

TASC Test Science Practice Items

Use these items to practice for the TASC Science subtest. Once you reach the end of the test, check your responses against the answer key provided. Take the time to read the information preceding the answers to understand what you'll need to know and be able to do to prepare yourself to pass the TASC test. In the following multiple-choice questions, circle the correct answer then check your answers using the answer key provided.

Good luck preparing for the TASC test!

The parts of the human body can be classified into different levels of organization. The chart describes several of these levels within a human.

Level	Description
Organ system	An organ system is a group of organs that work together to perform a specific function or set of functions.
Organ	An organ is a group of tissues that perform a specific function or set of functions.
Tissue	A tissue is a group of cells of the same type that work together to perform a specific function.
Cell	A cell is the smallest functional unit of life. There are different types of cells, which may have different structures and perform different functions.

An important part of the human body is the heart. The heart is primarily made of muscle tissue and connective tissue. The heart's primary function is to pump blood. Blood helps transport nutrients and waste products within the body. Diseases that affect the heart are the leading cause of death worldwide.

1 Which level of organization would the heart be classified as?

- A organ system
- B organ
- C tissue
- D cell

2 Which of these describes a role of DNA in a cell?

- A** DNA is the material that forms into the cell's membrane.
- B** DNA produces the energy needed for the cell's activities.
- C** DNA provides the information to make proteins for the cell.
- D** DNA is the building block for the other molecules in the cell.

A certain plant species varies in the shape of its leaf edges. Some of the plants have wavy-edged leaves, and some of the plants have straight-edged leaves. In this plant species, the trait for leaf-edge shape is controlled by a single gene. The dominant allele is represented by L, and the recessive allele is represented by l.

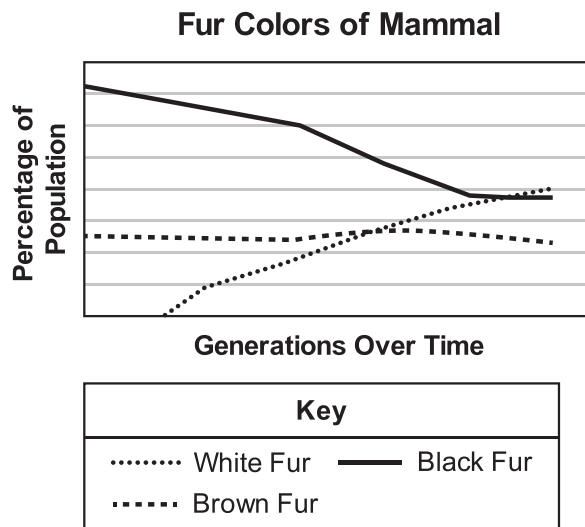
Two plants with wavy-edged leaves are crossed with each other, producing 421 offspring plants. Of these, 298 offspring plants have wavy-edged leaves, and 123 offspring plants have straight-edged leaves.

3 What are the genotypes of the parent plants in this cross?

- A** Ll and ll
- B** Ll and Ll
- C** LL and ll
- D** LL and Ll

Use the following information to help answer questions 4 and 5.

A population of a certain species of mammal was studied over many generations. The graph shows the percentages of fur colors observed in the population over the generations.



4 Which explanation is the most likely reason for the appearance of individuals that have white fur?

- A** The mammals adapted to a change in climate by changing their fur color.
- B** The mammals chose a different food source that resulted in a new fur color.
- C** A mutation occurred in an individual's fur color gene and resulted in a new fur color.
- D** A new predator moved into the area that caused the individuals to change fur color.

5 Which statement would most likely help explain the changes over time in the percentages of the fur colors within the population?

- A** The mammals with white fur had an advantage in producing offspring.
- B** The mammals with brown fur had an advantage in producing offspring.
- C** The mammals with white fur had a disadvantage in producing offspring.
- D** The mammals with brown fur had a disadvantage in producing offspring.

Carbon dioxide is a gas present in small amounts in Earth's atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is absorbed and released as part of natural cycles that involve ecosystems, the ocean, the atmosphere, and other systems on Earth. The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere affects Earth's global temperature and climate.

The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is also affected by certain human activities. For example, when fossil fuels are burned, they release carbon dioxide. Fossil fuels include coal, oil, and natural gas. Fossil fuels are used primarily as energy sources for transportation and for producing electricity. Oil is refined into gasoline and other fuels burned by cars, trucks, buses, and airplanes. Most power plants burn coal or natural gas to produce electricity for cities and towns.

Many scientists are concerned because the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has been increasing over the last century. During this same time period, Earth's global temperature has also increased. These scientists are concerned that a continued increase in carbon dioxide may cause further changes in Earth's climate.

6 Which of these solutions would best help reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere by human activities?

- A** using rechargeable batteries in small electrical devices
- B** finding more sources of fossil fuels to extract through drilling and mining
- C** manufacturing more vehicles, such as cars and trucks, for use in transportation
- D** using more alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind, to produce electricity



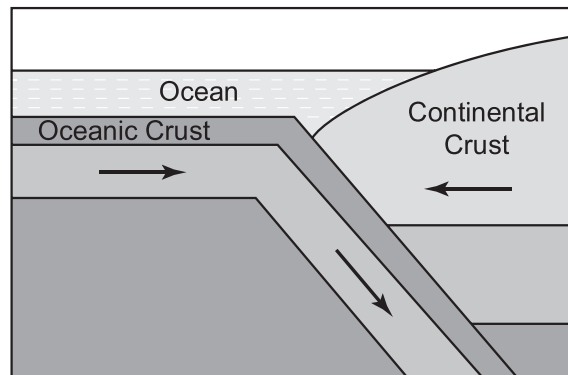
The sun produces tremendous amounts of energy. Some of that energy reaches Earth and affects Earth's systems.

7 Which statement explains how the sun produces this energy?

- A** The sun produces energy through fusion reactions in its core.
- B** The sun produces energy through radioactive decay in its core.
- C** The sun produces energy through convection cells on its surface.
- D** The sun produces energy through combustion reactions on its surface.

Use the following information to help answer questions 8 and 9.

The diagram shows a cross-section of an area where two tectonic plates of Earth's surface are moving towards each other. The leading edge of one tectonic plate has oceanic crust, while the leading edge of the other tectonic plate has continental crust.



- 8 Several types of geographic features would be predicted to form over time in the area shown in the diagram. Which geographic feature would not be predicted to occur in this area?
- A volcanoes
 - B mountains
 - C ocean ridge
 - D ocean trench

9 Which of these could explain the motion of the tectonic plates shown in the diagram?

- A** rotation of Earth's axis
- B** currents within Earth's ocean
- C** convection of material within Earth's interior
- D** gravitational pull of the sun and moon on Earth's surface

When a moving object, such as a car, experiences a collision that causes the object to stop moving, the amount of force experienced by the object can be determined using the following formula:

$$\text{Force} \times \text{change in time} = \text{mass} \times \text{change in velocity}$$

During the collision, the object's velocity (speed) slows down over a period of time until the object stops, reaching a velocity of zero. If the force experienced by the object during the collision is too high, the force can damage the object. For example, the force of a collision can damage a car and injure passengers in the car.

One way to reduce the amount of force experienced during a collision is to reduce the velocity of the object before the collision occurs. An object that is moving slower will experience less force during a collision. An object that is moving faster will experience more force during a collision.

Another way to reduce the amount of force experienced during a collision is to increase the amount of time that it takes the velocity to slow down and reach zero. An object that comes to a stop more slowly will experience less force. An object that comes to a stop more quickly will experience more force.

10 Which of these is an example of a safety feature that reduces the amount of force experienced during a collision involving a car?

- A** A concrete barrier on a road helps prevent cars from driving into a ditch.
- B** An engine helps supply power to the wheels to increase the velocity of a car.
- C** A car windshield is constructed from reinforced layers to help prevent shattering.
- D** An air bag in a car helps increase the amount of time that a person takes to slow down.

An object at rest with a mass of 4 kilograms (kg) is acted on by a force causing the object to move. The table shows measurements of the object's motion.

Time (s)	Velocity (m/s)
0	0
1	2
2	4
3	6
4	8
5	10

The relationship between the force acting on an object and the object's mass and acceleration (change in object's velocity over time) is defined by the formula:

$$\text{Force} = \text{mass} \times \text{acceleration}$$

- 11** Based on the data in the table, which equation correctly calculates the amount of force, in newtons (N), that acted on the object?
- A** $4 \text{ kg} \times 0.5 \text{ s}^2/\text{m} = 2 \text{ N}$
 - B** $4 \text{ kg} \times 2 \text{ m/s}^2 = 8 \text{ N}$
 - C** $4 \text{ kg} \times 5 \text{ s} = 20 \text{ N}$
 - D** $4 \text{ kg} \times 10 \text{ m/s} = 40 \text{ N}$

Use the following information to help answer questions 12 and 13.

Potassium chlorate (KClO_3) is a crystalline solid that can undergo thermal decomposition to form solid potassium chloride (KCl) and gaseous oxygen (O_2) when heat is added. The chemical equation for this reaction is shown.



The table lists the molar masses of the elements involved in this reaction.

Element	Symbol	Molar Mass (grams/mole)
Potassium	K	39.10
Chlorine	Cl	35.45
Oxygen	O	16.00

12 If 5.00 grams of KClO_3 (0.0408 moles) undergoes decomposition to produce 3.04 grams of KCl , which equation shows the predicted amount of oxygen that will be produced?

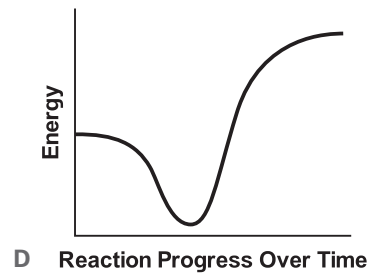
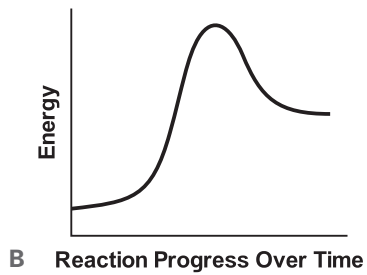
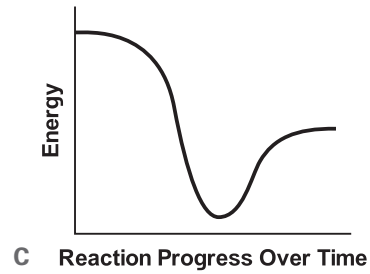
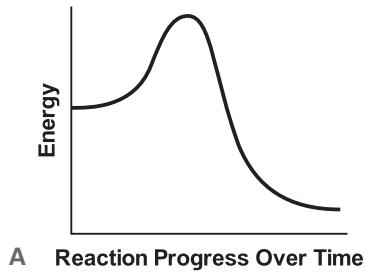
A $0.0408 \text{ moles} \times \frac{2 \text{ moles}}{3 \text{ moles}} \times \frac{16.00 \text{ grams}}{\text{mole}} = 0.435 \text{ grams}$

B $0.0408 \text{ moles} \times \frac{2 \text{ moles}}{3 \text{ moles}} \times \frac{32.00 \text{ grams}}{\text{mole}} = 0.870 \text{ grams}$

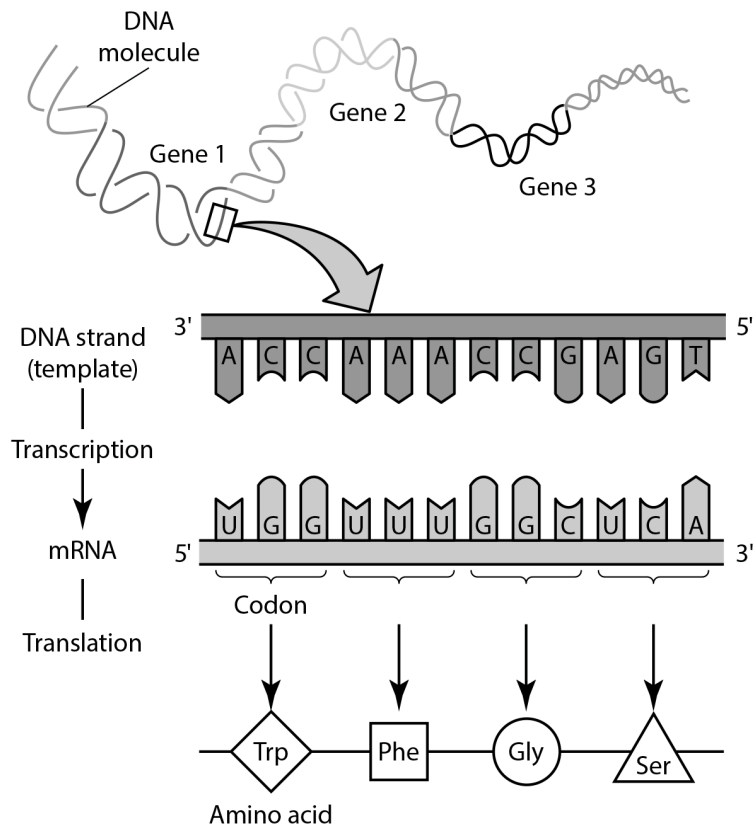
C $0.0408 \text{ moles} \times \frac{3 \text{ moles}}{2 \text{ moles}} \times \frac{16.00 \text{ grams}}{\text{mole}} = 0.979 \text{ grams}$

D $0.0408 \text{ moles} \times \frac{3 \text{ moles}}{2 \text{ moles}} \times \frac{32.00 \text{ grams}}{\text{mole}} = 1.96 \text{ grams}$

- 13 Which diagram best represents the change in energy that results from the decomposition reaction of potassium chlorate?



- 14** The diagram shows transcription and translation. Both of these processes begin with a specific strand of DNA.



- Part 1.** What macromolecule is the end product of the processes shown in the diagram?
- Part 2.** Why is it important that a section of DNA be copied in a specific order?

- 15** The American robin (*Turdus migratorius*) is a common songbird found throughout North America. It feeds mostly on insects, fruits, and berries. Its average lifespan is about 2 years. Only 25 percent of robins survive after one year. Despite this seemingly low survival rate, the American robin is among the most abundant species in North America. To help maintain stability, there are a number of interrelated nonliving (or abiotic) factors and living (or biotic) factors that act as checks and balances on the growth of a population.

**Which four factors are living (biotic) factors that could affect a robin population?
Drag the correct tiles into the box.**

reproductive rate	Drop Area 1
pollution	
resistance to disease and parasites	
ability to hide from predators	
competition for food and nesting sites	
weather conditions	

Science

Answer Key

After taking these practice items, you can check your answers with the following answer key. For your added benefit, answers come with explanations to help you understand why they're right. If you do well on the practice test, then you know you're prepared to take the official TASC Readiness Assessment. If you struggle on the practice test, then you know you may still have more work to do to get prepared.

- 1.** A core idea within the structures and processes of organisms is understanding the hierarchical organization of systems within multicellular organisms. This item requires you to classify the organizational level of a part of the human body.

Answer: B

Explanation for Correct Response:

The heart is an organ because it is composed of multiple tissues that work together to perform a set of functions.

- 2.** A core idea within heredity is understanding the role of DNA in the inheritance of traits. This item requires you to identify that DNA contains coded instructions that cells use to make proteins, which help determine the inherited traits of an organism.

Answer: C

Explanation for Correct Response:

The nitrogenous base sequences of DNA provide the coded information needed to assemble different proteins for a cell.

- 3.** A core idea within heredity is understanding how variation within a population can be predicted using mathematical patterns. This item requires you to analyze the frequencies of different physical traits in a group of offspring to determine the genetic traits of the parents.

Answer: B

Explanation for Correct Response:

The observed phenotypic ratio is approximately 3:1, which is consistent with a cross between two heterozygous parents.

- 4.** A core idea within heredity is understanding the source of new genetic variation within a population. This item requires you to determine which claim most likely explains the appearance of a new variety within a population.

Answer: C

Explanation for Correct Response:

New alleles (that can produce new phenotypes) are produced through mutations in gamete cells.

- 5.** A core idea within biological evolution is understanding how differences in rates of survival and reproduction of organisms with different traits leads to changes in a population over time through natural selection. This item requires you to analyze the changes in the traits within a population over time, in order to support an explanation for the observed changes.

Answer: A

Explanation for Correct Response:

The percentage of the population with white fur increased steadily over time, which helps support the claim that white fur had a reproductive advantage.

- 6.** A core idea within the interaction of Earth's processes and human activities is understanding how technological solutions can reduce the impact of human activities on natural systems. This item requires you to identify which solution would best reduce carbon dioxide emissions from human activities.

Answer: D

Explanation for Correct Response:

Using alternative energy sources, instead of fossil fuels, to produce electricity would significantly reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released.

Answer Key (cont'd)

7. A core idea within Earth's place in the universe is understanding how the sun produces energy that eventually reaches Earth. This item requires you to identify how the sun produces its energy.

Answer: A

Explanation for Correct Response:

The sun produces energy through hydrogen fusion in its core.

8. A core idea within Earth's systems is understanding how Earth's internal and surface processes create large-scale geographic features over time. This item requires you to analyze a model of Earth's tectonic plates to predict the types of geographic features that would form over time.

Answer: C

Explanation for Correct Response:

An ocean ridge occurs where two oceanic plates are pulling away from each other, so this would not be predicted to occur in this area.

9. A core idea within Earth's systems is understanding how Earth's surface processes are affected by Earth's internal processes. This item requires you to explain that the motion of Earth's tectonic plates shown in a model is related to the cycling of material within Earth's interior.

Answer: C

Explanation for Correct Response:

The slow convection of material within Earth's interior could explain the motion of the tectonic plates of Earth's surface.

10. A core idea within forces and motion is understanding how scientific and engineering ideas are used to design devices that minimize the force acting on an object during a collision. This item requires you to recognize a safety feature designed to reduce the force experienced during a car collision.

Answer: D

Explanation for Correct Response:

An air bag in a car is designed to reduce impulse force during a collision by increasing the amount of time it takes a person's body to slow down.

11. A core idea within forces and motion is understanding how Newton's Second Law of Motion describes the mathematical relationship between the force acting on an object, the object's mass, and the object's acceleration. This item requires you to analyze data to determine the acceleration of an object and then use Newton's Second Law to create an equation to calculate the amount of force that acted on the object.

Answer: B

Explanation for Correct Response:

This equation correctly determines the force by multiplying the mass of the object by the acceleration of the object (change in velocity over time), according to Newton's Second Law of Motion.

Answer Key (cont'd)

- 12.** A core idea within matter and its interactions is understanding how the conservation of matter allows predictions of the amounts of reactants and products in a chemical reaction. This item requires you to create a mathematical equation to predict the expected amount of a product in a chemical reaction.

Answer: D

Explanation for Correct Response:

This shows the correct mathematical equation to determine the predicted amount of oxygen produced from the given amount of potassium chlorate.

- 13.** A core idea within matter and its interactions is understanding that the release or absorption of energy during a chemical reaction is related to the changes in the energy of the materials. This item requires you to recognize heat energy is absorbed during this chemical reaction and to select the model that best represents the changes in energy during the reaction.

Answer: B

Explanation for Correct Response:

This diagram correctly represents the decomposition of potassium chlorate, which is an endothermic reaction.

- 14. Score: 1**

A correct response to Part 1 OR Part 2

Score: 2

Part 1. A protein OR a peptide OR a polypeptide and

Part 2. Any response indicating that the order of the DNA codon/code determines the specific amino acid and/or protein/peptide/polypeptide that is built.

- 15. The correct four answers are:**

reproductive rate

resistance to disease and parasites

ability to hide from predators

competition for food and nesting sites