

Michigan State University
English Language Examinations

**EXAMINATION
FOR
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY'S
CERTIFICATE
OF
ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCY**

MSU-CELC

Skills Practice

Volume 1

Anatolia
College
Testing Office

THE GRAMMAR AND READING SECTIONS OF THE MSU-CELC

This set of five short practice tests has been produced to help candidates familiarize themselves with the skills tested in two of the four sections of the MSU-CELC examination:

Grammar You Can Use! – MSU-CELC Test of English Grammar
Read About It! – MSU-CELC Test of English Reading Ability.

Below are examples of each of the different types of problems with the correct answer indicated with an asterisk (*).

Grammar You Can Use! – MSU-CELC Test of English Grammar

Candidates are required to choose the word or phrase which best completes the given sentence.

E.g. You are going to Bob's party, _____?

- a. won't you
- b. aren't you*
- c. will you
- d. shouldn't you

Read About It! – MSU-CELC Test of English Reading Ability

VOCABULARY: Vocabulary is not tested discretely in the limited context of isolated sentences but within the context of an entire reading passage or a part of it. Candidates are required to choose the given word or phrase that is closest in meaning to the word **highlighted** in a sentence from the passage.

E.g. The sentences from the passage may read as follows:

Q1. The Arctic explorers had to travel in the **bitter** cold for days on end, so their progress was extremely slow.

- a. continuous
- b. long
- c. unusual
- d. freezing*

READING COMPREHENSION: The question types in this section include comprehension of the main idea of the passage to discrete points of information, inference, and structure/logic questions, e.g. selecting the correct place in the given text to insert a given sentence.

E.g.

(A) You wouldn't want to race your friends across this pool. Measuring 1,100 yards long, the San Alfonso del Mar seawater pool in Chile is the world's largest swimming pool. (B) Ten feet deep on average, the private resort pool **holds** 66 million gallons of water. (C) That's enough to fill more than 2,000 residential pools. (D) Guests can paddle kayaks, pedal water bikes, and windsurf right in the pool.

The passage above was taken from an Internet report from *Natural Geographic KIDS, May 2010*

Q1. What can be inferred from what is said in line 1 about racing your friends across this pool?

- a. It would be dangerous.
- b. You would not find it a challenge.
- c. You would not be used to swimming in seawater.
- d. It would probably be too exhausting.*

Q2. The word **holds** in line 3 is closest in meaning to _____ .

- a. empties
- b. uses
- c. contains*
- d. catches

Q3. At which point in the passage would the following sentence best fit?

"There's more to do than just swim."

- a. (A)
- b. (B)
- c. (C)
- d. (D)*

EXTRA SKILLS PRACTICE

Following each reading comprehension text, material is provided to help your students practice two other important skills tested on the examination: Writing and Speaking

Test 1

Grammar You Can Use!

Choose the answer that best fits the sentence.

- Sue bought two pairs of shoes, but I didn't like _____ of them
 - either
 - none
 - neither
 - any
- We _____ complaints from younger customers.
 - don't never receive
 - not receive
 - usually not receive
 - never receive
- If we _____ Bob, we would have invited him.
 - wouldn't have gotten
 - had seen
 - wouldn't have been
 - hadn't been
- An ambulance rushed _____ to hospital.
 - injured
 - injuries
 - the injured peoples
 - the injured
- As soon as Bill _____, I'll give him the news.
 - will return
 - returned
 - returns
 - is returning
- The policeman wanted to know _____.
 - what I had seen
 - what I was seeing
 - what had I seen
 - what was I seeing
- She didn't find the answer, and neither _____.
 - anyone else
 - anyone else did
 - did anyone else
 - did no one else
- It's time _____ about that old armchair.
 - us to do something
 - we did something
 - we are doing something
 - we have done
- If you _____, you can go out to play.
 - finishing your homework
 - have to finish your homework
 - have finished your homework
 - will finish your homework
- He prefers listening to the radio _____ watching TV.
 - to
 - than
 - instead
 - from
- _____ you please turn down the TV?
 - Need
 - May
 - Ought
 - Would
- She asked me _____ people I had invited.
 - the number
 - how many
 - how much
 - what number
- Pete enjoys _____ his friends.
 - to help
 - he helps
 - himself to help
 - helping
- Helen looks happy; she _____ the job.
 - should have got
 - had to get
 - must have got
 - could get
- Paul has been looking very tired _____.
 - later
 - lately
 - late
 - lastly

Read About It!

Choose the word or phrase that is closest in meaning to the **highlighted** word/s in each sentence. In the actual examination, the vocabulary items tested will be highlighted within a much longer text, thereby providing candidates with a wider context in which to determine the meaning of the words. The following sentences are meant to represent such test items when found in longer contexts.

16. I cannot understand why she **refused** his offer of help when it was clear she did not know what to do.
a. turned in b. turned down c. turned up d. turned into
17. The group of friends found a **convenient** spot to have a picnic just a few yards from the riverbank.
a. shady b. high c. cool d. suitable
18. After **slicing** the onions, cucumber and peppers thinly, she prepared the salad dressing.
a. cutting b. chopping c. blending d. peeling
19. The young player **deserved** his place on the team because he had worked really hard all season.
a. gained b. found c. rewarded d. earned
20. The group had to **cancel** the concert because their lead singer was suddenly taken ill and had to be hospitalized.
a. call out b. call away c. call off d. call over
21. Sheila is **definitely** going to be elected as class president because she is so popular with everyone.
a. probably b. possibly c. plainly d. undoubtedly
22. The **current** situation in the country requires immediate government action if a civil war is to be avoided.
a. terrible b. miserable c. present d. lasting
23. The child **remained** after school to discuss her problem with her class teacher.
a. stayed b. left c. returned d. reported
24. The mountain roads become **hazardous** at this time of the year when the cold weather brings snow and ice to the region.
a. beautiful b. dangerous c. scenic d. graphic
25. That building has **narrowly** escaped destruction many times during its 150 year history.
a. successfully b. marginally c. closely d. repeatedly
26. The town is expecting over one thousand visitors for the conference, so unless you make an immediate **reservation** for a hotel room, you might find yourself with nowhere to stay
a. call b. appointment c. check d. booking
27. The manager was **fired** when it was discovered that he had been using company money for his own purposes.
a. suspended b. demoted c. dismissed d. replaced
28. Someone had **altered** the position of the vase on my desk and that is what first made me suspicious.
a. moved b. turned c. lowered d. changed
29. The four bank robbers **split** the loot from the robbery equally before they went their separate ways.
a. divided b. counted c. distributed d. halved
30. Most chemicals have to be handled with **caution** at all times since many are highly caustic.
a. care b. balance c. speed d. slowness

READING COMPREHENSION

You come across the following passage taken from *Natural Geographic KIDS*, May 2010 while doing research for an assignment on endangered species. Read the passage carefully; then answer the questions that follow.

Modern Technology Helping to Protect Lions

5 Outside a hut on the African savannah, a Maasai warrior taps away on a laptop computer. But he's not texting friends. He's tracking lions. In the surrounding wilderness, a group of his fellow warriors—who are responsible for protecting their community—have been following a lion's paw prints for hours. The men expertly read the animal's tracks to see if they are days or hours old. These brave Maasai are lion guardians. And they are using modern technology and traditional skills to help keep lions from becoming extinct.

For centuries the Maasai have herded cattle in the grasslands of Kenya and Tanzania, countries in East Africa. Lions have always prowled nearby, but the Maasai haven't always gotten along with these fierce neighbors. To become a Maasai elder, a respected leader in the community, a man had to kill a lion as a sign of courage. "You wanted to show that you are someone," says Antony Kasanga, a Maasai warrior from Kenya.

10 Today the Maasai no longer encourage the killings, and it's illegal to hunt lions in Kenya. But the cats treat the Maasai's valuable livestock—including cows, sheep, and goats—like an all-you-can-eat buffet. Until recently, the warriors had no choice but to kill lions that attacked their livestock. Their community's survival depended on it.

15 "I have participated in killing lions. So did my father and grandfather," says Kasanga, who lives in a Maasai community on Mbirikani Group Ranch. In the 1940s there were an estimated 450,000 lions in Africa, but overhunting and habitat loss have cut the population to as few as 20,000, and it's shrinking fast. So Kasanga and other lion guardians are working with the organizations *Living with Lions* and the *Maasailand Preservation Trust (MPT)* to protect livestock and keep cats out of danger.

20 The lion guardians have turned to modern technology to watch the cats. A few lions have been fitted with radio collars that transmit signals to satellites. "The collars let us track these lions on the Internet," Kasanga says. And the guardians can use cell phones to warn herders that a cat is nearby, so they can avoid the lion. When a lion does attack livestock on the ranch, the MPT's Predator Compensation Fund—which receives support from the National Geographic Society—pays the owner for the loss, so the Maasai are more willing to live side-by-side with wildlife.

25 In the past four years, no lions have been killed on the ranch. "We are helping to save lions in the ecosystem," says Tom Hill, who helps run the fund. The Maasai have warmed to the change, too. "The guardians have killed lions in the past," Kasanga says. "So people listen to us."

31. By reading the lion's paw prints, the men
- are able to determine how old the lion is.
 - can decide whether or not their community needs protection from the lion.
 - can determine when the lion passed by a certain point.
 - can tell whether or not they are surrounded by lions.
32. The word **show** in line 8 is closest in meaning to_____.
- reveal
 - realize
 - present
 - prove
33. The Maasai's livestock is described in line 11 as "**an all-you-can-eat buffet**" to show that lions often
- eat everything that they are offered.
 - kill and eat large numbers of cattle.
 - appear while the Maasai are having their meals.
 - steal the food which is scattered for the livestock.
34. The word **habitat** in line 15 describes
- the lions' food source.
 - the number of lions regularly killed.
 - the lions' natural surroundings.
 - the lions' natural enemies.
35. When the owner of an animal that is attacked by a lion is paid for his loss, he is unlikely to
- hunt down and kill the lion that was responsible.
 - avoid the lion.
 - want to preserve lions in the wild.
 - trust the guardians who use modern technology.

EXTRA SKILLS PRACTICE

Think About It, Write About It!

In an essay of between 150 and 180 words

Either

Say why you think a number of countries around the world have made it illegal to hunt certain animals. Support what you say with examples.

or

Say why, despite the efforts of certain countries and organizations to reduce or stop the international trade in exotic animals, many continue to find their way to pet shops around the world. What are some wild animals that, in your opinion, should not be kept as pets? Support what you say with examples.

Talk About It!

Description

- Describe your favorite wild animal or animals.
- What are some animals that can be seen in the wild in your country.
- Describe any animals in your country which are considered endangered species.
- Have you heard of the WWF? What work is done by the WWF?
- Describe a tiger / leopard / cheetah / zebra / hippo (etc.) to me

Narration

- Talk about a time when you visited a zoo.
- Talk about a time when you visited an aquarium or safari park.
- Have you seen any animals in the wild? Describe the experience.
- Have you ever worn a mask and explored the seabed? Describe some of the things you saw underwater.
- Have you ever been visited by wild animals while camping in the countryside? Describe what happened.

Supported opinion

- Should animals be kept in zoos or allowed to live free in the wild?
- Why are so many wild animals killed on the roads every year and what can be done to reduce the number?
- What is a photo safari? Why are more and more people today going on photo safaris nowadays?
- Why should the younger generation be encouraged to join organizations like the WWF?
- What is the symbol of the WWF and why do you think it was chosen as the symbol?

Test 2

Grammar You Can Use!

Choose the answer that best fits the sentence

1. Pam had better _____ if she hopes to pass the test.
 - a. to studying
 - b. study
 - c. studied
 - d. studying
2. I spend an hour _____ TV before I go to bed.
 - a. to watch
 - b. watch
 - c. watches
 - d. watching
3. A hippopotamus is just _____ a rhinoceros.
 - a. as dangerous
 - b. more dangerous from
 - c. so dangerous as
 - d. as dangerous as
4. My brother and sister _____ help with their math.
 - a. need
 - b. are needing
 - c. needs
 - d. needing
5. I saw a number of people _____ outside the factory.
 - a. be protesting
 - b. was protesting
 - c. protesting
 - d. to protest
6. I don't like spicy food and _____ does my father.
 - a. also
 - b. neither
 - c. so
 - d. either
7. I _____ in the same house for over twenty years.
 - a. have lived
 - b. live
 - c. living
 - d. am living
8. My boss makes us _____ every other Saturday.
 - a. to work
 - b. working
 - c. worked
 - d. work
9. If you have difficulty _____ a place to stay, I'll put you up for a couple of nights.
 - a. finding
 - b. find
 - c. to find
 - d. you find
10. You wouldn't know where Maria is, _____?
 - a. wouldn't you
 - b. do you
 - c. would you
 - d. did you
11. By the time we returned, he _____ two walls.
 - a. would paint
 - b. was painting
 - c. had painted
 - d. will have apinted
12. Among the three children, Paul is _____ obedient.
 - a. little
 - b. the less
 - c. less
 - d. the least
13. The boys prefer watching TV _____ going out.
 - a. than
 - b. instead
 - c. on
 - d. to
14. The picnic will be cancelled if it _____.
 - a. will rain
 - b. rains
 - c. is going to rain
 - d. raining
15. _____ such well-behaved children?
 - a. Have you ever seen
 - b. Have ever you seen
 - c. Have you seen never
 - d. Have never you seen

Read About It!

Choose the word or phrase that is closest in meaning to the **highlighted** word/s in each sentence. In the actual examination, the vocabulary items tested will be highlighted within a much longer text, thereby providing candidates with a wider context in which to determine the meaning of the words. The following sentences are meant to represent such test items when found in longer contexts.

16. George was not **prepared** to help his lazy classmate by doing his homework for him.
a. happy b. determined c. willing d. able
17. The fashion house does not use **genuine** animal fur in any of its collections; all of it is synthetic.
a. fresh b. real c. fake d. suitable
18. He has spent **roughly** €7,000 on renovating his house, but I cannot give you the exact amount.
a. over b. precisely c. nearly d. approximately
19. The driver **claimed** that the cyclist he knocked down had braked suddenly for no reason.
a. confessed b. maintained c. pretended d. supposed
20. We don't **mind** her using this empty room if she has nowhere else to study as long as she remembers to lock it before leaving.
a. object to b. put up c. point out d. think of
21. What **bothers** his friends is that he often asks them to lend him money but always has to be reminded to return what he has borrowed.
a. annoys b. amuses c. troubles d. frightens
22. The weather recently has been rather **miserable**; I hope it improves before the weekend.
a. terrible b. unpleasant c. unpredictable d. changeable
23. If you need information about sights to see in the town, **inquire** at the hotel's reception desk.
a. wait b. ask c. visit d. question
24. That supermarket has such a wide **selection** of tropical foods it is difficult to decide what to try!
a. choice b. list c. amount d. quantity
25. It is **unjust** to make her take the blame for what all the students did; they should all be punished.
a. doubtful b. correct c. necessary d. unfair
26. They **concluded** the meeting after the committee members took a vote to give workers a pay rise.
a. decided b. postponed c. ended d. rearranged
27. She **sensed** there was something wrong when her daughter failed to return from school by 4 o'clock.
a. mentioned b. realized c. learned d. reported
28. The new machinery is really easy to **operate**; anyone can do it after a simple demonstration.
a. work b. turn c. start d. repair
29. The new neighbors are really **inconsiderate** and regularly make noise late into the night.
a. unusual b. amusing c. cheerful d. thoughtless
30. The new assistant **appears** to be learning the job very quickly and has impressed everyone in the office.
a. cares b. tries c. shows d. seems

READING COMPREHENSION

You come across the following article taken from *Faces, People, Places and Cultures, July-August 2011, Vol 27, No.9* while doing research for an assignment on animals that are used by human beings. Read the passage carefully; then answer the questions that follow.

Animals in Our Lives

Lions, tigers, and bears, oh my! Animals are all around us, from our favorite pet snuggled at our feet on a cold night, to the critters that roam our yards as we sleep.

While there are hundreds of thousands of animal species on earth, only a fraction of these have special relationships with human beings. Some animals work for us, feed and clothe us, keep us company, amuse us, and in some cases keep us alive. Some animals have even changed the course of history.

People began domesticating, or controlling animals between 10 and 15 thousand years ago. Archaeologists believe dogs and sheep were the first animals domesticated. When people began to control dogs, chickens, sheep and goats, and later other animals as well, they were able to live in larger groups, either in villages, where they could also farm, or as nomads, following their herds.

Some animals are useful in many different ways. Dogs are a favorite pet, but don't forget that they work too: as service dogs, watchdogs, actors, hunters, or shepherders. Cats have been royal mousers to Egyptian kings and queens. Elephants have served in the military.

In many parts of the world, cattle and other larger animals still help people move heavy loads from one place to another. For example, the yak carries the belongings of nomadic people in the mountains of Tibet and Nepal and provides them with milk and butter as well. In the Andes Mountains of South America, llamas are allies of the native people, whose loads they carry between the countryside and the cities and towns.

The camel is an important animal in Africa and Asia, where it helped change the course of history. Camels have special adaptations that make them invaluable to people living in or crossing the desert. They can travel for long periods without drinking. Almost 5,000 years ago, people were loading camels with water and trade items and driving them across vast desert trade routes. Later, these routes extended to link widely-separated civilizations in China, the Middle East, and Europe. Because of this trade, different cultures began to learn of one another's art, philosophy, and way of life.

31. The word **critters** in line 2 refers to_____.
- a. species b. strays c. insects d. creatures
32. We can understand from the use of the word **fraction** in line 3 that
- a. most animal species have a special relationship with human beings.
b. a small number of the animals species have a special relationship with human beings.
c. half the animal species have a special relationship with human beings.
d. the majority of animal species have a special relationship with human beings.
33. We are able to understand from the text that the domestication of animals led to
- a. an increase in the number of villages.
b. the formation of the first villages.
c. the end of nomadism.
d. the replacement of nomadism by village life.
34. Which of the following is NOT a function of dogs mentioned in the text?
- a. entertaining us
b. protecting us
c. being used in scientific experiments
d. helping us obtain food
35. The larger animals that are used by human beings are apparently most valuable in
- a. transportation of heavy loads.
b. providing milk and butter.
c. being able to live both in cities and in the countryside.
d. being able to survive for long periods of time without drinking.

EXTRA SKILLS PRACTICE

Think About It, Write About It!

In an essay of between 150 and 180 words

Either

In many countries in the world, a dog is considered to be a man's best friend. What do you consider to be the most important ways in which dogs are used to help us? Support what you say with examples from everyday life.

or

Why do zoo or circus animals continue to attract children? Support what you say with examples.

Talk About It!

Description

- Describe any animals that are made to work in your country.
- Describe a camel.
- Describe an elephant.
- What makes elephants suitable for some of the work they are made to do? Give some examples

Narration

- Describe any tricks you have seen an animal perform.
- Have you been to a circus? Describe the experience.
- Have you seen any animals in the wild? Describe the experience.
- Have you ever worn a mask and explored the seabed? Describe some of the things you saw underwater.
- Have you ever been visited by wild animals while camping in the countryside? Describe what happened.

Supported opinion

- Why are some animals still being used for work in certain countries when there are so many machines that can take their place?
- What is your opinion of pet owners who spend large sums of money to change the appearance of their pets by taking them to beauty saloons?
- Why might some people object to our using animals for work?
- Why might some people object to our using animals in experiments?
- Why should the authorities do everything possible to catch and remove stray animals from residential areas?

KEY

Test 1		Test 2	
1	a	1	b
2	d	2	d
3	b	3	d
4	d	4	a
5	c	5	c
6	a	6	b
7	c	7	a
8	b	8	d
9	c	9	a
10	a	10	c
11	d	11	c
12	b	12	d
13	d	13	d
14	c	14	b
15	b	15	a
16	b	16	c
17	d	17	b
18	a	18	d
19	d	19	b
20	c	20	a
21	d	21	a
22	c	22	b
23	A	23	b
24	b	24	a
25	c	25	d
26	d	26	c
27	c	27	b
28	d	28	a
29	a	29	d
30	a	30	d
31	c	31	d
32	d	32	b
33	b	33	b
34	c	34	c
35	a	35	a