

**JOLIET JUNIOR  
COLLEGE**

**WRITING &  
READING  
COMPASS TEST  
REVIEW  
PACKET**

Dear Student:

Enclosed you will find review sheets on punctuation, capitalization, homonyms, and reading comprehension. This packet is designed to help you review some of these concepts before taking the writing and reading sections of the JJC COMPASS Test. This packet does not cover every topic on the test nor can it guarantee you success on the COMPASS Test.

The COMPASS Test can only be taken twice. All retakes are to be done at the Main Campus. There is a \$10 retake fee. Test candidate must know their Social Security number and they must present a photo ID before testing.

If you have any questions or need any further assistance, please contact the Academic Skills Center, Main Campus, room J-2013, or phone (815) 280-2261.

# Reading Comprehension

Read the following paragraph and answer the questions below:

The trip into the city took longer than usual for Gary and Jane because they missed their exit twice. Finally, after two hours and many detours, they reached their destination. After they had waited outside for an hour, the doors were opened and they went inside to begin their stroll through the rooms. As Jane paused to look closely, she said, "I've never seen paintings displayed in only natural light before."

After they had seen the entire exhibit, Gary and Jane went to the restaurant on the top floor. They had to catch their breath for a moment before they took their seats by the windows.

When they had finished their meal, Gary remarked, "I hope we get home before it gets dark. I'm not sure the headlights are working."

"Don't worry," said Jane as she put on her mittens and coat, "I had them checked last week when I had the windshield wipers fixed."

1. Gary and Jane went to the city by:
  - a) car
  - b) train
  - c) plane
  
2. Their destination was:
  - a) a movie theater
  - b) a museum
  - c) an aquarium
  
3. The building had:
  - a) no windows
  - b) florescence lights
  - c) many large windows
  
4. How did they reach the restaurant?
  - a) by elevator
  - b) by the stairs
  - c) by the escalator
  
5. What meal did they have at the restaurant?
  - a) breakfast
  - b) lunch
  - c) dinner
  
6. What season was it?
  - a) fall
  - b) spring
  - c) winter

7. Between what two sentences should the following sentence be inserted?  
They ran to get in line before the doors opened.

***ANSWERS***

1. a    2. b    3. c    4. b    5. c    6. c

7. Insert sentence between that begins with “Finally after two hours...” and “After they had waited...”

# Punctuation Rules

Punctuation rules are listed below followed by an example.

## *Periods*

- ❖ Use at the end of a complete sentence.  
I am not working today.
- ❖ Use after an abbreviation (**do not** use after the title “Miss” for a woman).  
Dr. Smith, Ph.D., is my boss.

## *Question Marks*

- ❖ Use at the end of a sentence that asks a question.  
Will I get paid today?

## *Exclamation Marks*

- ❖ Use at the end of a sentence or group of words (a phrase) that expresses a strong feeling.  
Come here immediately!

## *Apostrophes*

- ❖ Use to show that letters have been left out of a contraction.  
You're      it's      let's      o'clock      ma'am      class  
of '89
- ❖ Use to show possession.  
3 cases of possession:
  1. Add an apostrophe and an “s” to a singular noun  
Sue's car is red.  
Sam's and Ann's cars are red.  
The council president's address was a bore.
  2. Add an apostrophe and an “s” to a plural noun that does not end in “s”  
The men's club meets today.
  3. Add only an apostrophe to a plural noun ending in “s”  
The lawyers' meeting is today.
- ❖ Use to make a number or letter plural or words named as words. Note that the number, letter, or word is underlined but not the “'s”.  
I got all B's on my report card.  
This sentence has too many and's.

## ***Quotation Marks***

- ❖ Use to enclose a speaker's words.  
Barry yelled, "Look out!"  
"Yes," she said, "the baby is sleeping."
  
- ❖ Use to enclose a title of a song, newspaper, magazine, essay, short poem, short story, subdivisions of a book, an article in a periodical, or an episode of a TV or radio program.  
Dad sang "Moon River" to us.
  
- ❖ Use to enclose titles of works that are parts of other works. Note that titles of books, plays, periodicals, movies, works of art, and TV programs are underlined.  
The chapter entitled "Freedom" from Future Goals was quoted in his speech.
  
- ❖ Use to enclose a single line from a poem, song, or verse that is part of a sentence.  
Sam remembered his childhood as an idyllic time: "...happy as the grass was green."
  
- ❖ Use to enclose a word being defined or used in a special sense.  
By "charity," I mean the love of one's neighbor as oneself.  
On movie sets, movable "wild walls" make the one-walled room seem like four walls.

## ***Semicolons***

- ❖ Use to connect independent clauses with or without transitional words. An independent clause has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. Transitional words come after the semicolon and are followed by a comma.  
I'd like to try skiing; it looks like fun!  
Let me help you; otherwise, it will take too long to finish.

*Transitional words are: of course that is therefore otherwise  
however moreover nevertheless furthermore*

- ❖ Use to reduce confusion in sentences where many commas are used.  
I went to Columbus, Ohio; Chicago, Illinois; Lincoln, Nebraska;  
and Red River, Texas.

## ***Colons***

- ❖ Use to separate a series of items from an independent clause. The independent clause must express a complete thought.  
The shoes came in four colors: red, green, yellow, and brown.

- ❖ Use to separate the hours from the minutes.  
2:45 p.m.
- ❖ Use to separate titles and subtitles.  
Charles Dickens: An Introduction to His Novels
- ❖ Use to separate parts of biblical citations.  
Isaiah 28:1-6
- ❖ Use after the greeting in a formal letter.  
Dear Mr. Jones:

### ***Dashes***

- ❖ Use to indicate sudden changes in tone or thought or to set off some sentence elements.  
He tells us--does he really mean it?--that he will speak the truth from now on.
- ❖ Use to emphasize modifiers, appositives, or parenthetical expressions.  
Though they are close together--separated by only a few blocks--the two friends did not visit each other often.
- ❖ Used to set off introductory or concluding series or explanations.  
A new student will undergo a battery of tests--ACT, Compass, English Composition, Math Computation, and Physical Endurance.

### ***Parentheses***

- ❖ Use to enclose nonessential elements within a sentence.  
The population of Joliet (about 1 million) is increasing due to the new housing developments.

Note that dashes, commas, and parentheses may all set off nonessential information such as modifiers and parenthetical phrases. Dashes give the information the greatest emphasis while commas are less emphatic and parentheses signal that the information is just worth a small mention.

- ❖ Use to enclose letters or numbers labeling items in lists within a sentence.  
Each student will need to bring the following: (1) a pencil, (2) paper, and (3) their textbook.

### ***Brackets***

- ❖ Use only within a quotation to indicate your own comments or changes.  
“This town [Joliet] is one of the largest commercial towns in the area,” Mayor Smith replied.

### ***Ellipsis***

- ❖ Use to indicate omissions within a quotation. Use 3 spaced periods for the ellipsis mark.

“It was another Nicaragua . . . .”

“But all those places . . . were so different from each other.”

## ***Slashes***

- ❖ Use between options or to separate lines of poetry that run together.  
Some teachers oppose pass/fail courses.  
In Frost’s poem the lines “The woods are lovely, dark and deep, /  
But I have promises to keep” refer to death.

Note that between options there are no spaces around the slash, but in lines of poetry there are spaces before and after the slash.

## ***Commas***

- ❖ Use to separate items in a list of three or more items. Make sure a comma is used after the word before the connecting word in the list.  
She worked on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.

- ❖ Use to separate two or more adjectives that modify the same noun or pronoun.  
The dirty, dusty, dented car was an eyesore.

- ❖ Use to separate the text of a quotation from the phrase that identifies the speaker.  
Jeff said, “I’m hungry.”  
“We can do it,” said Bob.  
“Be back at noon,” said Mom, “or you will miss lunch.”

- ❖ Use to separate two independent clauses that are joined with these words:  
*and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet.*  
I ate lunch, but now I am hungry.

- ❖ Use to separate an introductory word, phrase, or adverb clause.  
Yes, I’d be happy to finish the dishes.  
Exhausted, the runner quit before the race was over.

- ❖ Use after a name you use when your are addressing someone.  
Tom, come into the kitchen.  
I’m sorry, Jane, I can’t help you today.

- ❖ Use to enclose a parenthetical phrase (interrupting phrase) in a sentence.  
We could, of course, go tomorrow.

*Words that can be used as parenthetical phrases are:*

<i>of course</i>	<i>by the way</i>
<i>I hope</i>	<i>on the contrary</i>
<i>I think</i>	<i>after all</i>
<i>however</i>	<i>nevertheless</i>
<i>I believe</i>	<i>for example</i>

- ❖ Use to set off an appositive (a word or phrase that follows a noun or pronoun and identifies or describes it).  
Aunt Sally, my dad’s sister, will be here for dinner.



- ❖ For historical periods, events, documents, movements, governments offices or departments, and institutions.
  - World War II**                      **Great Depression**                      **Middle Ages**
  - Postal Service**
  
- ❖ For organizations and associations.
  - Sierra Club**                      **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**
  
- ❖ For races, nationalities, and languages (not “blacks” or “whites”).
  - Germans**                      **English**
  
- ❖ For religions and religious terms for sacred people and things.
  - Christianity**                      **Catholicism**                      **God**                      **Bible**
  - Budda**
  
- ❖ For trade names.
  - Xerox**                      **Chevrolet**
  
- ❖ For titles when they precede proper names.
  - Professor Smith**
  
- ❖ For compass directions only when they refer to a specific geographical area.
  - Students from the **South** have trouble adjusting to the winter weather in Joliet.

### **Homonyms**

Homonyms are words that are pronounced the same though they have different spellings and meanings. Some commonly confused homonyms and words with very similar pronunciations, such as accept/except, are listed below.

Accept (to receive)	Forth (forward)	Reign (to rule)
Except (the other)	Fourth (after third)	Rein (a strap for controlling an animal)
Affect (to have an influence on)	Gorilla ( a large primate)	Raise (to build up)
Effect (result)	Guerrilla (a kind of soldier)	Raze (to tear down)
All ready (prepared)	Hear (to perceive by ear)	Right (correct)
Already (by this time)	Here (in this place)	Rite (a religious ceremony)
Allude (to refer to indirectly)	Heard (past tense of <i>hear</i> )	Write (to make letters)
Elude (to avoid)	Herd (agroup of animals)	Road (a surface for driving)

Allusion (indirect reference)	Hole (an opening)	Rode (past tense of ride)
Illusion (erroneous belief or perception)	Whole (complete)	Scene (where an action occurs)
Ascent (a movement up)	Its (possessive of it)	Seen (past participle of see)
Assent (agreement)	It's (contraction of it is)	Stationary (unmoving)
Bare (unclothed)	Lead (heavy metal)	Stationery (writing paper)
Bear (to carry, or an animal)	Led (past tense of lead)	Straight (unbending)
Board (a plane of wood)	Lessen (to make less)	Strait (water passageway)
Bored (uninterested)	Lesson (something learned)	Their (possessive of they)
Born (brought into life)	Meat (flesh)	There (opposite of here)
Borne (carried)	Meet (encounter)	They're (contraction of they are)
Brake (stop)	No (the opposite of yes)	To (toward)
Break (smash)	Know (to be certain)	Too (also)
Buy (purchase)	Passed (past tense of pass)	Two (following one)
By (next to)	Past (after, or a time gone by)	Waist (the middle of the body)
Capital (the seat of a government)	Patience (forbearance)	Waste (discarded material)
Capitol (the building where a legislature meets)	Patients (person under medical care)	Weak (not strong)
Cite (to quote an authority)	Peace (the absence of war)	Week (Sunday through Saturday)
Site (a place)	Piece (apportion of something)	Which (one of a group)
Desert (to abandon)	Plain (clear)	Witch (a sorcerer)
Dessert (after dinner course)	Plane (a carpenter's tool, or an airborne vehicle)	Who's (contraction of who is)
Discreet (reserved, respectful)	Presence (the state of being at hand)	Whose (possessive of who)
Discrete (individual or distinct)	Presents (gifts)	Your (possessive of you)
Elicit (illegal)	Principal (most important, or the head of a school)	You're (contraction of you are)
Fair (average, or lovely)	Principle (a basic truth or law)	
Fare (a fee for transportation)	Rain (precipitation)	