The purpose of the A.W.E. is to place a student into the writing course where the student has the best chance of success.

Students do not pass or fail the A.W.E.
ENGLISH COURSES AT MT. SAC

Your AWE score determines where you begin the progression of English courses at Mt. SAC.
HOW THE A.W.E. WORKS

• The placement test generally takes place in the Assessment Center (Student Services Center)
• A student can choose to use a computer (which has no spell or grammar check) or pen and paper to write.
• This is a 45-minute timed writing test.
• A student chooses one of the topic options given.
• A student completes the online Student Success Inventory. The information on this survey can be used to place students in an appropriate class. Assessment Center
• Two or more A.W.E. Readers will score the writing sample to determine a placement.
• Placement results will be available in 24-72 hours at the Mt. SAC portal or at the Assessment Center.
BEFORE THE DAY OF ASSESSMENT

• Read over the A.W.E. writing samples on the Assessment Center website.

• Look at the criteria the readers use to score your writing

• Do a timed writing practice at home. Practice prompts are also provided on the Assessment Center website.
CRITERIA TO DETERMINE PLACEMENT:

• Reader Compensation & Comprehensibility

• Organization

• Development

• Reasoning & Ideas

• Language
PREPARING FOR THE ASSESSMENT

• Even though you only have 45 minutes to write, plan to spend one hour and a half total time at the test location so that you have enough time to find parking and test location (Bldg. 9B).
DURING ASSESSMENT
THINGS TO AVOID

• Dictionaries, translators, and other outside resources are not allowed.

• Please silence and put away all cell phones and other electronic devices.
Use the following chart to determine general guidelines for how long to spend on each part of the writing process.

- Choosing a ? (1 minute)
- Brainstorming (4 minutes)
- Organizing (3 minutes)
- Writing (30 minutes)
- Revising (5 minutes)
- Re-reading (2 minutes)
CHOOSING A TOPIC

• You will have a few questions to select from. Pick only one.

• Select the topic that will allow you to give an example of your best writing.

• Read the entire prompt and keep all the parts in mind as you write.

• You will then have an opportunity to ask questions related to them. Your questions must be for clarification of topics only.
CHOOSING A TOPIC

• You should read the prompt more than once and:
  • Underline key words
  • Circle unfamiliar vocabulary

• You may use the scratch paper given to brainstorm or create an outline.

• While there is no required length, you should write enough to address all points in the topic completely.
BRAINSTORMING AND ORGANIZING

• Use a hook to grab the reader’s attention in the introduction paragraph. **

• You should write a thesis (main idea) that responds to the:
  • prompt (writing topic)
  • previews your main points

• Write a main idea/thesis that previews your main points. ex: Successful college students use time management strategies, attend classes regularly, and work diligently on their assignments.

**Please see the Writing Center’s “Introductions.”
BRAINSTORMING AND ORGANIZING

• Focus on writing topic sentences that generally cover the points in each body paragraph (if you have more than one).

• Use transition words and phrases within and between the paragraph(s).

• Conclude your essay by referencing the hook and re-emphasizing the thesis/main idea.

**Please see the Writing Center’s “The Burger Approach,” “Transitions,” “Conclusions,” “Paragraphing: The MEAL Plan,” and “The Five Paragraph Essay” handouts for additional clarification.**
WRITING AND REVISING

• Make sure the writing:
  • Addresses all parts of the prompt
  • Develops one main idea/thesis
  • Includes specific examples and details
  • Has a clear beginning and ending
  • Demonstrates good critical thinking
Finally, read what you wrote. Look for places
  • that need punctuation
  • that are not clear
  • that need more precise words

Editing in all these areas can make a difference in being placed higher or lower.
No experience can affect a person as much as travelling to a new place. From visiting a new part of town, a different state, or an entirely new country, travel can make us more aware of the world. Describe a place you have visited and the effect it has had on you. What did the experience add to your life?
ONE PATTERN TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU WRITE YOUR COMPOSITION

I. Introductory Paragraph
   A. Hook to catch the reader’s attention
   B. Main idea of paper

II. Narrative Paragraph(s)
   A. Focus on key parts to your story that connect to the analysis
   B. Present events in the order they occurred
   C. Use evidence, examples, and/or details that appeal to the different senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch)

III. Analysis Paragraph(s)
   A. Analyze the key events in the story as they relate to the prompt
   B. Explain the significance of the story
   C. “Circle back” to the hook to suggest significance of conclusion
ANOTHER PATTERN YOU MAY BE FAMILIAR WITH:
THE BASIC ESSAY**

I. Introductory Paragraph
   A. Hook to catch the reader’s attention
   B. Main idea of paper

II. Body Paragraphs
   A. Focus on one point per paragraph
   B. Use evidence, examples, and/or details to support your points

III. Conclusion Paragraph
   A. One sentence summary of thesis
   B. Review of main points
   C. “Circle back” to your hook to suggest significance of conclusion

**Please see the Writing Center MEAL handout and “The Five Paragraph Essay” for additional clarification.**
No experience can affect a person as much as travelling to a new place. From visiting a new part of town, a different state, or an entirely new country, travel can make us more aware of the world. Describe a place you have visited and the effect it has had on you. What did the experience add to your life?
Throughout my life I have been passionate about many things, but the thing that I'm most passionate about is traveling. Traveling has opened me up to new experiences and allowed me to learn about different cultures, languages, and how people live. Traveling has really made me become into a more open-minded person. I’ve learned to be thankful for what I have and not to take things for granted.

Last Summer I went to Pakistan to visit my relatives. Over there I saw many fascinating things that don’t happen here in the U.S. Milk is delivered by bike to almost every house in a city called Karachi in Pakistan. Even though they have cars in Pakistan, they still deliver by bike. Seeing this and experiencing this made me realize how different things are in Pakistan. In addition to milk being delivered by bike, neighbors also cook for each other and everything is home made. I think that it’s a wonderful and unique concept that doesn’t happen often in the US. After coming back from Pakistan I became so open-minded to the ideas and wondered why the US doesn’t do these old traditions anymore.
While in Pakistan I also got to see the different aspects of culture. I realized that the people of Karachi were into making dresses, making food, and listened to different music. Every store or mall I went to there was different products being sold and different languages being spoken. I explored many stores and malls throughout Karachi and was amazed at the diversity in everything. While shopping I learned more words in Urdu, one of the languages spoken in Karachi and throughout Pakistan. It was nice to experience the culture of Karachi and being able to truly enjoy it.

Besides experiencing new things and learning about the aspects of culture, I also saw and learned how people lived on a daily basis. Many people in Karachi go without water and electricity for many days. Majority of the people in Karachi are poor and cannot afford basic necessities. I can relate to all this while in Pakistan because I went without electricity and had a shortage of water for some periods of time. After experiencing this it made me thankful that I have all my basic necessities back in the US. This experience also allowed me to see what people go through every day. Without traveling I wouldn’t have able to experience this.

Traveling has allowed me to become a more open-minded person and made me realized all of the blessings that I have. From learning languages to taking part in the Pakistani culture, I have learned that traveling is something that I’m truly passionate about.
ANALYZING THE ESSAY

• What is the main idea of this essay?

• What do you notice about the organization?

• What does the writer do to develop the ideas?

• What do you notice about the language in this piece?

• Are there any places where you had to guess what the writer meant?

• What does the writer do to demonstrate critical analysis?
PRACTICE

Choose one of the topics provided and provide a sample of your best writing.
ANALYZING YOUR RESPONSE

• What did you do first?

• How did you organize your response?

• Did you answer (or plan to) all parts of the prompt?

• Do you have a clear main idea?

• Have you supported it with specific examples?

• How did you begin and end your writing?
KEY ISSUES FOR PLACEMENT IN AMLA COURSES

Verb Forms
Subject-verb Agreement
Verb Tense Shift

Writing Center Resources

Directed Learning Activities
• Tenses
• Adjective Clauses
• Subject-Verb Agreement

Workshops
• Verbs Boot Camp
• Writing Boot Camp
• Articles

Computer Lab
• FEG Interactive computer program in the lab
• Writer’s Resources computer program in the lab
KEY ISSUES FOR PLACEMENT IN LERN AND ENGLISH 67 COURSES

Verb Tense Shift
Fragments, Comma Splices, and Run-ons

Writing Center Resources

Directed Learning Activities
- Paragraph Writing
- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Commas
- Fragments
- Comma Splices and Run-Ons

Workshops
- Developing your Sentence Style
- Fixing Fragments, Run-Ons, and Comma Splices
- Plan your Essay in Three Easy Steps
- Keys to Better Paragraphs

Computer Lab
- Writer’s Resources computer program in the lab
KEY ISSUES FOR PLACEMENT IN ENGLISH 68 AND 1A COURSES

Level of Detail Analysis

Writing Center Resources

Directed Learning Activities
- Paragraph Writing
- Thesis Statements
- Analytical and Persuasive Thesis Statements
- Outlining the Essay
- Transitions

Computer Lab
- Writer’s Resources computer program in the lab

Workshops
- Plan your Essay in Three Easy Steps
- Easy Steps to a Great Thesis
- Keys to Better Paragraphs
PLAN OF ACTION

• What are three things you will do to prepare for the assessment?
  • Create specific goals
  • How will you accomplish these goals?
DO YOUR BEST!

• Show us everything you know about writing.
• Mt. SAC wants to place you in an English course where you will be successful.
• You may wait three months to retake the test if you are not pleased with the results.
• You can do it!
QUESTIONS AND SURVEY

Before leaving, please take a moment to fill out the Writing Center Workshop survey.
• It is located under “Favorites” on your Internet toolbar.
• The workshop is titled “AWE Workshop.”

Don’t forget to take any helpful handouts on your way out!
HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Assessment Center Office: Student Services Center • (909) 594-5611, ext.4265 • Office Hours: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. Mon. - Thu. / 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Fri.
- Mt. SAC’s Assessment Center Website
  http://www.mtsac.edu/assessment/
- Mt. SAC’s Writing Center Website
  http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/
- Mt. SAC’s Language Learning Center (Bldg. 6, rm. 264)
- Learning Assistance Center Lab (Bldg. 6)
  http://lac.mtsac.edu
WEBSITES FOR GRAMMAR AND WRITING

• http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/
• http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
• http://grammarbook.com/
• http://chompchomp.com/menu.htm
• http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/
• http://minnesota.publicradio.org/radio/podcasts/grammar_grater/
• http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/write.shtml
• http://www.suu.edu/hss/english/writingcenter/tipsheets.html
• http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/
• http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/catalogue.html
WEBSITES FOR NON-NATIVE ENGLISH WRITERS

Grammar
• http://www.englishclub.com/grammar/
• http://www.englishpage.com/verbpage/verbtenseintro.html
• http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/courses/elc/studyzone/200/grammar/
• http://www.manythings.org/rs/
• http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/grammar_challenge/index.shtml
• http://www.englishpractice.com/
• http://a4esl.org/q/h/
• http://www.chompchomp.com/menu.htm

Writing
• http://www.paragraphpunch.com/
• http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
THE A.W.E. INFORMATION WORKSHOP IS SUPPORTED BY:

- The Mt. SAC Assessment Center
- The Mt. SAC Writing Center
- A.W.E. Facilitators from AMLA and English Depts.
- The Mt. SAC Matriculation & Assessment Committee
- Mt. SAC High School Outreach
- Title V Grant