

ACT Tips and Tricks

Mrs. Webb

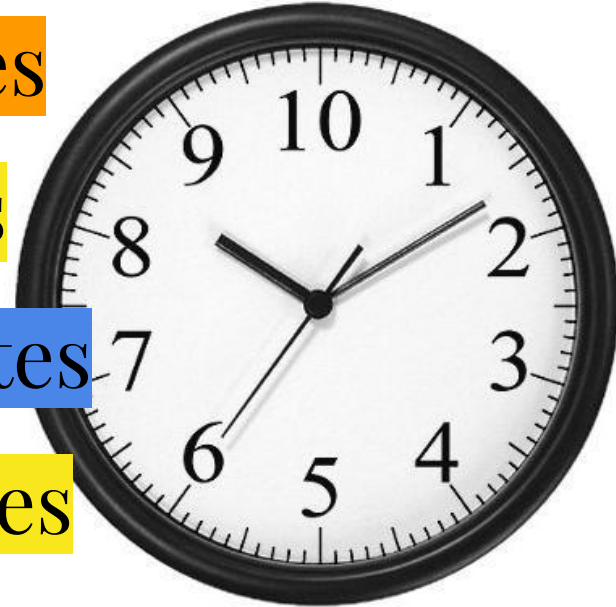
Parts of the ACT

English - 75 questions; 45 minutes

Math - 60 questions; 60 minutes

Reading - 40 questions; 35 minutes

Science - 40 questions; 35 minutes



Basic ACT Strategies

- Answer Every Question
- There is no penalty for wrong answers on the ACT
- Pick a letter of the day and use that letter every time you guess:

A A A A A A Not A B A C D E A

Basic ACT Strategies

- Use P.O.E. - Process of Elimination
- Get in the habit of placing a line through the answers you know are wrong in the test booklet

Let's review a sample problem to demonstrate P.O.E.

Basic ACT Strategies

Guessing Strategy #1: Always Try to Eliminate Answer Choices Before Guessing

The number one rule of guessing is...try to minimize guessing. The first thing you should do when you come across a question that (at least partially) stumps you is to use process of elimination on the answer choices. The more choices you can cross off, the better your chances at answering correctly. Don't guess blindly just because you think you don't know the answer after reading a question. Read all the answer choices - sometimes a question that seems difficult will be less so after you review the options you are given. When it comes down to it, the ACT only tests basic academic skills. Even if a question appears to ask about an unfamiliar subject, you might be able to use simple logic to find the answer. Even if you can only find one answer choice that is clearly incorrect, you you have a better shot at guessing correctly from the remaining three choices.

Basic ACT Strategies

Eliminate what you know is wrong.

What is the capital of Malawi?

Does anyone know the answer to this question?

Basic ACT Strategies

Eliminate what you know is wrong.

What is the capital of Malawi?

- a) London
- b) Tokyo
- c) Paris
- d) Washington D.C.
- e) Lilongwe

Basic ACT Strategies

Strategy #2: Pick One "Guessing Letter" Before the Test

What if you really, really can't eliminate any answers? On these questions it is best to pick the same letter answer choice every time. You have a better likelihood of getting some questions right by guessing the same letter every time than by skipping around.

Why? For a couple of reasons. It saves you time and it ensures a random guess. If you have already decided you're going to pick a certain letter regardless of the question, you can preserve randomness and count on the law of averages to give you one question correct out of every four guesses.

Basic ACT Strategies

Strategy #3: Move On and Guess Later

Many students make the mistake of lingering on questions they don't know causing them to lose time that would be better spent on easier questions. If you really don't know which answer is better, don't waste your time dwelling on the question. What's considered "wasting your time"? The ACT has pretty narrow time constraints for each section. For Math, you get a minute on average for each question. If you haven't figured out a strategy to answer a question in the first 30 seconds of looking at it, move on to the next one. For English, you get around 30 seconds to answer each question, so you should be able to figure out a strategy within the first 10 seconds or you need to skip it.

Reading and Science each give you around 50 seconds to answer each question, so for those sections 20 seconds or less is a good rule of thumb.

Basic ACT Strategies

* ACT Triage * - WHAT ELSE CAN I DO??

- Work on the easy/quick questions first

AND

Be sure to know your POD:

Personal **O**rder of **D**ifficulty

Basic ACT Strategies

Time is your nemesis so consider the level of question difficulty for each passage. Choose the passage that you are most comfortable with first.

Read THAT passage then think about NOW, LATER, and LOTD.

- Consider whether the question looks easy. Can you answer it NOW? If so do it.
- If the question looks difficult, leave it and come back to it LATER.
- If the question is impossible, NEVER waste your time struggling for longer than one minute on one question. Instead...
- Choose the Letter of the Day or (LOTD) for NEVER questions. Be strategic. Always choose the same answer for LOTD questions.

Basic ACT Strategies

Timing and Pacing are the most difficult aspects of the test because students are not used to dealing with time constraints.

- Wearing a watch will help keep your pacing goals and tell you if you are spending too much time on one section or passage.**

It's gotta be a basic timekeeping piece. No smart watches.

Basic ACT Strategies

Traps to Avoid When Taking the ACT

Losing concentration: When you're in the middle of an excruciatingly boring reading passage, the worst thing you can do is let your mind drift off to a more pleasant time. Although visualization (picturing yourself doing something relaxing or fun) is a good stress-reduction technique to practice before the exam, it stinks when it comes to helping your ACT score during the test. Even if you have to pinch yourself to keep from falling asleep or flaking out, stay focused

Basic ACT Strategies

Traps to Avoid When Taking the ACT

Panicking over time: Every section on the ACT begins with directions and a line that tells you how many questions are in the section and, therefore, how many minutes you have per question. The ACT is no big mystery. You can waste a lot of time and drive yourself crazy if you keep flipping pages and counting how many more questions you have to do. You can do what you can do; that's all. Looking ahead and panicking are counterproductive and waste time.

Basic ACT Strategies

Traps to Avoid When Taking the ACT

Rubbernecking: Rubbernecking is craning your neck around to see how everyone else is doing. Forget those bozos. You have too much to do on your own to waste precious seconds checking out anyone else. After you have the exam booklet in front of you, don't look at anything but it and your watch until time is called.

Basic ACT Strategies

Traps to Avoid When Taking the ACT

Worrying about previous sections: Think of the ACT as five separate lifetimes. You're reborn four times, so you get four more chances to "do it right." Every time the proctor says, "Your time is up. Please turn to the next test and begin," you get a fresh start. The ACT rules are very strict: You can't go back to a previous section and finish work there or change some of your answers. If you try to do so, the proctor will catch you, and you'll be in a world of hurt.

Basic ACT Strategies

Traps to Avoid When Taking the ACT

Worrying about the hard problems: The ACT contains some incredibly hard problems and questions. Forget about them. Almost no one gets them right anyway. A ridiculously few students receive a score of 36 every year, and if you get into the 30s, you're in a super-elite club of only a few percent of the thousands who take the ACT annually. Just accept the fact that you either won't get to or can't answer a few of the hard questions and learn to live with your imperfection. If you do go quickly enough to get to the hard questions, don't waste too much time on them. See if you can use common sense to eliminate any answers. Then mark your best guess from the remaining choices. Keep reminding yourself that every question counts the same in a section.

English Tips

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Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #10: THINK SIMPLE.

As far as the ACT is concerned, the best writing uses the fewest number of words to convey an idea. This doesn't always mean the shortest answer is the best answer; sometimes more words are needed in order for a phrase or sentence to be grammatically correct. In general, avoid answer choices that are wordy. The best answers are clear and concise.

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #9: TAKE THE WHOLE SENTENCE INTO ACCOUNT

While it may seem like a good idea to only look at the underlined portion of a sentence, this approach can lead you to miss issues in the passage. Many times the rest of the sentence will affect your answer.

For example, if there is an independent clause in the second part of the sentence, you will need to make sure that the underlined portion does not cause a run-on if it is also an independent clause.

Always read the whole sentence; you'll be less likely to overlook an error.

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #8: READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE.

It may seem like the overall meaning of the passage is unimportant since these are grammar questions. However, there are many questions where context must be considered.

Some examples are transition word questions, questions that ask you to choose the best closing sentence, and questions that ask you about the proper placement of a sentence in a paragraph.

For these types of questions, you will need an understanding of the main idea of the each paragraph as well as the entire passage.

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #7: KEEP IT SIMPLE.

Generally, you want to keep things such as verb tense and voice consistent. If you're choosing the proper tense for a verb, look at the surrounding sentences; the underlined verb should be in the same tense as the rest of verbs in the paragraph. There will be exceptions, like when a certain clause refers to a past event in a paragraph that is otherwise in present tense, but this is a good rule to follow.

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #6: AVOID REDUNDANCIES.

If something has already been stated or implied, don't state it again. There's no need for two adjectives that mean the same thing or any other type of repetition.

This rule also falls under keeping it simple and taking the whole sentence into account. If you just read the underlined portion, you might miss the same idea already present elsewhere in the sentence.

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #5: KEEP THINGS PARALLEL.

Parallelism is a grammatical principle that becomes easier to spot the more you see it. For a sentence to be parallel, the clauses within it must have matching structure. Here's an example of a sentence that isn't parallel:

My favorite things to do are running, swimming, and to read.

The first two items in the series are in gerund (-ing) form (running and swimming), but the third item is in infinitive form. To make this sentence parallel, change "to read" to "reading."

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #4: WATCH OUT FOR RUN-ON SENTENCES.

Comma splices are common mistakes in everyday writing, so they may not jump out at you as mistakes in an ACT English passage. A comma splice is a specific type of run-on in which two independent clauses are joined together with just a comma.

Remember that an independent clause is a clause that could stand on its own as a complete sentence.

A comma splice can be fixed by adding a **FANBOYS** conjunction, making one of the clauses dependent, or changing the comma to a semi-colon.

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #3: MAKE SURE THE SUBJECTS AND VERBS AGREE.

Whenever you see a verb underlined, match it to its subject. Plural subjects need plural verbs, and singular subjects need singular verbs. Subject-verb agreement errors are usually easy to spot if the subject and verb are right next to each other. Often, though, they are not; that's when it gets tricky.

If there are any prepositional phrases in between the subject and verb, take them out and then read the subject and verb together. *Do not make the mistake of thinking that the object of the prepositional phrase is your subject.*

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #2: LOOK FOR PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT.

The antecedent is the noun that a pronoun replaces or refers to. You can draw an arrow from a pronoun back to its subject and then check to make sure they agree in number and gender. For example, the plural pronoun “they” must have a plural subject, such as “students,” and the plural pronoun “her” must have a singular, feminine subject, such as “Jane.”

Top 10 Tips for English

ACT ENGLISH TIP #1: CHECK THAT TRANSITIONAL SENTENCES INCLUDE IDEAS FROM BOTH THE CURRENT AND THE PREVIOUS/FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH.

Often you will have to pick the best opening or closing sentence of a paragraph. The best choice will almost always create a smooth transition by including ideas from both the current paragraph and the previous or following one (depending if it is an opening or closing sentence). By including ideas from both paragraphs, the two ideas are connected, creating a smoother transition.

English - What's on the test?

Usage/Mechanics Questions (Total of 40 questions)

Punctuation (7-11 questions)

commas, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, dashes, periods, question marks, and exclamation points

Grammar & Usage (11-15 questions)

subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, pronoun forms and cases, adjectives, adverbs, verb forms, comparative and superlative modifiers, and idioms

Sentence Structure (15-19 questions)

subordinate or dependent clauses, run-on or fused sentences, comma splices, sentence fragments, misplaced modifiers, shifts in verb tense or voice, and shifts in pronoun person or number

English - What's on the test?

Rhetorical Skills Questions (Total of 35 questions)

Strategy (11-15 questions)

adding, revising, or deleting sentences; how a sentence fits with the purpose, audience, and focus of a paragraph or the essay as a whole

Organization (7-11 questions)

opening, transitional, and closing phrases or statements; order and focus of sentences or paragraphs

Style (11-15 questions)

writing style, tone, clarity, and effectiveness; eliminating ambiguity, wordiness, and redundant material; clarifying vague or awkward material

Math Tips

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Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #10: APPROACH EVERY ACT MATH QUESTION WITH THE SAME METHOD

- 1) Read the question
- 2) Look at the information provided in the question and the answer choices
- 3) Solve:
 - Backsolve
 - Pick Numbers
 - Use Traditional Math
 - Strategically Guess
- 4) Check to make sure that you answered the specific question that was asked.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #9: PICK NUMBERS TO AVOID COMPLICATED ALGEBRA ON THE ACT

Avoid using algebra by picking numbers for variables. Arithmetic is almost always easier than algebra! Picking numbers is especially helpful for number properties questions. Pick numbers that follow the rules of the question and are small and easy to work with. Avoid picking 0 or 1 because they have special properties.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #8: BACKSOLVE TO SAVE TIME

You can backsolve when you see integers in the answer choices. The answer choices are arranged in numeric order, so start with answer choice C/H unless the question asks for the smallest or largest value. Let the answer choices work for you.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #7: TRANSLATE WORDS INTO MATH

Translate the words in the question into math so that you can solve more easily. Take it one word or phrase at a time. Remember that “of” means to multiply.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #6: KNOW YOUR PROPERTIES

Recognizing number properties will save you time on test day. Number properties rules include odds and evens, prime numbers, and the order of operations. You can pick numbers to help you remember the rules.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #5: UNDERSTAND MATH RELATIONSHIPS

Know the difference between values, ratios, and percents. A ratio is a relationship between numbers. Make sure you're able to move easily between percents, fractions, and decimals.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #4: KNOW YOUR TRIANGLES

You must know the 30-60-90 and 45-45-90 rules. The ACT does not provide this information at the beginning of the math section like the SAT does, so be sure to memorize this information ahead of time. Also look out for Pythagorean triplets (3:4:5 and 5:12:13 and their multiples); these will save you time on Test Day!

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #3: FIND COMMON SHAPES

Find common shapes on the ACT to help you break complex figures into simple polygons. Look in particular for **triangles**; they're full of valuable information.

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #2: RECOGNIZE RED FLAGS

Be on the lookout for common trap answers on the ACT. Watch out for answers to steps along the way to the final answer. Be careful with negative signs!

Top 10 Tips for Math

ACT MATH TIP #1: MAKE SURE YOUR CALCULATOR IS ALLOWED ON TEST DAY

Check the [official ACT website](#) to make sure the calculator you plan to use on the ACT math section is allowed.



Additional Math Strategies

- Know how to ballpark - this will improve your efficiency and score!
- Learn how to use a calculator – graphing functions and matrix problems
- Take 2 passes - X the questions in the test booklet you do not understand at all and skip them on your second pass
- P.O.E. - be sure to eliminate the wrong answers
- Follow your personal order of difficulty – start with your easiest section
- Read the question carefully – they predict where students will misread the question– you can count on that answer as being one of your choices – they do this to trap students
- Questions typically get more difficult as you move through the section.

Math - What's on the test?

Pre-Algebra (14 questions)

whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers; positive integer powers and square roots; ratio, proportion, and percent; multiples and factors; absolute value; one variable, linear equations; probability and counting problems; data interpretation; and mean, median, and mode

Elementary Algebra (10 questions)

variables, polynomials, factoring, quadratic equations, linear inequalities, integer exponents, and square roots

Intermediate Algebra (9 questions)

quadratic formula, radical and rational expressions, inequalities, absolute value, sequences, systems of equations, quadratic inequalities, functions, matrices, polynomial roots, and complex numbers

Math - What's on the test?

Coordinate Geometry (9 questions)

number line graphs; graphs of points, lines, polynomials, circles, and other curves; relationships between equations and graphs; slope; properties of parallel and perpendicular lines; distance formula; midpoint formula; transformations; and conics

Plane Geometry (14 questions)

plane figures (triangles, rectangles, parallelograms, trapezoids, circles); angles; parallel lines; perpendicular lines; translations, reflections, and rotations; 3-D geometry; perimeter, area, and volume; and logical reasoning and proofs

Trigonometry (4 questions)

right triangle trigonometric ratios; trigonometric functions, identities, and equations; and trigonometric functions modeling

Reading Tips

10

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Remember these Tips for Reading

The Reading Section of the ACT is separated into four passages.

**The order is Prose Fiction, Social Studies, Humanities,
Natural Science.**

They will always be in this order.

Additional Reading Strategies

What do those sections mean?

1. Prose Fiction(Literary Narrative): Most interesting to read, but often the hardest questions!
Most time-consuming!
2. Social Sciences: Politics, history
3. Humanities: Arts, culture
4. Natural Science: biology, ecology

Cool Tip: Reading is almost a point to point conversion on the ACT grading scale. Twenty correct questions roughly equals a 19-20 on this section. Yes, seriously.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #10: KNOW THE STRUCTURE OF THE TEST

The ACT Reading Test is a 35-minute Reading section that starts immediately after a 15-minute break. Use this to your advantage by using your break to relax.

There are five ACT reading passages that equals a total of 40 multiple-choice questions that each have four answer choices. There are four different passage types: Prose Fiction(Literary Narrative), Social Studies, Humanities, and Natural Sciences. You can do the passages in any order, so start with your strongest passage type and work from there.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #9: THE ACT IS AN OPEN-BOOK TEST

On Test Day, you will encounter four very different passage types: Prose Fiction (Literary Narrative), Social Studies, Humanities (history and fine art), and Natural Science. One or two passages could be unfamiliar to you. Don't get discouraged, though. You don't need any outside knowledge to answer ACT Reading questions; they're all based on the passage in front of you.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #8: FOLLOW KAPLAN'S METHOD FOR ACT READING COMPREHENSION

Read the passage and write short notes next to each paragraph.

- Focus on the topic and purpose of the passage
- Keep track of different people and opinions

Read the question and identify helpful hints.

- Line references and keywords can help you find the answer

Predict an answer BEFORE you look at the answer choices.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #7: THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO TACKLE A PASSAGE. READ THE QUESTIONS FIRST? OR READ THE PASSAGE FIRST?

This is totally up to you and your learning style. We will practice both methods, but you may find that your reading comprehension increases when you read those QUESTIONS (not ANSWERS) first. It gives you something to look for in the reading passage and helps keep your interest where you might otherwise let your mind wander. Either method here is ok. Just find what works for you.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #6: USE THE LINE REFERENCES

Memories can be faulty; don't waste energy trying to rely on yours during a timed, high stakes test. The line references are provided for a reason, so use them, and don't forget to read around the line reference for context. If a question references line 12, for example, read lines 10-14. The correct answer will always have support in the passage.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #5: ELIMINATE INCORRECT ANSWER CHOICES

There will always be answers to eliminate, so look for them. Sometimes, just one word makes an entire answer choice wrong. Find the flaw in the answer choice, and cross it off.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #4: FIND SUPPORT

Always choose the best answer choice (based on support in the passage), not the one you think sounds most intelligent. You must find textual evidence supporting the right answer.

The correct answer will be flawless.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #3: KNOW HOW THE TEST IS SCORED

There is no wrong answer penalty, so make sure you answer every question, even if you cannot eliminate any answer choices or if you run out of time.

Have a pre-specified “Letter of the Day” like (A)/(F) or (B)/(G) to fill in automatically so you don’t spend extra time deciding which answer choice you want to bubble in.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #2: KNOW THE ACT READING COMPREHENSION QUESTION TYPES

1. **Global questions** – Ask about the passage as a whole
2. **Inference & Writer's View questions** – Ask you to understand something that isn't directly stated in the passage
3. **Detail questions** – Ask about specific parts of the passage
4. **Vocab-in-Context questions** – Ask about a word as it is used in the passage
5. **Function questions** – Ask about the purpose of a specific part of the passage

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT READING TIP #1: KNOW THE ACT READING COMPREHENSION TRAP ANSWERS

1. **Distortion** – twists details from the passage so they are no longer correct
2. **Misused detail** – a true statement from the passage, but one that doesn't answer the question
3. **Out-of-scope** – includes information not included in the passage
4. **Extreme** – too extreme to reflect the author's purpose (often includes words like always, never, best, worst, etc.)
5. **Opposite** – contradicts the information in the passage

Content Covered by the ACT Reading Test

Five scores are reported for the reading section: a score for the section overall; three reporting category scores based on specific knowledge and skills; and an Understanding Complex Texts indicator. The approximate percentage of the section devoted to each reporting category is:

Key Ideas and Details (55–60%)

This category requires you to read texts closely to determine central ideas and themes. Summarize information and ideas accurately. Understand relationships and draw logical inferences and conclusions, including understanding sequential, comparative, and cause-effect relationships.

Content Covered by the ACT Reading Test

Craft and Structure (25–30%)

These questions ask you to determine word and phrase meanings; analyze an author's word choice rhetorically; analyze text structure; understand the author's purpose and perspective; and analyze characters' points of view. Interpret authorial decisions rhetorically and differentiate between various perspectives and sources of information.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (13–18%)

This category requires you to understand author's' claims, differentiate between facts and opinions, and use evidence to make connections between different texts that are related by topic. Some questions will require you to analyze how authors construct arguments and evaluate reasoning and evidence from various sources.

Science Reasoning Tips

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Remember these Tips for Science Reasoning

Instead of calling it Science Reasoning, think of it as Technical Reading.

- **Basic understanding of the scientific method will help you out.**
- **Not much science knowledge is needed.**
- **Read and understand charts and graphs**

Remember these Tips for Science Reasoning

There are 3 types of science passages:

1. Charts and Graphs = consists only of charts and graphs
2. Experiments = combination of reading text and charts and graphs in the same question
3. Fighting Scientists = much like the reading section, only reading text, no charts and graphs

Work out of order – know your POD

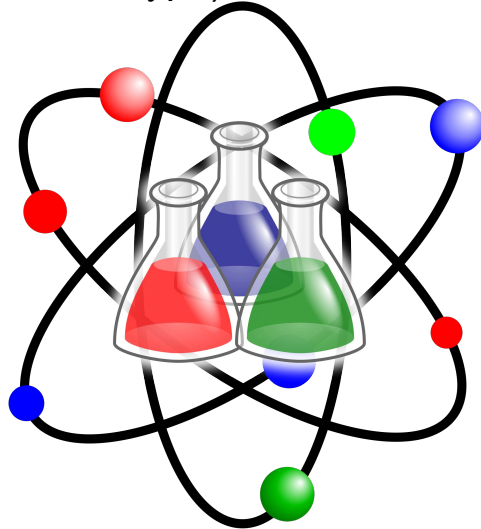
usually students find the charts and graphs the easiest, then the experiments – if you find the reading section easy then you should do the fighting scientists second.

Opposites – when a student encounters 2 answer choices that are direct opposites, one will almost always be the correct answer.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #10: KNOW THE ACT SCIENCE PASSAGE TYPES

- **Research Summary** (3 of this type): presents a series of experiments
- **Data Representation** (2 of this type): presents information about a topic
- **Conflicting Viewpoints** (1 of this type): discusses multiple theories about a single topic



Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #9: ADOPT A STRATEGY FOR EACH OF THE 3 FORMATS

Data Representation focuses mostly on charts, graphs, and tables, so you will need to practice identifying variables, units, and trends. The **Conflicting Viewpoints** passage typically has no diagrams and is more like the paired passage you will encounter on the Reading Test. **Research Summaries** describe one or more experiments. You will need to understand the Purpose, Method, and Results for each experiment and know what the similarities and differences are between them. Don't treat these 3 formats all the same; they are each quite unique.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #8: MARK UP THE PASSAGE

As you are reading, do not hesitate to underline, circle, and make small notes in your test booklet. This type of note-taking is an efficient way to help you stay focused and on target with your pacing. Noting similarities and differences between multiple experiments will help you when it comes time to deal with the questions.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #7: KNOW THE ACT SCIENCE QUESTION TYPES

1. **Interpretation of Data** — examine tables & graphs
2. **Evaluation of Models, Inferences, and Experimental Results** — make judgments about theories, data, and other scientific information
3. **Scientific Investigation** — understand the reasons behind an experimental setup

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #6: PRACTICE YOUR TIMING

Don't wait until two weeks before your test to get started. You will only have about 5 minutes per passage, so you may want to start by only doing 5 passages, allotting 7 min per passage.

Once you can confidently do 5 passages with reasonable accuracy, work your way up to 6 and then 7. If you have a limited time to study and your accuracy significantly drops after 5 passages, just stick to 5 on Test Day. Better to do 5 really well and use your "Letter of the Day" on the last one than to do all of them haphazardly.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #5: ALWAYS REFER BACK TO THE PASSAGE

You won't be able to memorize the information presented in the passages; it's too overwhelming. Read the passages to understand the gist and the data that is presented, but also move back to the passage to locate the information you need to answer the questions. Memory alone will not suffice. You may find it helpful to jot down a few short notes on each passage. Drawing arrows and circling important info is also a great idea.

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #4: TRENDS CONTINUE

When asked about a data point that is not explicitly shown on a table or graph, you can assume that the trends presented in the passage will continue. Use this to extend the line or to estimate the value of the new point. Don't be afraid to draw in your test booklet!

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #3: KNOW COMMONLY-USED TERMS

- **Independent variable**: the variable that scientists change on purpose
- **Dependent variable(s)**: the variable(s) that the scientists are measuring
- **Constants**: parts of the experiment that the scientists keep the same
- **Direct relationship**: As the independent variable increases or decreases, the dependent variable does the same
- **Indirect relationship**: As the independent variable increases or decreases, the dependent variable does the opposite

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #2: HAVE AN OVERALL EXAM STRATEGY

- When tackling the ACT science section, ask yourself:
 - What did the scientists study and how did they do so?
 - Why is the experiment set up this way?
 - What is measured? What is controlled by the scientists?
 - What did the scientists find? What are the patterns?
 - What are the similarities? What are the differences?
- The halfway mark is at about 17 minutes, so you should be done with at least 3 passages and about 20 questions at that point.
- Circle detail words in the question stem, such as “NOT,” “Experiment 1,” or “Table 1.”

Top 10 Tips for Reading

ACT SCIENCE TIP #1: MASTER YOUR TIMING

Set a timer the next time you work on an ACT Science practice test, and see if you can stick to these checkpoints.

This is the ideal timing for the actual exam:

- :00 ... Set the clock and begin!
- :06....Finish gridding in the answers for Passage 1
- :12....Finish gridding in the answers for Passage 2
- :18....Finish gridding in the answers for Passage 3
- :24....Finish gridding in the answers for Passage 4
- :30....Finish gridding in the answers for Passage 5
- :35....Finish gridding in the answers for Passage 6

If there are 7 passages in the section, you'll want to spend about a minute less on the shorter passages with fewer questions to bank time for the extra passage.

Science Reasoning - What's on the test?

Data Representation (approx 15 questions)

understand, evaluate, and interpret information presented in graphs, tables, or charts

Research Summaries (approx 18 questions)

understand, evaluate, and analyze one or more experiments

Conflicting Viewpoints (approx 7 questions)

understand and evaluate conflicting viewpoints, theories, or hypotheses on a specific topic

Scale Score	Raw Scores				Scale Score
	Test 1 English	Test 2 Mathematics	Test 3 Reading	Test 4 Science	
36	74-75	59-60	40	40	36
35	71-73	57-58	38-39	—	35
34	70	55-56	37	39	34
33	69	54	36	38	33
32	68	53	34-35	—	32
31	67	51-52	33	37	31
30	66	49-50	32	36	30
29	64-65	47-48	31	—	29
28	63	45-46	30	35	28
27	61-62	42-44	—	34	27
26	59-60	39-41	29	32-33	26
25	56-58	37-38	28	31	25
24	53-55	34-36	26-27	29-30	24
23	50-52	32-33	25	26-28	23
22	47-49	31	23-24	24-25	22
21	44-46	29-30	22	22-23	21
20	41-43	27-28	20-21	20-21	20
19	39-40	25-26	19	18-19	19
18	37-38	22-24	18	17	18
17	35-36	19-21	16-17	15-16	17
16	32-34	16-18	15	14	16
15	29-31	13-15	14	13	15
14	26-28	10-12	12-13	11-12	14
13	24-25	8-9	11	10	13
12	22-23	7	10	9	12
11	19-21	5-6	8-9	8	11
10	16-18	4	7	7	10
9	13-15	—	6	6	9
8	11-12	3	5	5	8
7	9-10	—	—	4	7
6	7-8	2	4	3	6
5	6	—	3	—	5
4	4-5	1	2	2	4
3	3	—	—	1	3
2	2	—	1	—	2
1	0-1	0	0	0	1