Completing the Pre-Assessment Activity for TSI Testing (designed by Maria Martinez- CARE Coordinator)

Texas law requires students to complete the Texas Success Initiative Assessment or TSI for college placement purposes at any public Texas university. The TSI is a college PLACEMENT test NOT an admissions test like SAT or ACT. Before a student can test, however, he must complete a pre-assessment activity, also known as PAA, to become familiar with the test and what it contains. This activity should take no more than ten minutes total.


2. Fill in the information with the username you were given and the password you created.

3. A screen will appear that has two tabs: APPLICANT and STUDENT. We will work with the APPLICANT tab. There is a Student Checklist to complete before you can attend Lone Star College System. (NOTE: IF YOU ARE A DUAL CREDIT STUDENT ONLY TAKING CLASSES ON YOUR SCHOOL CAMPUS, SOME OF THESE ITEMS WILL NOT APPLY TO YOU!!) If the applicant tab is not present, there is a fix on the back of this page.
* * TIP - IF THE APPLICANT TAB IS NOT PRESENT, THERE IS A FIX. Click on the STUDENT tab and click on SELF SERVICE. Start clicking on random button links and let the pages load. YOU WILL NOT DO ANYTHING ON THESE PAGES, just let them load. Log off and wait 5-10 minutes and then re-log in. The APPLICANT tab should be present at that time. If it is not, log off again and re-log in again.

4. You will need to complete the Pre-Assessment Activity (PAA) before you can take the TSI test. This activity will take about ten minutes to complete. Click the link inside the blue box that states “Complete your Pre-Assessment Activity now.”

5. The first screen of the PAA will appear. Read it and then hit NEXT.
6. The next screen will give you information about the PAA. Headphones are recommended. Click NEXT.

7. The video will begin. If you need subtitles, click the CC box. DO NOT HIT NEXT BEFORE FINISHING THE VIDEO. Your account may not give you credit for completing the PAA if you rush through it, and you will have to redo the entire PAA.
8. After each video is a page giving a little information about the test. There are FIVE videos and FIVE segments total. Some of the videos are less than 30 seconds.

9. When you get to Segment Five, you are done with the videos. There is some very important information on the Segment Five screen. This page will give you information about preparing to take the TSI. It will also allow you to see sample questions and sample essays. You do NOT have to complete the sample questions or essays, but they are extremely useful to view.
10. This is the test preparation page. There are many useful resources on this page that can also be accessed at home. If you scroll down, there are more resources available.
11. The essay samples are very useful because many students will score below college level, but barely, because of essay length or structure. The sample essay section provides sample prompts and then sample essays that range from very poor to excellent (scores of 1-8). A minimum essay score of 4 is required combined with a multiple choice score of at least 363 to score college level in writing.

**Sample Prompt**

**Passage**

An actor, when his cue came, was unable to move onto the stage. He said, “I can’t get in, the chair is in the way.” And the producer said, “Use the difficulty. If it’s a drama, pick the chair up and smash it. If it’s comedy, fall over it.” From this experience the actor concluded that in any situation in life that is negative, there is something positive you can do with it.

Adapted from Lawrence Eisenberg, “Caine Scrutiny.”

**Assignment**

Can any obstacle or disadvantage be turned into something good?

**Sample Essays**

On the pages that follow there are descriptions of each of the eight WritePlacer score points followed by two sample essays that were assigned the indicated score. Annotations are provided for each essay explaining why the essay was given the score it received. Studying these sample essays and the accompanying annotations will point out the elements considered during the scoring process.

**SCORE of 1**

**Description of Score of 1**

A response in this category demonstrates no mastery of on-demand essay writing; the response is severely flawed by many or most of the following weaknesses:

- Lacks a viable point of view on the issue
- Demonstrates no awareness of audience
- Fails to present a main idea
- Demonstrates flawed reasoning
- Demonstrates no complexity of thought
- Is disorganized and/or disjointed
- Displays fundamental errors in word choice, usage and sentence structure
- Contains pervasive spelling, grammar, punctuation and mechanical errors

Shown below are sample essays that received a score of 1. The annotations explain why the essay received the indicated score.

**Sample Essay #1 — Score of 1**

The question is can any obstacle or disadvantage be turned into something good? Yes it can, because even in the story he couldn’t get in because of the chair and the guy tells him if it’s a drama, “Smash it and if it’s a comedy fall over it. But when you think about it, if a girl was guilty and was pleading to say on how she was innocent and they catch her in a lie its practically the same thing. But that’s not the point but you can change a negative into a positive someway.

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**Annotations**

This essay lacks a viable, coherent point of view on the issue. The writer attempts to explain that “you can change a negative into a positive,” but the ideas provided are minimal and disorganized, resulting in a disjointed and, at times, incoherent essay (Yes it can,.... But when you think about it, if a girl was guilty and was pleading to say on how she was innocent and they catch her in a lie its practically the same thing). The response demonstrates flawed reasoning, no complexity of thought and displays fundamental errors in sentence structure (But that’s not the point but you can change...). Demonstrating no mastery, this essay receives a score of 1.
12. After Segment Five, you will receive a message indicating you have completed the PAA.

13. Log out of myLonestar and wait about ten minutes. When you re-log in, you will notice another checkmark has been added to your student checklist. Now you are eligible to take the TSI test to assess college readiness.