

**VERIZON**



# ASSET

## Study Guide

## ASSET STUDY GUIDE

### *What is ASSET?*

The ASSET program is a series of short placement tests developed by American College Testing (ACT) that lets you and the school work together to help you succeed in your educational program. ASSET helps you identify your strengths as well as the knowledge and skills you will need in order to succeed in the **Next Step** program.

### *How Does ASSET Work?*

ASSET, as used in **Next Step**, has three tests of basic skills in writing, reading, and numerical reasoning, plus a fourth test in elementary algebra. ASSET scores indicate areas in which you are strong and areas in which you may need help. Thus, ASSET can identify problems in major subject areas before they disrupt your educational progress, giving you the opportunity to prepare more effectively for needed courses.

### *How Are ASSET Scores Used?*

You must achieve a minimum score on ASSET to be considered eligible for the **Next Step** program. Seniority is also a factor in determining who is given the opportunity to register for **Next Step** in any enrollment period.

### *Where Can I Get Help?*

A review course in algebra is available at colleges participating in **Next Step** for those employees who did not reach the required minimum score in the elementary algebra part of ASSET. Retesting of the algebra component is done at the completion of the refresher course.

Various *Home Study* courses can help employees prepare in advance for ASSET testing. These self-study courses are offered at no cost to employees and cover writing, reading, numerical reasoning, and elementary algebra. There are also study guides available at bookstores and public libraries for the ACT, a test which is similar to the ASSET test used in the **Next Step** program. (See *Suggestions for Further Development* at the end of this booklet.)

***What Kinds of Questions are on the ASSET Tests?***

The ASSET tests all use a multiple-choice format. The following table gives the number of items and the amount of time allowed for each test.

| TEST                       | NUMBER OF ITEMS | MINUTES |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| <u>Basic Skills Tests:</u> |                 |         |
| Writing Skills             | 36              | 25      |
| Reading Skills             | 24              | 25      |
| Numerical Skills           | 32              | 25      |
| <u>Mathematics Test:</u>   |                 |         |
| Elementary Algebra         | 25              | 25      |

The Writing Skills test measures your understanding of appropriate usage in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, writing strategy, and writing style.

The Reading Skills test measures your ability to find specific information in text, and to make logical inferences that extend beyond the text information.

The Numerical Skills test assesses your knowledge and skills in the performance of basic math operations using whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. This test also measures pre-algebra knowledge and skills such as your understanding of prime numbers, absolute values, scientific notations, and square roots.

The Elementary Algebra test measures skills often taught in a first-year high school algebra class, including evaluating and simplifying algebraic expressions, solving linear and quadratic equations, and performing operations and polynomials.

Sample items and instructions for the three Basic Skills tests and the Elementary Algebra test are provided on the following pages (answers are provided following test pages).



### *Tips for Taking the ASSET*

1. Relax! The ASSET tests are designed to help you succeed in school. Your score helps you and your institution determine which courses are most appropriate for your current level of knowledge and skills. Once you identify your academic strengths and weaknesses you can get the help you need to improve underdeveloped skills before they can interfere with your learning.
2. You will be able to concentrate better on the test if you get plenty of rest and eat properly prior to the test. You should also arrive a few minutes early so you can find the testing area, bathroom, etc., and to ensure that you have time to find satisfactory seating, sharpen pencils, and gather your thoughts before the test begins.
3. Be sure you understand the directions for each test before that test session begins. Ask questions if you need to.
4. Pace yourself. You have 25 minutes to answer all questions. Note the time when you start the test and check the time periodically to keep yourself "on schedule." Questions usually get increasingly harder, so you need to allow more time for later questions.
5. Answer the easier questions first and skip over the more difficult ones. Be sure that you mark the appropriate item number on the answer sheet, so you can come back to the difficult item later. You can put a light check mark on the answer sheet next to the ones you skip over as long as you erase any stray marks after you have returned to that item and answered it. Do not make any marks in the test booklet.
6. Read each question carefully until you understand what the question is asking. If answering an item requires several steps, be sure you consider them all.
7. Be sure to answer every item. You are not penalized for guessing. Your score will provide more useful placement information if you answer every item, even if you must guess.
8. If time is available, go back and check your work on the test after you have answered all items. Don't be afraid to change an answer if you believe that your first choice was wrong.
9. Be sure that you mark the space that corresponds to the answer you have selected for each item. Darken the space completely. If you change your mind about an answer, be sure to erase any stray marks on your answer sheet.
10. If you have a problem or question during the test, raise your hand and the test administrator or proctor will help you. Although they cannot answer test questions for you, they can help you with other types of problems (e.g., broken pencil, etc.).

### ***Tips for Specific ASSET Tests***

| <b><u>Writing Skills</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b><u>Reading Skills</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Determine the intended meaning of each paragraph before trying to answer items in that paragraph.</li><li>2. Substitute each alternative into the appropriate underlined portion for each item and select the one that fits best with the meaning of the paragraph.</li></ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read the entire passage carefully before trying to answer any items.</li><li>2. Reread appropriate sections of the passage as needed to answer specific items.</li><li>3. Read a few sentences before and after the appropriate sections of a passage to be sure that you understand the context.</li></ol> |
| <b><u>Numerical Skills and Mathematics</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read each item stem carefully and examine all supporting information (e.g., tables and graphics) to be sure you understand each question.</li><li>2. Solve each question <u>before</u> you look at the alternatives.</li><li>3. Find your solution among the listed alternatives.</li><li>4. If your answer is not among the listed alternatives, check your work.</li><li>5. Use the scratch paper provided to do your calculations (sorry, no calculators).</li><li>6. For some items "Not given" may be the correct alternative.</li></ol> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Sample Writing Skills Test

**Directions:** In the passage that follows, certain words and phrases are underlined and numbered. In the right-hand column, you will find alternatives for each underlined part. You are to choose the one that best expresses the idea, makes the statement appropriate for standard written English, or is worded most consistently with the style and tone of the passage as a whole. If you think the original version is best, choose "NO CHANGE." You will also find questions about a section of the passage, or about the passage as a whole. For each question in the test, choose the alternative you consider best. Read each passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. You cannot determine some answers without reading several sentences beyond the phrase in question. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

The following paragraphs may or may not be in the most logical order. Each paragraph is numbered in parentheses, and item 11 will ask you to choose the sequence of paragraph numbers that is in the most logical order.

1

In the end, everyone gives up jogging. Some find that their strenuous efforts to earn a living drains away the energy necessary for

1

1. A. NO CHANGE
- B. drain
- C. has drained
- D. is draining

running. Others suffering from

2

2. A. NO CHANGE
- B. suffered
- C. suffer
- D. suffering with



defeat by the hazards of the course,  
which can range from hard pavement to  
muddy tracks and from smog to sleet

and snow. Person's can also simply  
3

collapse in their sneakers. My

experience having been different  
4

however; I had a revelation.

2

It happened two summers ago up  
Lake Tom, where I was vacationing

with friends. I had been accustomed

to running fairly regularly, but that

whole week I decided to be lazy. I

sailed, basked in the sun, and ate  
5

wonderful: lobster, steak,  
5

corn on the cob, baked potatoes, and

ice cream. By the fourth day of this

3. A. NO CHANGE  
B. Still others  
C. One may also  
D. It's also possible to

4. A. NO CHANGE  
B. being different,  
C. was a difference,  
D. was different,

5. A. NO CHANGE  
B. ate wonderfully:  
C. eating wonderful:  
D. eat wonderful:

routine I had to face the truth which  
6

6. A. NO CHANGE  
B. truth about  
C. truth:  
D. truth, which

my body was slowly changing to dough.

3

So, filled with worthy ambition,

I tied on my favorite pair of running  
shoes and loped out to the main road

in search of a five-mile route. Out  
7

of curiosity, I turned onto Lookout  
7

Hill Road and soon discovered how the  
7

7. A. NO CHANGE  
B. Out of curiosity, Lookout Hill Road w  
turned onto  
C. Having become curious, Lookout Hill  
Road was the road I turned onto  
D. Lookout Hill Road, having become  
curious, was the route I turned onto

road had come by its name. I was

chugging, at a painfully slow rate,

up one of the longest, steepest  
8

8. A. NO CHANGE  
B. longest, steepest,  
C. steepest longest,  
D. longest and steepest,

inclines in the region. Perched at

the faraway top of the hill was a

solitary house, and only a desire to

get a closer look at the place kept me

going.



4

I was exhausted when, gasping and bedraggled, I reached the crest of

the hill. There I found a native New Englander rocking tranquilly on the

front porch of the house, which was

9

painted. "Mister," I panted, "you

9

sure live on a big hill!"

9. A. NO CHANGE  
B. house (painted).  
C. house, and it was painted.  
D. house.

5

He studied me closely for a

moment and then responded, "Yep, and

I've got the good sense not to run up

it." That night I tied the laces of my running

10

shoes around a rock and pitched them

into Lake Tom.

10. A. NO CHANGE  
B. laces, of my running  
C. laces of my running,  
D. laces; of my running

Items 11 and 12 pose questions about the ~~essay~~ as a whole.

11. Choose the sequence of paragraph numbers that will make the essay's structure most logical.

- 11. A. NO CHANGE
- B. 1,4,5,2,3
- C. 1,5,4,3,2
- D. 4,5,1,2,3

12. Is the use of direct quotation in the essay appropriate?

- 12. A. No, because the ~~essay~~ is an explanation of why the writer gave up jogging.
- B. No, because more physical detail would be better in a descriptive ~~essay~~.
- C. Yes, because the story is enlivened by dialogue.
- D. Yes, because the essay persuades readers to talk about running.

## Sample Reading Skills Test

**Directions:** The passage below is followed by 8 questions. After reading the passage, choose the best answer to each question. You may look back at the passage as often as you wish.

The Industrial Revolution got under way first in England. This is a historical fact of the utmost significance, for it explains in large part England's primary role in world affairs in the nineteenth century. Consequently, the question of why the Industrial Revolution began where it did is of much more than academic interest.

The problem may be simplified by eliminating those countries that could not, for one reason or another, have generated the Industrial Revolution. Italy at one time had been an economic leader but had dropped behind with the Discoveries and the shift of the main trade routes from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. Spain had been economically predominant in the sixteenth century but had then lost out to the northwestern states for various reasons already noted. Holland had enjoyed her Golden Age in the seventeenth century, but she lacked the raw materials, labor resources, and water power necessary for machinery production. The various countries of Central and Eastern Europe had been little affected by the Commercial Revolution and hence did not develop the technical skills, the trade markets, and the capital reserves needed for industrialization.

This leaves only France and Britain as possible leaders, and of the two, England had certain advantages that enabled her to forge far ahead of her rival. In commerce, for example, the two countries were about equal in 1763, or, if anything, France was somewhat in the lead. But France had a population three times that of England. France also lost ground in foreign trade when she was driven out of Canada and India in 1763. Furthermore, the blockade of the British fleet during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars reduced French commerce to about half its 1788 value, and the loss was not restored until 1825.

Another important advantage enjoyed by Britain is that she had taken an interest in the basic coal and iron industries. Because the forest reserves were being depleted, Britain early began using coal for fuel and for smelting iron. By the time of the French Revolution in 1789, Britain was producing about 10 million tons of coal per year, while France was producing 700,000 tons. A contemporary poet sensed the significance of this unlimited source of power for English industry when he wrote,

England's a perfect World! has Indies too

Correct your Maps! New-castle is Peru.

England also pioneered in the development of the blast furnace which, in contrast to the open hearth, could mass-produce iron. In 1789, Britain's iron output had been a third that of France; by 1840, it was three times more. As this meant that Britain was pushing ahead in the production of goods of mass consumption for which there was a large and steady demand, whereas France specialized more in luxury commodities of limited and fluctuating demand. Perhaps Voltaire had this in mind when he wrote in 1735, "In truth we are the whipped cream of Europe."

From L.S. Stavrianos, *The World Since 1500: A Global History*.



1. The word *forged*, as it is used in the third paragraph, means:
  - A. make use of the blast furnace.
  - B. alter in order to deceive.
  - C. move forward steadily.
  - D. produce wrought iron
2. In comparing the economic development of England and France, the passage shows that:
  - A. England and France were essentially equals until the middle of the nineteenth century.
  - B. France modeled itself on the examples of Italy and Spain, while England modeled itself on the example of Holland.
  - C. England gained most of its capital reserves from the spoils of war, while France gained its capital reserves from trade.
  - D. England began on the equal base with France in the middle of the eighteenth century, but pulled far ahead by the middle of the nineteenth century.
3. What reason does the author give for discussing several countries besides England and France?
  - A. Enriching the information provided in the passage
  - B. Balancing the passage in the interest of fairness
  - C. Simplifying the problem confronted in the passage
  - D. Eliminating countries whose Golden Age was yet to come
4. The passage suggests that generating the first Industrial Revolution required which of the following?
  - I. Raw material
  - II. Technical skills
  - III. A large population
  - A. I only
  - B. III only
  - C. I and II only
  - D. II and III only
5. The author asserts that England's primary role in world affairs in the nineteenth century can be explained in large part by:
  - A. The Industrial Revolution getting under way in England first.
  - B. England's overwhelming naval power.
  - C. The decline of Italy, Spain, Holland, and Central and Eastern Europe.
  - D. England's unlimited source of power to fuel its industry.
6. The passage suggests that one indication of a country's success in industrializing was:
  - A. an education system that could produce a steady supply of skilled workers.
  - B. an ability to satisfy a large market for necessary, rather than luxury, goods.
  - C. a forest reserve that could be rapidly and efficiently replenished.
  - D. a fluctuating demand for luxury, rather than necessary, goods.

7. According to the passage, France was compared to whipped cream by:

- A. an unnamed contemporary poet.
- B. Voltaire.
- C. Napoleon.
- D. L.S. Stavrianos.

8. The main idea of the passage is that:

- A. certain conditions gave England an advantage over other countries in industrializing.
- B. with its conquest of Canada in 1763, England controlled the raw materials necessary for industrialization.
- C. the English preferred quantity in their goods, while the French demanded quality.
- D. England's primary position in international affairs gave it the wealth and influence necessary for industrialization.

### Sample Numerical Skills Test

**Directions:** Solve each problem and choose the correct answer. For some questions, the fifth choice for an answer will be "Not given." Whenever none of the first 4 possible answers is correct, choose "Not given" as your answer.

Do not linger over problems that take too much time. Solve as many as you can; then return to the others in the time you have left.

---

1.  $0.05 + 0.30 = ?$

- A. 0.08
- B. 0.305
- C. 0.35
- D. 0.38
- E. Not given

2.  $0.35 \div 5 = ?$

- A. 0.07
- B. 0.70
- C. 1.75
- D. 7.00
- E. Not given

3. On a road map with a scale of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch per 10 miles, the highway from Waukee to Winterset is  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches long. How many miles long is this highway?

- A. 44
- B. 55
- C. 65
- D. 70
- E. 90

4. The price of gasoline has increased by 5% during the past month. If the price per gallon a month ago was \$1.20, what is the current price per gallon?

- A. \$1.24
- B. \$1.25
- C. \$1.26
- D. \$1.70
- E. \$1.80

5.  $-2 | 3 - 4 - 5 | = ?$

- A. -12
- B. -8
- C. 8
- D. 12
- E. 24

6. Which of the following fractions is equivalent to 0.05?

- A.  $\frac{1}{5}$
- B.  $\frac{1}{20}$
- C.  $\frac{1}{25}$
- D.  $\frac{1}{50}$
- E.  $\frac{1}{200}$



### Sample Elementary Algebra Test

**Directions:** Solve each problem and choose the correct answer. For some questions, the fifth choice for an answer will be "Not given." Whenever none of the first 4 possible answers is correct, choose "Not given" as your answer.

Do not linger over problems that take too much time. Solve as many as you can; then return to the others in the time you have left.

---

1. If  $5 \times 10^n = 0.005$ , then  $n = ?$

- A. -5
- B. -3
- C. -2
- D. 2
- E. 3

2. If  $x = -3$ , then  $x^2 - 2x + 1 = ?$

- A. 16
- B. 4
- C. 1
- D. -11
- E. -14

3. Which of the following gives  $6a^2b^3 - 3a^2b$  in factored form?

- A.  $3a^2b(2b^2)$
- B.  $3a^2(2b^2 - 1)$
- C.  $3ab(2ab^2 - 1)$
- D.  $3a^2b(2b^2 - 1)$
- E.  $a^2b(6b^2 - 1)$

4. For all  $x \neq 0$  and  $y \neq 0$ ,

$$\frac{(3x^{-2}y^3)^2}{xy} = ?$$

A.  $9x^3y^8$

B.  $\frac{9y^4}{x}$

C.  $\frac{9y^4}{x^2}$

D.  $\frac{9y^5}{x^5}$

E.  $\frac{9y^7}{x^5}$

## ***Answers to Sample Items***

### **Writing Skills Answer Key**

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. C  | 11. A |
| 2. C | 7. A  | 12. C |
| 3. B | 8. A  |       |
| 4. D | 9. D  |       |
| 5. B | 10. A |       |

### **Reading Skills Answer Key**

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1. C | 4. C | 7. B |
| 2. D | 5. A | 8. A |
| 3. C | 6. B |      |

### **Numerical Skills Answer Key**

- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. C | 4. C |
| 2. A | 5. A |
| 3. B | 6. B |

### **Elementary Algebra Answer Key**

1. B
2. A
3. D
4. D

## ***SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT***

### **Home Study Courses:**

#### **Writing Skills**

##### ***Practical English and the Command of Words***

This comprehensive course is designed to improve oral and written communication skills. All phases of language and effective communication are addressed in forty-eight brief lessons written in a style that quickly captures and holds the student's attention.

Among the topics included are:

- ◆ vocabulary development
- ◆ pronunciation
- ◆ writing
- ◆ diction
- ◆ grammar
- ◆ spelling
- ◆ punctuation
- ◆ usage

#### **Reading Skills**

##### ***Speed Learning***

Speed Learning is designed to enable the employee to read more effectively by increasing both speed and comprehension. The course consists of workbooks, audio tapes, and associated reading material. It focuses on his/her purpose in reading a newspaper, textbook, magazine, report, novel, etc., and thereby understand the contents more rapidly. The course also teaches different reading strategies and when to use them:

- ◆ skim reading
- ◆ scan reading
- ◆ study reading
- ◆ rapid reading

The skills learned in this course can be applied to any learning task.

#### **Numerical Reasoning**

##### ***Real Life Math and the Power of Numbers***

This course consists of forty-eight interesting, to-the-point units that build mathematical skills in a concise, logical way. The program addresses problems the student has to deal with daily:

- ◆ basic math operations
- ◆ business math applications
- ◆ statistics
- ◆ financial applications
- ◆ consumer issues
- ◆ problem solving

Students will see a noticeable improvement in math skills right from the start.



Numerical Reasoning **Basic Math** (Lessons 1,2,3, and 4)  
Elementary Algebra **Basic Math** (Lessons 5 and 6)

Certain elements of this course may be new to some employees. For others, it will serve as a refresher of math skills that have faded through disuse. The components of the course are:

- ◆ Lesson 1: Basic Arithmetic
- ◆ Lesson 2: Fundamental Fractions
- ◆ Lesson 3: Decimals
- ◆ Lesson 4: Exponents, Powers, and Roots
- ◆ Lesson 5: Introductory Algebra
- ◆ Lesson 6: Advanced Algebra

Any of the above Home Study courses can be obtained by calling the NYNEX Home Study office at (718) 237-5283. If you plan to take a Home Study course, be sure to allow yourself enough time to order the course and complete it before you take the ASSET test.

### **Using an ACT Study Guide to Prepare for ASSET**

There are numerous books available at bookstores and libraries that are designed to help people prepare for the ACT, a test that is similar to the ASSET program used in *Next Step*, but not quite the same. (The ACT is required by some four-year colleges and universities for admission. The ACT covers English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning.)

If you decide to use an ACT study guide to get ready for taking ASSET, you will find the following similarities and differences:

- ▼ the English part of ACT is similar to the Writing Skills part of ASSET. Both measure your understanding of appropriate usage in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, writing strategy and writing style.
- ▼ ASSET has two mathematics components, Numerical Skills and Elementary Algebra. Numerical Skills tests your ability to perform basic math operations using whole numbers, decimals and fractions. It also measures your understanding of prime numbers, absolute values, scientific notation, and square roots. Elementary Algebra measure skills often taught in a first year high school algebra class, including evaluating and simplifying algebraic expressions, solving linear and quadratic equations, and performing operations on polynomials. The ACT has a single mathematics section that goes beyond elementary algebra, and includes intermediate algebra, geometry and trigonometry.

▼ the **Reading** part of ACT is similar to the **Reading** part of ASSET, but the ACT has more questions and covers four different kinds of reading material: prose fiction, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Both tests measure your ability to find specific information in text, and to make logical inferences that extend beyond the text information.

▼ the fourth part of the ACT, **Science Reasoning**, is not a part of the ASSET.

**A word of advice:** Using an ACT study guide to prepare for the Asset can be helpful, but it can also be confusing. While some parts of both tests are similar, some are not. The ACT mathematics, for example, covers more mathematics than you need to know to take the ASSET.

By carefully examining the sample questions in the Numerical Skills and Elementary Algebra sections in this **ASSET Study Guide**, you will get an idea of the math covered in the ASSET. With this in mind, you can then go to any ACT study guide and review only the math topics you can expect to find on the ASSET.

For additional information, go to [www.nspinfo.com](http://www.nspinfo.com).

Thank you.

Enc.

