovals.....	135
Do's, Don'ts, and Darns: What to Do and Not Do in the Math Test	135
Do get the lead out.....	135
Don't start working until you've read the entire problem	136
Do reread the problem with your answer inserted	136
Don't strike out over a difficult question early on.....	136
Chapter 14: More Fun Than a Root Canal: Mathematics Practice Questions	137
<i>Part V: Time to Read the Riot ACT: The Reading Test.....</i>	<i>143</i>
Chapter 15: This, Too, Shall Pass(age): Sailing through the Reading Test	145
Facing Forty (Questions): The Reading Test	145
Timing.....	146
Scoring.....	146
Reading strategies.....	146

I've Been Meaning to Ask You Something: The Questions.....	148
Main idea	148
Details	148
Tone, attitude, and inference	148
Vocabulary in context.....	149
Negative or reverse questions	149
Tips and Traps.....	149
Chapter 16: Where Are CliffsNotes When You Need Them?	
Reading Practice Questions	151
Passage 1.....	151
Passage 2.....	154
 Part VI: Proven to Cause Brain Defects in Laboratory Rats: The Science Reasoning Test	 157
Chapter 17: Frankenstein to Einstein: Excelling on the Science Reasoning Test	159
I'm Mad, but I'm No Scientist: What Do I Need to Know?	159
Too Graphic for Words: The Format	159
Chalk Talk: Developing a Game Plan.....	160
The Android's Favorite: Data Representation	160
After the game plan: Executing the play	161
Going for pay dirt: The "data-analysis" question	162
That's It in a Nutshell: Research Summaries	163
Purpose.....	163
Experimental design	163
Just tell me what you want: Question styles	164
Warring Factions: Conflicting Viewpoints.....	165
Asking for Trouble: Question Styles	166
Parting Is Such Sweet Sorrow: The Conclusion	167
 Chapter 18: Faking Atomic Ache Won't Get You Out of This: Science Practice Questions	 169
Passage.....	169
Initial Analysis	171
 Part VII: I'd Rather Wait for the Movie: Full-Length Practice ACTs	 179
Chapter 19: How to Ruin a Perfectly Good Day, Part I: Practice Exam 1.....	181
Answer Sheet	182
English Test.....	185
Mathematics Test	195
Reading Test	203
Science Reasoning Test	211
Getting Down to the Nitty-Gritty: Subscores	223
Score One for Our Side: The Scoring Key	223
Answer Key	225

Chapter 20: Practice Exam 1: Answers and Explanations	227
English Test	227
Mathematics Test	235
Reading Test	248
Science Reasoning	254
Chapter 21: How to Ruin a Perfectly Good Day, Part II: Practice Exam 2	265
Answer Sheet	266
English Test	269
Mathematics Test	280
Reading Test	288
Science Reasoning Test	296
Getting Down to the Nitty-Gritty: Subscores	307
Score One for Our Side: The Scoring Key	307
Answer Key	309
Chapter 22: Practice Exam 2: Answers and Explanations	311
English Test	311
Mathematics Test	320
Reading Test	332
Science Reasoning Test	338
<i>Part VIII: The Part of Tens</i>	351
Chapter 23: Ten Wrong Rumors About the ACT	353
You Can't Study for the ACT	353
Different States Have Different ACTs	353
The ACT Has a Passing Score	354
The ACT Tests IQ	354
If You Don't Know the Answer, Choose A or F	354
You Should Never Guess	354
The ACT Is Easier than the SAT I	354
The ACT Is the Same as the Achievement Test	355
You Have to Write an Essay	355
You Can't Take Both the SAT I and the ACT	355
Chapter 24: Ten Differences between the ACT and the SAT	357
The ACT Emphasizes English Grammar; The SAT I Emphasizes Vocabulary	357
The ACT Has an Optional Essay Question; The SAT I Has a Required Essay Section	357
The ACT Questions Are All Multiple-Choice; SAT I Math Questions Aren't	357
The ACT Tests Science Reasoning; The SAT I Doesn't	358
The ACT Doesn't Penalize You for Guessing; The SAT I Does	358
The ACT Has Five Long Sections; The SAT I Has Ten Short Sections	358
The ACT Has No Experimental Sections; The SAT I Has One	358
<i>Index</i>	359

