



CUNYASSESSMENT TEST IN WRITING (CATW) Practice 5

ure to summarize the passage in your own words, stating the author’s most important ideas. Develop your essay by identifying one idea in the passage that you feel is especially significant, and explain its significance. Support your claims with evidence or examples drawn from what you have read, learned in school, and/or personally experienced.

Preparing for the Work World

With recent college graduates flooding the job market—and only 19 percent finding work so far—it’s a difficult time to be looking for a first job.

Students still in school should be thinking about getting work experience now, so that when they graduate and need a job, they aren’t starting from nothing. I receive many resumes from recent grads who have no work experience: nothing, not internships, not temp jobs, nothing at all. And since they’re competing against candidates who do have experience, they’re at an enormous disadvantage.

The most useful thing students can do to prepare for the job market is to work. Work before you actually have to work. It’s the single best thing you can do to make yourself marketable.

No amount of fancy resume writing will disguise a lack of work experience. Nothing else will give hiring managers any confidence that you know how to work in an office. It doesn’t matter how much you studied or how fantastic your grades were—you don’t yet know how the work world works, and you can only learn by joining it. Anyone who has spent time working has an advantage.

So, find a way to get actual work experience before you leave school. Do internships every semester you are able, so that you have experience on your resume. Paid, unpaid, whatever it takes. If a part-time job of a few hours a week is all you have time for outside of your classes, that’s fine. Do that. No one will hire you? Find work experience as a volunteer--that counts too.

Do something so you can show that you’ve spent time in a work environment, because that means that you’re going to be better prepared than those of your peers who haven’t. And that means that future employers will have to spend less time explaining office basics to you and you’ll spend more time being productive.

Adapted from “How College Students Can Gain an Edge in the Job Hunt” by Alison Greene, *US News*, June 1, 2009.