

# Session 6—WorkKeys Workplace Documents Handout

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The following material is publicly available on the ACT web site at:

<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workkeys-for-job-seekers/assessments/workplace-documents.html>

## The Workplace Documents Assessment

Employees must be able to understand written text to do a job. The Workplace Documents assessment measures skills that individuals use when they read real workplace documents and use that information to make job-related decisions and solve problems. The documents include messages, emails, letters, directions, signs, bulletins, policies, websites, contracts, and regulations.

Number of Items: 35

Test Length

- 55 minutes (WorkKeys Internet Version and Paper)

## What it Measures

There are five levels of difficulty. Level 3 is the least complex, and Level 7 is the most complex. The levels build on each other, each incorporating the skills assessed at the previous levels. For example, at Level 5, individuals need the skills from Levels 3, 4, and 5. Examples are included with each level description.

### Level 3

#### Characteristics of Items

- Reading materials include basic company policies, procedures, and announcements
- Reading materials are short and simple, with no extra information
- Reading materials tell readers what they should do
- All needed information is stated clearly and directly
- Items focus on the main points of the passages
- Wording of the questions and answers is similar or identical to the wording used in the reading materials

#### Skills

- Identify the main idea
- Identify specific details
- Choose when to perform a step in a series of short steps
- Apply information/instructions to a situation that is the same as the situation described in the document

## Level 3 Workplace Documents Sample Item

ATTENTION CASHIERS:

All store employees will now get 20% off the price of clothes they buy here. Please follow the new directions listed below.

### Selling clothes to employees

Ask to see the employee's store identification card.

Enter the employee's department code number into the cash register.

Use the cash register to take 20% off the price. Then push the sales tax button.

Write your initials on the sales receipt.

Sell clothes to employees during store hours only.

### Accepting clothing returns from employees

Employees receive a store credit certificate for clothes they return to the store.

Store credit certificates are next to the gift certificates.

Employees may not get a cash refund for clothes they return to the store.

You are a cashier. According to the notice shown, what should you write on a store employee's receipt?

Individual Question

- A.  The employee's identification number
- B.  The employee's department number
- C.  The amount of sales tax
- D.

The 20% discount price

E.

Your initials

## Level 4

### Characteristics of Items

- Reading materials include company policies, procedures, and notices
- Reading materials are straightforward but have longer sentences and contain a number of details
- Reading materials use common words but do have some harder words, too
- Reading materials describe procedures that include several steps
- When following the procedures, individuals must think about changing conditions that affect what they should do
- Questions and answers are often paraphrased from the passage

### Skills

- Identify the main idea
- Identify specific details
- Use the information in the document to figure out the meanings of words or phrases that are not defined for them
- Choose when to perform a step in a series of steps
- Apply information/instructions to a situation that is the same as the situation described in the document
- Choose what to do when changing conditions call for a different action

### Level 4 Workplace Documents Sample Item

INSTRUCTIONS TO SORTING DEPARTMENT:

SPECIAL PROJECT TO FIX ORDER #888

Five long, blue plastic bins have been placed over by the overhead door. Piled on the other side of this room, near the time clock, are several thousand steel rods of varying lengths. All of those rods must be sorted by length and placed in the bins.

Bin "1" is for rods that are four to five meters long.

Bin “2” is for rods that have a length of over five meters, up to six meters.

Bin “3” is for rods that have a length of over six meters, up to eight meters.

Bin “4” is for rods that have a length of over eight meters, up to ten meters.

Bin “5” is for warped or unsmoothed rods. These will not be accepted.

If these rods are not all sorted correctly, the customer will reject the order. We cannot afford to let that happen again. Work as quickly as you can because Friday is the deadline for delivery of the order.

According to the instructions shown, what is a condition for project success other than delivery on time?

Individual Question

- A.  All rods must be sorted by both length and diameter.
- B.  Rods eleven meters long must be leaned against the overhead door.
- C.  The customer does not want rods that are warped.
- D.  The five-meter-long rods must go in Bin 2.
- E.  The ten-meter-long rods must arrive at the customer in Bin 4.

## Level 5

### Characteristics of Items

- Reading materials include informational, instructional, policy, contracts, and legal documents

- Longer passages that include multiple details and extraneous information
- Documents may include unfamiliar vocabulary, professional jargon, and acronyms
- Figure out the correct meaning of a word based on how the word is used
- Apply technical terms and jargon and relate them to stated conditions
- Written materials include conditionals (e.g., if-then statements)

## Skills

- Identify specific details
- Infer the meaning of a word or phrase from context
- Apply information/instructions to a new situation that is similar to the one described in the document while considering changing conditions
- Apply information/instructions that include conditions to situations described in the document
- Identify the appropriate meaning of an acronym, jargon, or technical term defined in the document
- Apply technical terms and jargon to stated situations
- Make inferences to accomplish a goal

## Level 5 Workplace Documents

Goldberg's Auto Parts is served by more than fifty different accounts, each with its own sales representative, company name, corporate address, and shipping address. As a shipping and receiving clerk at Goldberg's, you are required to return defective merchandise to the manufacturer.

Standard procedure for returning an item begins with your written request to the company for authorization. Always send the request to the corporate address, not to the shipping address. Unless the company file folder contains a form for this procedure, write a business letter to the manufacturer supplying the item's stock number, cost, and invoice number; the date it was received; and the reason for its return. The manufacturer's reply will include an authorization number from the sales representative, a sticker for you to place on the outside of the box to identify it as an authorized return, and a closing date for the company's acceptance of the returned item. If you do not attach the provided sticker, your returned box will be refused by the manufacturer as unauthorized, and you will need to obtain a new letter, authorization, sticker, and closing date. Always send a returned box to the shipping address, not to the company's corporate address.

According to the policy shown, what should you do if you lose an authorization sticker?

Individual Question

- A.  Send a request for a return authorization along with the rejected part directly to the manufacturer's shipping address.
- B.  Send a request for return authorization along with the rejected part directly to the manufacturer's corporate address.
- C.  Repeat the standard procedure to obtain a new letter, authorization, sticker, and closing date.
- D.  Use a sticker from another company's folder.
- E.  Send the rejected part to your sales representative.

## Level 6

### Characteristics of Items

- Reading materials include informational, instructional, policy, contracts, and legal documents
- Longer passages that include complex sentences, difficult vocabulary, professional jargon, and acronyms
- Meaning of terms may be implied and their meaning will need to be determined from context
- Extraneous details
- Written materials include extraneous details and conditionals (e.g., if-then statements)

### Skills

- Infer implied details
- Infer the meaning of an acronym, jargon, or technical term from context
- Apply information/instructions to a situation not directly described in the document or to a completely new situation
- Apply principles inferred in a passage to a situation not directly described in the document or to a completely new situation
- Identify the rationale behind an entire document or a section of a document

## Level 6 Workplace Documents Sample Question

From: J. Kimura, Senior Vice President of Molten Metals, Inc.

To: All e-mail users at Molten Metals, Inc.

To permit our employees to communicate directly with one another as well as with vendors and customers, Molten Metals, Inc. provides a network of e-mail accounts. Access to e-mail is at the sole discretion of Molten Metals, Inc., and we will determine who is to be so empowered. Under President Duarte's leadership, all messages sent and received (even those intended as personal) are treated as business messages. Molten Metals, Inc. has the capability to and reserves the right to access, review, copy, and delete any messages sent, received, or stored on the company e-mail server. Molten Metals, Inc. will disclose these messages to any party (inside or outside the company) it deems appropriate. Employees should treat this server as a constantly reviewed, shared file stored in the system. Due to the reduced human effort required to redistribute electronic information, a greater degree of caution must be exercised by employees transmitting MM, Inc. confidential information using company e-mail accounts. Confidential information belonging to MM, Inc. is important to our independence and should never be transmitted or forwarded to persons or companies not authorized to receive that information. Likewise, it should not be sent or forwarded to other employees inside the company who do not need to know that information. MM, Inc. strongly discourages the storage of large numbers of e-mail messages for a number of reasons. First, because e-mail messages frequently contain company confidential information, it is good to limit the number of such messages to protect the company's information. Second, retention of

messages fills up large amounts of storage space on the e-mail server and personal hard disks, and can slow down the performance of both the network and individual personal computers. Finally, in the event that the company needs to search the network server, backup tapes, or individual hard disks for genuinely important documents, the fewer documents it has to search through, the more economical the search will be. Therefore, employees are to delete as soon as possible any e-mail messages they send or receive.

Based on the memo shown, personal messages transmitted or received using Molten Metals, Inc. e-mail accounts will be:

Individual Question

- A.  automatically deleted upon detection.
- B.  avoided by server staff to save company time.
- C.  forwarded to private, personal accounts.
- D.  grounds for personnel action.
- E.  treated no differently from other messages.

## Level 7

### Characteristics of Items

- Very complex reading materials
- Information includes a lot of details
- Complicated concepts
- Difficult vocabulary
- Unusual jargon and technical terms are used but not defined
- Writing often lacks clarity and direction



- Readers must draw conclusions from some parts of the reading and apply them to other parts

## Skills

- Infer implied details
- Infer the meaning of an acronym, jargon, or technical term from context
- Apply information/instructions to a situation not directly described in the document or to a completely new situation
- Apply principles inferred in a passage to a situation not directly described in the document or to a completely new situation
- Identify the rationale behind an entire document or a section of a document

### Level 7 Workplace Documents Sample Question

#### Confidentiality

Client and Consultant agree to maintain the confidentiality of each other's trade secrets and any confidential business information disclosed during the term of this agreement, except as authorized by the party that disclosed the information. When the consulting services have been completed, the parties will return all confidential materials and equipment provided during the term of this agreement, unless keeping the materials is authorized by the party that provided them. Each party is responsible for identifying all trade secrets, confidential business information, and confidential materials. Nothing in this or in any other agreement will prevent any party from using or disclosing confidential information to the extent necessary to carry out the responsibilities in this agreement; or will restrict any party's use or disclosure of information that is or becomes publicly known through lawful means, that was rightfully in that party's possession or part of that party's general knowledge prior to the term of this agreement, or that is disclosed to that party without confidential or proprietary restrictions by a person who rightfully possesses the information; or will prevent any party from responding to a lawful subpoena or court order. Client agrees that Consultant will neither use nor disclose the trade secrets, confidential

information, or confidential materials of third parties, and Client will neither ask nor require Consultant to do so.

#### Miscellaneous Provisions

All agreements and understandings between the parties concerning the subject matter of this agreement are embodied in this agreement and any proposal to which the parties agreed. It is understood and agreed by both parties that there are no oral or other agreements or understanding between the parties affecting this agreement. This agreement shall supersede all prior and contemporaneous agreements and understandings between the parties, with respect to any subject covered by this agreement, except as otherwise provided in this agreement. This agreement may not be amended except in writing by an instrument, signed by each of the parties. No failure or delay in exercising any right under this agreement shall operate as a waiver thereof. Neither party shall assign or otherwise transfer any rights or obligations under this agreement without the written consent of the other party. Subject to the foregoing agreement, this agreement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the parties' respective heirs, successors, attorneys, and permitted assignees. If any provision of this agreement, or its application to any person, place, or circumstance, is held by an arbitrator or a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, unenforceable, or void, such provision shall be enforced to the greatest extent permitted by law, and the remainder of this agreement and such provision as applied to the other persons, places, and circumstances shall remain in full force and effect. This agreement shall not become binding on either party until both parties execute it.

You have hired a consultant to work with your firm. Based on the agreement shown, what will happen if the consultant's business is taken over by a major competitor?

Individual Question

- A.  The agreement will confidentially go into arbitration.
- B.  The agreement will not be enforceable and is void.
- C.  The consultant is bound by the agreement.
- D.  The obligations will pass to the new owner.
- E.  You must renegotiate the agreement with the new owner.