

The *Praxis*® Study Companion

Middle School: English Language Arts

5049



Welcome to the *Praxis*® Study Companion

Prepare to Show What You Know

You have been working to acquire the knowledge and skills you need for your teaching career. Now you are ready to demonstrate your abilities by taking a *Praxis*® test.

Using *The Praxis Series*® Study Companion is a smart way to prepare for the test so you can do your best on test day. This guide can help keep you on track and make the most efficient use of your study time.

The Study Companion contains practical information and helpful tools, including:

- An overview of the *Praxis* tests
- Specific information on the *Praxis* test you are taking
- A template study plan
- Study topics
- Practice questions and explanations of correct answers
- Test-taking tips and strategies
- Frequently asked questions
- Links to more detailed information

So where should you start? Begin by reviewing this guide in its entirety and note those sections that you need to revisit. Then you can create your own personalized study plan and schedule based on your individual needs and how much time you have before test day.

Keep in mind that study habits are individual. There are many different ways to successfully prepare for your test. Some people study better on their own, while others prefer a group dynamic. You may have more energy early in the day, but another test taker may concentrate better in the evening. So use this guide to develop the approach that works best for you.

Your teaching career begins with preparation. Good luck!

Know What to Expect

Which tests should I take?

Each state or agency that uses the *Praxis* tests sets its own requirements for which test or tests you must take for the teaching area you wish to pursue.

Before you register for a test, confirm your state or agency's testing requirements at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

How are the *Praxis* tests given?

Praxis tests are given on computer. Other formats are available for test takers approved for accommodations (see page 34).

What should I expect when taking the test on computer?

When taking the test on computer, you can expect to be asked to provide proper identification at the test center. Once admitted, you will be given the opportunity to learn how the computer interface works (how to answer questions, how to skip questions, how to go back to questions you skipped, etc.) before the testing time begins. Watch the [What to Expect on Test Day](#) video to see what the experience is like.

Where and when are the *Praxis* tests offered?

You can select the test center that is most convenient for you. The *Praxis* tests are administered through an international network of test centers, which includes Prometric® Testing Centers, some universities, and other locations throughout the world.

Testing schedules may differ, so see the *Praxis* Web site for more detailed test registration information at www.ets.org/praxis/register.

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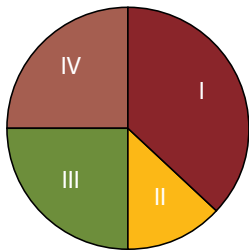
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1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

Middle School: English Language Arts (5049)

Test at a Glance			
Test Name	Middle School: English Language Arts		
Test Code	5049		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	90 selected-response questions (Part A) 2 constructed-response questions (short-answer essay) (Part B)		
Format	Selected-response and constructed-response questions		
Weighting	Selected response: 75% of total score Constructed response: 25% of total score		
Test Delivery	Computer delivered		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Reading and Literature Study II. Language Study III. Composition and Rhetoric IV. Short Essays: 1. Textual Interpretation 2. Teaching Reading/Writing	45 16 29 2	37% 13% 25% 25%
Pacing and Special Tips	In allocating time on this assessment, it is expected that about 90 minutes will be spent on the selected-response section and about 30 minutes will be spent on the constructed-response section; the sections are not independently timed.		

About This Test

The Middle School: English Language Arts test is designed to assess whether an examinee has the knowledge and competencies necessary for a beginning teacher of English Language Arts at the middle school level. The 90 selected-response questions constitute approximately 75 percent of the examinee’s score and fall into three categories: knowledge of concepts relevant to reading and literature study, knowledge of the history and use of the English language, and knowledge of concepts relevant to the study of composition and rhetoric. The two equally weighted constructed-response questions constitute approximately 25 percent of the examinee’s score and emphasize the use of critical thinking skills. One question will ask examinees to interpret a piece of literary or nonfiction text and/or to discuss an approach to interpreting text; the other question will ask examinees to discuss approaches to teaching writing or teaching reading. With respect to the examinee’s allocation of time on this assessment, it is expected that about 90 minutes will be spent on the selected-response section

and about 15 minutes will be spent on each essay question (for an approximate total of 30 minutes on the constructed-response portion); the sections are not separately timed.

Please note that this test may contain some selected-response questions that will not count toward your score.

Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

I. Reading and Literature Study

- A. Knowing the major works and authors of literature appropriate for adolescents
- B. Paraphrasing, comparing, and interpreting (literally and inferentially) various types of print and nonprint texts; e.g., fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and graphic representations
- C. Identifying and interpreting figurative language and other literary elements; e.g., voice, point of view, style, tone, diction, allusions, irony, clichés, simile, metaphor, analogy, character, setting, theme, plot
- D. Identifying the characteristics of literary forms and text structures; e.g., poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama
- E. Locating and interpreting literature within historical and cultural contexts
- F. Recognizing various critical approaches to interpreting text; e.g., shared inquiry and reader-response theory
- G. Recognizing and applying various strategic approaches to teaching reading; e.g., cueing systems, activating prior knowledge, constructing meaning through context, and employing metacognitive strategies

II. Language Study

- A. Understanding and applying the conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics; e.g., sentence types, sentence structure, parts of speech, modifiers, phrases and clauses, capitalization, and punctuation
- B. Understanding the development and structure of the English language; e.g., vocabulary and syntax
- C. Understanding principles of first- and second-language acquisition and development, and the nature of dialects

III. Composition and Rhetoric

- A. Understanding strategies for teaching writing
 1. individual and collaborative approaches to teaching writing; e.g., writing processes (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, evaluating) and how those processes work recursively
 2. common research and documentation techniques; e.g., gathering and evaluating data, using electronic and print media, and evaluating sources
 3. evaluating and assessing student writing, including knowledge of various assessment tools and response strategies
- B. Recognizing, understanding, and evaluating rhetorical features of writing
 1. thesis statements and appropriate support; e.g., evidence, examples, arguments
 2. audiences and purposes within varying contexts
 3. types of discourse; e.g., narrative, expressive/poetic, expository, persuasive, reflective, informational, and descriptive
 4. coherence and organization; e.g., chronological order, transitions, cause/effect, compare/contrast
 5. critical reasoning; e.g., recognition of bias and fallacies, distinctions between fact and opinion, and identification of stereotypes, inferences, and assumptions

Short Essays

Question 1: Textual Interpretation

Stimulus

The stimulus for the literary analysis question will consist of a selection of prose (fiction or nonfiction) OR poetry (a whole short poem or an excerpt from a longer work).

Task

Examinees will be asked to do both of the following:

- Describe and give examples of the use of one or two specified literary element(s) present in the stimulus; e.g., metaphor, simile, voice, narrative point of view, tone, style, setting, diction, mood, allusions, irony, cliches, analogy, hyperbole, personification, alliteration, foreshadowing
- Discuss how the author's use of the literary element(s) contributes to the overall meaning and/or effectiveness of the text

Question 2: Teaching Reading/Writing

Stimulus

The stimulus for the teaching reading/writing question will consist of a piece of student work OR a classroom situation.

Task

Examinees may be asked to do any of the following:

- Analyze a piece of student work or a classroom situation to determine strengths and/or weaknesses
- Describe an instructional activity referencing the identified strengths and/or weaknesses

2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

Become comfortable with the types of questions you'll find on the Praxis tests

The *Praxis Series* assessments include a variety of question types: constructed response, for which you write a response of your own; selected response, for which you select one or more answers from a list of choices or make another kind of selection (e.g., by clicking on a sentence in a text or by clicking on part of a graphic); and numeric entry, for which you enter a numeric value in an answer field. You may be familiar with these question formats from taking other standardized tests. If not, familiarize yourself with them so you don't spend time during the test figuring out how to answer them.

Understanding Computer-Delivered Questions

Questions on computer-delivered tests are interactive in the sense that you answer by selecting an option or entering text on the screen. If you see a format you are not familiar with, read the directions carefully. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

For most questions, you respond by clicking an oval to select a single answer from a list of options.

However, interactive question types may also ask you to respond by:

- **Clicking more than one oval** to select answers from a list of options.
- **Typing in an entry box.** When the answer is a number, you may be asked to enter a numerical answer. Some questions may have more than one place to enter a response.
- **Clicking check boxes.** You may be asked to click check boxes instead of an oval when more than one choice within a set of answers can be selected.
- **Clicking parts of a graphic.** In some questions, you will select your answers by clicking on a location (or locations) on a graphic such as a map or chart, as opposed to choosing your answer from a list.
- **Clicking on sentences.** In questions with reading passages, you may be asked to choose your answers by clicking on a sentence (or sentences) within the reading passage.
- **Dragging and dropping answer choices into targets on the screen.** You may be asked to select answers from a list of options and drag your answers to the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting options from a drop-down menu.** You may be asked to choose answers by selecting options from a drop-down menu (e.g., to complete a sentence).

Remember that with every question you will get clear instructions.

Perhaps the best way to understand computer-delivered questions is to view the [Computer-delivered Testing Demonstration](#) on the Praxis Web site to learn how a computer-delivered test works and see examples of some types of questions you may encounter.

Understanding Selected-Response Questions

Many selected-response questions begin with the phrase “which of the following.” Take a look at this example:

Which of the following is a flavor made from beans?

- (A) Strawberry
- (B) Cherry
- (C) Vanilla
- (D) Mint

How would you answer this question?

All of the answer choices are flavors. Your job is to decide which of the flavors is the one made from beans.

Try following these steps to select the correct answer.

- 1) **Limit your answer to the choices given.** You may know that chocolate and coffee are also flavors made from beans, but they are not listed. Rather than thinking of other possible answers, focus only on the choices given (“which of the following”).
- 2) **Eliminate incorrect answers.** You may know that strawberry and cherry flavors are made from fruit and that mint flavor is made from a plant. That leaves vanilla as the only possible answer.
- 3) **Verify your answer.** You can substitute “vanilla” for the phrase “which of the following” and turn the question into this statement: “Vanilla is a flavor made from beans.” This will help you be sure that your answer is correct. If you’re still uncertain, try substituting the other choices to see if they make sense. You may want to use this technique as you answer selected-response questions on the practice tests.

Try a more challenging example

The vanilla bean question is pretty straightforward, but you’ll find that more challenging questions have a similar structure. For example:

Entries in outlines are generally arranged according to which of the following relationships of ideas?

- (A) Literal and inferential
- (B) Concrete and abstract
- (C) Linear and recursive
- (D) Main and subordinate

You’ll notice that this example also contains the phrase “which of the following.” This phrase helps you determine that your answer will be a “relationship of ideas” from the choices provided. You are supposed to find the choice that describes how entries, or ideas, in outlines are related.

Sometimes it helps to put the question in your own words. Here, you could paraphrase the question in this way: “How are outlines usually organized?” Since the ideas in outlines usually appear as main ideas and subordinate ideas, the answer is (D).

QUICK TIP: Don't be intimidated by words you may not understand. It might be easy to be thrown by words like "recursive" or "inferential." Read carefully to understand the question and look for an answer that fits. An outline is something you are probably familiar with and expect to teach to your students. So slow down, and use what you know.

Watch out for selected-response questions containing "NOT," "LEAST," and "EXCEPT"

This type of question asks you to select the choice that does not fit. You must be very careful because it is easy to forget that you are selecting the negative. This question type is used in situations in which there are several good solutions or ways to approach something, but also a clearly wrong way.

How to approach questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages

When answering questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages, provide only the information that the questions ask for. In the case of a map or graph, you might want to read the questions first, and then look at the map or graph. In the case of a long reading passage, you might want to go ahead and read the passage first, noting places you think are important, and then answer the questions. Again, the important thing is to be sure you answer the questions as they refer to the material presented. So read the questions carefully.

How to approach unfamiliar formats

New question formats are developed from time to time to find new ways of assessing knowledge. Tests may include audio and video components, such as a movie clip or animation, instead of a map or reading passage. Other tests may allow you to zoom in on details in a graphic or picture.

Tests may also include interactive questions. These questions take advantage of technology to assess knowledge and skills in ways that standard selected-response questions cannot. If you see a format you are not familiar with, **read the directions carefully**. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

QUICK TIP: Don't make the questions more difficult than they are. Don't read for hidden meanings or tricks. There are no trick questions on *Praxis* tests. They are intended to be serious, straightforward tests of your knowledge.

Understanding Constructed-Response Questions

Constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by creating your own response to particular topics. Essays and short-answer questions are types of constructed-response questions.

For example, an essay question might present you with a topic and ask you to discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the opinion stated. You must support your position with specific reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Take a look at a few sample essay topics:

- "Celebrities have a tremendous influence on the young, and for that reason, they have a responsibility to act as role models."
- "We are constantly bombarded by advertisements—on television and radio, in newspapers and magazines, on highway signs, and the sides of buses. They have become too pervasive. It's time to put limits on advertising."
- "Advances in computer technology have made the classroom unnecessary, since students and teachers are able to communicate with one another from computer terminals at home or at work."

Keep these things in mind when you respond to a constructed-response question

- 1) **Answer the question accurately.** Analyze what each part of the question is asking you to do. If the question asks you to describe or discuss, you should provide more than just a list.
- 2) **Answer the question completely.** If a question asks you to do three distinct things in your response, you should cover all three things for the best score. Otherwise, no matter how well you write, you will not be awarded full credit.
- 3) **Answer the question that is asked.** Do not change the question or challenge the basis of the question. You will receive no credit or a low score if you answer another question or if you state, for example, that there is no possible answer.
- 4) **Give a thorough and detailed response.** You must demonstrate that you have a thorough understanding of the subject matter. However, your response should be straightforward and not filled with unnecessary information.
- 5) **Reread your response.** Check that you have written what you thought you wrote. Be sure not to leave sentences unfinished or omit clarifying information.

QUICK TIP: You may find that it helps to take notes on scratch paper so that you don't miss any details. Then you'll be sure to have all the information you need to answer the question.

For tests that have constructed-response questions, more detailed information can be found in "Understanding Constructed-Response Questions" on page 10.

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Sample Test Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions on the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

Directions: Each of the questions or statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

- _____ is a narrative that takes abstract ideas of behavior—good or bad, wise or foolish—and attempts to make them concrete and striking. The chief actor in these stories is usually an animal or inanimate object that behaves like a human and engages in a single significant act intended to teach a moral lesson.

Which of the following will correctly complete the passage above?

- (A) A myth
- (B) A fable
- (C) An epic
- (D) A legend

Questions 2–4 refer to the following poem.

There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.

Line

- (5) This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul!

Reprinted by permission of the publishers and the Trustees of Amherst College from *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Copyright 1951 © 1955, 1979 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

- Which of the following is the best restatement of lines 5–6?
 - (A) Travel exposes an individual to new experiences
 - (B) Reading is an adventure that costs nothing
 - (C) Chariots are an inexpensive means of travel
 - (D) Poetry, in comparison with fiction, lacks seriousness
- In the poem, books and reading are described in terms related to
 - (A) laborious activities
 - (B) wealth and poverty
 - (C) geographical regions
 - (D) modes of transportation
- The word “prancing” (line 4) is used to
 - (A) link the images of “frigate” (line 1) and “chariot” (line 7)
 - (B) underline the contrast between “book” (line 1) and “page” (line 3)
 - (C) reinforce the image of horses, or “coursers” (line 3)
 - (D) introduce an image that will dominate the last four lines of the poem

5. If atoms are the letters of the chemical language, then molecules are the words. But in order to put the chemical letters together to form chemical words, we have to know something about the rules of chemical spelling.

In the passage above, a discussion of atoms is introduced by

- (A) an analogy
- (B) an aphorism
- (C) an example
- (D) a hypothesis

6. Set in the American Civil War, the novel concerns a young soldier's first encounter with battle and the psychological changes that he undergoes. Published in 1895, the novel had a great influence on 20th-century fiction.

The novel discussed above is

- (A) Andrea Davis Pinkney's *Silent Thunder*
- (B) Gary Paulsen's *Soldier's Heart*
- (C) Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*
- (D) Carolyn Reeder's *Shades of Gray*

7. Each of the following is an important part of guided reading EXCEPT:

- (A) The teacher should use texts that challenge students' current reading levels.
- (B) It is used to help students become independent readers.
- (C) It is used to help students learn various reading strategies.
- (D) Students are grouped homogeneously based on reading ability.

8. An angel, robed in spotless white,
Bent down and kissed the sleeping Night.
Night woke to blush; the sprite was gone.
Men saw the blush and called it Dawn.

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

The poem portrays "Night" using which of the following literary devices?

- (A) Oxymoron
- (B) Simile
- (C) Allusion
- (D) Personification

9. Which of the following most accurately describes the setting of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*?

- (A) An American colony in New England during the 17th century
- (B) The 19th-century United States in a village by the Mississippi River
- (C) The 19th-century United States in rural South Carolina during the Civil War
- (D) The 20th-century United States during the Dust Bowl in Oklahoma

10. The significance of the [literary] work . . . does not lie in the meaning sealed within the text, but in the fact that the meaning brings out what had been previously sealed within us [the readers]. . . . We actually participate in the text, and this means that we are caught up in the very thing we are producing. This is why we often have the impression, as we read, that we are living another life.

The description above of the reading process is most consistent with which of the following theories of literary interpretation?

- (A) Biographical criticism
- (B) Psychoanalytic criticism
- (C) New Criticism
- (D) Reader response

11. I. The teacher from Nebraska displayed Native American artifacts to her class.

II. The teacher displayed Native American artifacts from Nebraska to her class.

The meaning of sentence I differs from that of sentence II in that the

- (A) subject of sentence I is “teacher” whereas the subject of sentence II is “artifacts”
 - (B) first sentence ends in a prepositional phrase whereas the second sentence does not
 - (C) sentences do not have the same simple predicate
 - (D) adjective phrase “from Nebraska” modifies different nouns
12. They set two rats in cages side by side, and one was furtive, timid, and small, and the other was glossy, bold, and big.

The sentence above is an example of a

- (A) simple sentence
- (B) compound sentence
- (C) complex sentence
- (D) compound-complex sentence

13. My sister and I always loved sledding down the hill behind our house.

The underlined word in the sentence above is an example of

- (A) a conjunction
 - (B) a participle
 - (C) a gerund
 - (D) an adverb
14. Science fiction: readers claim to either love it or loathe it; either they avoid it like poison or they devour favorite works and authors like chocolate addicts gulping down fudge truffles.

The author of the passage compares certain readers with “chocolate addicts” primarily in order to

- (A) suggest that science fiction is not a serious literary genre
- (B) indicate the depth of certain readers’ feelings about science fiction
- (C) explain why some readers consider science fiction to be dangerous
- (D) contrast the characteristics of science fiction with those of other literary genres

Questions 15–16 refer to the following passage.

Unlike some writers who talk of language use with wailing and gnashing of teeth (see Edwin Newman’s petulant discussions of language misuse or any of
 Line (5) Jacques Barzun’s tirades on contemporary English), George Orwell recognized the complexity of the interrelationship between thinking and language and avoided the simplistic
 (10) thinking that argues that if we “correct” people’s use of English, we will somehow have solved the “problem” of the “decline” of the English language.

15. The author puts the words “correct,” “problem,” and “decline” in quotation marks primarily in order to suggest that
- (A) they are examples of words that are misused in the English language
 - (B) the complex interrelationship between thinking and language has affected the way in which people try to correct one another’s speech
 - (C) the problem of the decline of the English language is too severe to be solved merely by correcting people’s speech
 - (D) they reflect a limited perspective and should not be accepted uncritically
16. The author’s tone in describing Newman and Barzun can best be described as
- (A) dismissive
 - (B) bitter
 - (C) defensive
 - (D) spiteful
17. Freewriting, brainstorming, clustering, and idea mapping are most important during which stage of the writing process?
- (A) Prewriting
 - (B) Drafting
 - (C) Revising
 - (D) Proofreading
18. All of us find or invent our language. We may come up with new sentences never heard before. We may use words in a unique way. But we are always finding our voice, locating old patterns or long-heard expressions, reaching into our thesaurus for the right term. And in inventing English, we are always inventing ourselves— finding our place among the welter of the words or in the swell of sounds that is the ocean of our tongue.
- Which of the following most accurately describes how the author’s use of point of view works as a rhetorical strategy?
- (A) He speaks in the first person to invite the readers to see how they participate in the activities he describes.
 - (B) He speaks in the first person to emphasize his unique experience with the subject under discussion.
 - (C) He speaks in the third person to highlight the universality of the topic being discussed.
 - (D) He speaks in the third person to construct a more authoritative position from which to argue his point.

Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (B). The statements on which the question is based constitute a definition of a fable. While all of the choices are types of narrative, only a fable fits the full description.
2. The correct answer is (B). The syntax of line 5 of the poem is inverted. Read as “the poorest [people] may take this traverse [i.e., this travel; this route],” the sense becomes plainer, as does the sense of line 6: “without oppress [oppression or burden] of toll [i.e., payment].” What remains is to determine that “this traverse” refers to taking “us lands away” (line 2). It is a book (line 1) or “page of prancing poetry” (lines 3–4) that can do that.
3. The correct answer is (D). The comparison in line 1 of a book to a ship (“a frigate”) and in lines 2–3 of poetry to swift horses (“coursers”) makes it clear that books and reading are described in terms of modes of transportation. That interpretation is reinforced by the metaphor of a chariot bearing a human soul (lines 7–8).
4. The correct answer is (C). The description of poetry as “prancing” in line 4 calls to mind the rhythm of poetry and reinforces the image of spirited, galloping horses (coursers) in line 3.
5. The correct answer is (A). By suggesting that atoms are like letters, the author of the passage has used an analogy; i.e., the author has characterized one thing by reference to another thing that functions in a similar way.
6. The correct answer is (C). The passage presents factual information and a brief description of the plot of *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane.
7. The correct answer is (A). During guided reading, students are placed into small groups according to their individual reading levels. The teacher observes as students read and provides them with the opportunity to use various reading strategies. The ultimate goal of guided reading is to enable students to read successfully on their own. Thus, (B), (C), and (D) are all important parts of guided reading. (A) is not an important part because the teacher selects texts that students can read with 90 percent accuracy; it is not the intent of guided reading to select books that are beyond students’ current reading levels.
8. The correct answer is (D). Personification involves endowing abstractions, ideas, and inanimate objects with human characteristics or sensibilities. In the poem, “Night” is described as having the human ability to sleep, wake, and blush.
9. The correct answer is (B). *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is set in a Mississippi River town somewhere between 1836 and 1846.
10. The correct answer is (D). Reader response theory focuses on the reader and the process of reading. The reader is considered an active agent who gives meaning to the text. (A), (B), and (C) focus on the author or the text rather than on the reader.
11. The correct answer is (D). The meaning of the two sentences differs because in sentence I the teacher is “from Nebraska” and in sentence II the Native American artifacts are “from Nebraska.” Thus, the placement of the adjective phrase “from Nebraska” after two different nouns changes the meaning of the sentences. (A) is incorrect because “teacher” is the subject of both sentences. (B) is incorrect because both sentences end in the prepositional phrase “to her class.” (C) is incorrect because the simple predicate of both sentences is “displayed.”
12. The correct answer is (B). A simple sentence contains only one independent clause. This sentence has three independent clauses joined by the conjunction “and.” Without dependent clauses, the sentence cannot be characterized as either “complex” or “compound-complex.”
13. The correct answer is (C). In this sentence, the word “sledding” is a gerund, a verb form (the present participle) functioning as a noun.
14. The correct answer is (B). The author makes a comparison between science fiction readers and people who love chocolate so much they could be called addicts in order to stress that those who like science fiction cannot get enough of it.
15. The correct answer is (D). In the paragraph, the speaker explains that George Orwell recognized the complexity of language use and avoided simplistic arguments for improving how people speak. What follows are terms the speaker would consider related to such simplistic arguments. The quotation marks call attention to the terms and discourage readers from taking them at face value.

16. The correct answer is (A). In contrasting Orwell's discussions of language with those of writers exemplified by Newman and Barzun, the speaker implies that the arguments of Newman and Barzun are simplistic and hence easily dismissed. The hyperbole in "wailing and gnashing of teeth" (line 2) and the characterization of Newman's work as "petulant" (line 3) and Barzun's as "tirades" (line 5) have already signaled disapproval, implying that these authors are more emotional than thoughtful. While it is possible that the speaker is dismissing Newman and Barzun out of spite or bitterness, or even defensiveness, there is nothing in the structure of this excerpt to support (B), (C), or (D).

17. The correct answer is (A). The terms mentioned are processes and devices associated with generating new ideas and organizing them. These processes and devices would not be associated with proofreading (D). While they might be part of drafting (B) or revising (C), they are most important during the prewriting stage of the writing process.

18. The correct answer is (A). In first person point of view, the author or narrator writes from his or her own perspective. In this passage, the author uses the words "we" and "our" to suggest that his experience is similar to the readers' experience, and invites readers to understand how people invent themselves through the words they use. (B) is incorrect because the author does not suggest that inventing language is unique to him as an author. (C) and (D) are incorrect because the third person point of view is not used in the passage.

Sample Test Questions

This section presents sample questions and constructed-response samples along with the standards used in scoring the essays. When you read these sample responses, keep in mind that they will be less polished than if they had been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented. Examinees do not know what questions will be asked and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. Readers take these circumstances into account when scoring the responses.

Readers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide.

Scoring Guide

Score of 3

The response is successful in the following ways:

- It demonstrates an ability to analyze the stimulus material thoughtfully and in depth.
- It demonstrates a strong knowledge of the subject matter relevant to the question.
- It responds appropriately to all parts of the question.
- It demonstrates facility with conventions of standard written English.

Score of 2

The response demonstrates some understanding of the topic, but it is limited in one or more of the following ways:

- It may indicate a misreading of the stimulus material or provide superficial analysis.
- It may demonstrate only superficial knowledge of the subject matter relevant to the question.
- It may respond to one or more parts of the question inadequately or not at all.
- It may contain significant writing errors.

Score of 1

The response is seriously flawed in one or more of the following ways:

- It may demonstrate weak understanding of the subject matter or of the writing task.
- It may fail to respond adequately to most parts of the question.
- It may be incoherent or severely underdeveloped.
- It may contain severe and persistent writing errors.

Score of 0

Response is blank, off-topic, totally incorrect, or merely rephrases the question.

Sample Question Literary Analysis

"Why, thank you so much. I'd adore to."
I don't want to dance with him. I don't want to dance with anybody. And even if I did, it wouldn't be him. He'd be well down among the last ten. I've seen the way he dances. . . . Just think, not a quarter of an hour ago, here I was sitting, feeling sorry for the poor girl he was dancing with. And now I'm going to be the poor girl.

"The Waltz," a short story by humorist Dorothy Parker, opens with the lines above. Explain how Parker establishes tone and uses perspective in the excerpt.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

Dorothy Parker tells the story in the first person with two contrasting perspectives: what her character says and what she is really thinking. This sets an amusing and intimate tone throughout the excerpt.

Contributing to the sense of intimacy with her character is the conversational tone of her thoughts. Immediately the reader identifies with the character. Also, the use of present tense, so we are overhearing the character's thoughts as she is having them, contributes to the intimacy of the internal dialogue. When she says that she didn't want to dance with anyone, and even if she did "it wouldn't be him," it feels like the character is having a private conversation with the reader. Finally, the reader is left with a feeling of ironic amusement. The character who so politely agrees to dance has just been feeling sorry for her partner's previous victim: "Just think, not a quarter of an hour ago, here I was sitting, feeling sorry for the poor girl he was dancing with. And now I'm going to be the poor girl." Again, the reader identifies with the intimate tone the character uses since at one time or another most of us have also agreed to do something we would have preferred not to, just to be polite.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

This is a successful response because it addresses and analyzes the aspects of tone and perspective thoughtfully and in depth. Not only does the response identify the first person perspective, but it also recognizes the duality of the perspective in "what her character says and what she is really thinking." These "contrasting perspectives" reveal the outwardly proper and polite narrator, while the internal comments reflect the "ironic amusement" that she is now the "poor girl" who is the next "victim" of the awkward dance partner.

The words "amusing" and "intimate" accurately describe the tone of the piece, and the writer further analyzes how the tone establishes a connection ("the reader identifies") between the character and the reader, which adds to the intimacy and ironic humor of the piece.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

The tone of the story is humorous. Dorothy Parker does not want to dance with the man. While she says yes, she is thinking just the opposite. It's funny because in the first line of the story she says she would like to dance; "Why, thank you so much. I'd adore to." But in her mind, she is thinking about how much she does not want to dance with him. He would be one of the last people she'd dance with; "down among the last ten." She also makes fun of the "poor girl" that he danced with before her. She believes that when she dances with him, she will look as bad as the "poor girl," she does not want to look that bad. The story is funny because Dorothy Parker gets put in a tricky social situation.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

While recognizing that the excerpt is intended to be humorous, the response is limited and provides only a superficial analysis of the subject matter. The writer identifies the fundamental conflict in Parker's excerpt: the speaker does not want to dance, but she cordially agrees when asked. However, the response does not go on to provide an in-depth analysis of how Parker uses first person perspective to establish a humorous, ironic tone in her short story. Furthermore, the response demonstrates a crucial misreading of the excerpt by positing that the speaker is also making fun of the "poor girl." In truth, the speaker was in sympathy with the "poor girl" and finds it ironic that she will now be the "poor girl" dancing with the young man.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

In the above passage, Parker establishes tone with short, precise sentences, gradually getting longer. She used perspective in dealing with the fact that she does not want to dance and especially with him. She also was putting herself in the other girl's position.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

This response reveals a weak understanding of tone and perspective. It is severely underdeveloped, lacks analysis, and moreover includes a glaring misread of the piece. The explanation of how Parker establishes tone is limited to merely describing sentence style, and the writer's analysis of perspective is wrong. The response restates the central premise that "she does not want to dance and especially with him." This is followed by a misread of the ironic moment, as reflected in a reference to "the other girl's position" that misses the point that Parker is now in the position of the girl she earlier pitied.

Sample Question Teaching Writing

Introduction

Students in a seventh-grade class were asked to write a descriptive essay, for an audience of their peers, in response to an assignment about a favorite person. What follows is the final draft of one student's response to this assignment. Read the student's response carefully, paying particular attention to the features of writing listed below, and then complete the three tasks that follow the student's response.

Features of Writing

- Focus/Thesis
- Organization
- Content/Supporting ideas
- Sentence variety and complexity

Student Response

There are a lot of people that are important to me. My family, friends, and many more, but I know that my Aunt Pat is high on the list.

My Aunt Pat is someone I truly care about. Aunt Pat is always there for me. She makes me happy when I am sad. She also cheers me up when I am sad. Another reason I care for her is because we have the same interests. Pat likes to sew, scrapbook, and march in parades.

Pat is a great role model. She always tries to do the right thing. She is also very enthusiastic. Pat has many traits. She is reliable, cool, funny, and most of all she is creative. I love that she is a creative person. Currently she owns the costume shop in town. She also likes fall. She thinks it is pretty. Most people like winter because of Christmas, or summer because of the heat, but she has her own mind. She likes fall. I also love that she isn't afraid to be different.

In the end there are many reasons why I love her. She makes you feel like you are the most important person in the world and nobody can take that away from you.

Tasks

1. Identify one feature of the student's writing as a strength. Be sure to support your response with examples from the student's writing. Do NOT discuss facility in the conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation) in this part of your response.
2. Identify one feature of the student's writing as a weakness. Be sure to support your response with examples from the student's writing. Do NOT discuss the errors in the conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation) in this part of your response.
3. Describe one follow-up assignment you would give to this student that would build on the strength you described in Task 1 OR address the weakness that you identified in Task 2. Explain how the assignment would help the student.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

One strength of this student's descriptive essay is attention to the task of writing about a favorite person, which is established in a nicely stated (albeit structurally flawed) opening paragraph. "...my Aunt Pat is high on the list." All subsequent discussion is about Aunt Pat—who cheers, who shares interests, who is a "great role model," who is creative ("Currently she owns the costume shop in town."), who likes fall when winter and Christmas or summer are the more typical seasonal preferences.

However, the weakness in this essay is that this defined focus is not well elaborated with illustrative examples. Aunt Pat is a great role model, but how? "She always tries to do the right thing" but in what way or ways? When the student offers support—"...we have the same interests. Pat likes to sew, scrapbook, and march in parades"—the illustrative details are lacking. Sentences are simple, leaving the reader wishing for those supporting details.

The suggestion for revision, therefore, would be to build on the clear focus, which captures a genuine appreciation of this favorite person by extending the sentences to build interest. The student's respect and love of "Aunt Pat" is charming. The hints at her character (marching in parades, owning the costume shop, "she isn't afraid to be different") are intriguing. But, for example the simple, repetitive statements, "She makes me happy when I am sad. She also cheers me up when I am sad" do not reveal HOW "she is always there for me."

Illustrative examples literally "color in" the lines to make the portrait come alive.

The purpose of the essay is to "describe" a favorite person. The follow up assignment encourages the student to address this purpose. The essay is definitely about one favorite person, but the descriptive details are limited. Adding in one or two stories and a brief example for other points would enhance the fullness of why Aunt Pat is special.

To extend the example above: The student could consider, "When was one specific moment when Aunt Pat cheered you up?"

In doing this revision with a topic close to the student's heart, the student will gain a better understanding of the value of including descriptive details/supporting ideas when making a point, and, therefore, what is meant by "complex" sentences. The student will gain an understanding that complex sentences that

include illustrative detail are applicable in all writing, whether in a descriptive essay or when making a case in a persuasive essay or when addressing a topic in an expository essay.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

This is a successful response because it addresses all three tasks with strong evidence of understanding the features of writing and how to support a student in strengthening an essay.

The response to Task 1 correctly identifies one strength as the focus on a favorite person, as required by the student's assignment. Examples are provided of how the essay centers on descriptions of Aunt Pat's personality and interests. The response to Task 2, identifying one weakness of the essay, notes the limits of those descriptive details: ("... is not well elaborated with illustrative examples"). What follows is an analysis of specific points in the essay that make a statement without explanation or examples. Task 2 is thorough in this analysis.

The response to Task 3 then pointedly addresses what could be done to provide the needed elaboration. These suggestions for revision are very strong, including both what should be done and why these additions would improve the essay: ("Illustrative examples literally 'color in' the lines to make the portrait come alive"). One specific task—directly related to the weakness identified in Task 2—is suggested that would hone an appreciation of descriptive details and enhance an awareness of the concept of "complex sentences." The response shows a clear understanding of how actions by the teacher could support the student's skills and appreciation of writing.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

The student who wrote the essay has great focus and gives lots of details. She describes her Aunt Pat and how much she likes her. Then she goes on to provide details: her Aunt Pat “cheers her up” and is a “great role model.” The student also describes things that Aunt Pat likes to do: “sew, scrapbook, and march in parades” and says that she “owns the costume shop in town.” I would say that a strength of this essay is how the student keeps the focus on Aunt Pat while also giving so many details about what her Aunt is like and what she does. The content and supporting details are what make this essay so enjoyable to read.

The weakness, however, is that the essay isn’t very organized. The statements about Aunt Pat do not follow a logical pattern. The student should have made an outline before writing, each paragraph should have contained a separate supporting detail about her aunt. For example, the student could have had a whole paragraph about the costume shop and what kinds of costumes her aunt sold. It would have been very interesting to know whether she only sold Halloween costumes or whether she sold costumes for other parties. Also the writer could have had a whole paragraph about what kinds of parades her aunt marches in and why she likes parades.

For a follow-up assignment, I would ask the student to describe another favorite person and to give plenty of details about why that person is special. It wouldn’t have to be a family member, this time it could be a friend. It would be interesting to read about someone who is the students’ age and has the same interests as the student. Then the student could also talk about his or her own likes and dislikes. That would give readers a picture of the student; then we would know the student and her favorite people.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

The response above identifies both a strength and weakness of the student essay; however, they are only superficially described. For example, the response does identify a lack of organization as a weakness of the essay, but the analysis is not very strong. Adding entire paragraphs about the costume shop or about parades would not address the focus of the piece—why Aunt Pat is important to the student. While the response does provide a follow-up assignment, that assignment does not address the strength or weakness described in the response. Furthermore, the response also fails to explain why the assignment would be useful in building on a strength or improving a weakness. In summary, the response received a score of 2 not only because it provides a superficial analysis of a strength and a weakness, but also because it does not fully address the questions posed in the three tasks.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

This student really loves her Aunt Pat! She sounds like a fun person. As a scrapbooker, I know how much creative energy is needed. Aunt Pat is creative. The student says, "most of all she is creative" and she backs this up with the detail that the aunt owns a costume shop! And Aunt Pat loves fall, even when most people like winter "because of Christmas" and summer "because of the heat." These are good details of how Aunt Pat "isn't afraid of being different."

The essay makes a good case why Aunt Pat is a favorite person.

However, it is not perfect! I would have this student fix the fragments, like in the first paragraph. For example, "Some of those important people are my family, friends and many more, but I know that my Aunt Pat is high on the list." It is important to have the verb in that sentence to make it a sentence and not a fragment.

It is really important to write in complete sentences. This would be important to help the student become a better writer.

Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

Though one strength of the essay is noted ("The essay makes a good case why Aunt Pat is a favorite person"), the student's response is given too much credit for "good details" that are actually underdeveloped.

The attempt to respond to Task 2 addresses a grammatical weakness—fragmented sentences ("It is important to have a verb in that sentence ...")—even though the prompt specifies NOT to discuss errors in grammar or punctuation.

The response to Task 3 is weak because it addresses remediation of grammar ("write in complete sentences") and because the example cited ("Some of those ... high on the list") is incorrectly listed as a sentence fragment. Compounding the weak response is its lack of a recommended teacher-directed remedial activity or counseling. Enthusiasm for the student's response does not by itself provide a basis for helping the student strengthen this essay.

4. Determine Your Strategy for Success

Set clear goals and deadlines so your test preparation is focused and efficient

Effective *Praxis* test preparation doesn't just happen. You'll want to set clear goals and deadlines for yourself along the way. Otherwise, you may not feel ready and confident on test day. A helpful resource is the [Strategies for Success video](#), which includes tips for preparing and studying, along with tips for reducing test anxiety.

1) Learn what the test covers.

You may have heard that there are several different versions of the same test. It's true. You may take one version of the test and your friend may take a different version a few months later. Each test has different questions covering the same subject area, but both versions of the test measure the same skills and content knowledge.

You'll find specific information on the test you're taking in "1. Learn About Your Test" on page 5, which outlines the content categories that the test measures and what percentage of the test covers each topic. Visit www.ets.org/praxis/testprep for information on other *Praxis* tests.

2) Assess how well you know the content.

Research shows that test takers tend to overestimate their preparedness—this is why some test takers assume they did well and then find out they did not pass.

The *Praxis* tests are demanding enough to require serious review of likely content, and the longer you've been away from the content, the more preparation you will most likely need. If it has been longer than a few months since you've studied your content area, make a concerted effort to prepare.

3) Collect study materials.

Gathering and organizing your materials for review are critical steps in preparing for the *Praxis* tests. Consider the following reference sources as you plan your study:

- Did you take a course in which the content area was covered? If yes, do you still have your books or your notes?
- Does your local library have a high school-level textbook in this area? Does your college library have a good introductory college-level textbook in this area?

Practice materials are available for purchase for many *Praxis* tests at www.ets.org/praxis/testprep. Test preparation materials include sample questions and answers with explanations.

4) Plan and organize your time.

You can begin to plan and organize your time while you are still collecting materials. Allow yourself plenty of review time to avoid cramming new material at the end. Here are a few tips:

- Choose a test date far enough in the future to leave you plenty of preparation time. Test dates can be found at www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates.
- Work backward from that date to figure out how much time you will need for review.
- Set a realistic schedule—and stick to it.

5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

Praxis tests with constructed-response questions assess your ability to explain material effectively. As a teacher, you'll need to be able to explain concepts and processes to students in a clear, understandable way. What are the major concepts you will be required to teach? Can you explain them in your own words accurately, completely, and clearly? Practice explaining these concepts to test your ability to effectively explain what you know.

6) Understand how questions will be scored.

Scoring information can be found in "9. Understand Your Scores" on page 37.

7) Develop a study plan.

A study plan provides a road map to prepare for the *Praxis* tests. It can help you understand what skills and knowledge are covered on the test and where to focus your attention. Use the study plan template on page 30 to organize your efforts.

And most important—get started!

Would a Study Group Work for You?

Using this guide as part of a study group

People who have a lot of studying to do sometimes find it helpful to form a study group with others who are working toward the same goal. Study groups give members opportunities to ask questions and get detailed answers. In a group, some members usually have a better understanding of certain topics, while others in the group may be better at other topics. As members take turns explaining concepts to one another, everyone builds self-confidence.

If the group encounters a question that none of the members can answer well, the group can go to a teacher or other expert and get answers efficiently. Because study groups schedule regular meetings, members study in a more disciplined fashion. They also gain emotional support. The group should be large enough so that multiple people can contribute different kinds of knowledge, but small enough so that it stays focused. Often, three to six members is a good size.

Here are some ways to use this guide as part of a study group:

- **Plan the group's study program.** Parts of the study plan template, beginning on page 30, can help to structure your group's study program. By filling out the first five columns and sharing the worksheets, everyone will learn more about your group's mix of abilities and about the resources, such as textbooks, that members can share with the group. In the sixth column ("Dates I will study the content"), you can create an overall schedule for your group's study program.
- **Plan individual group sessions.** At the end of each session, the group should decide what specific topics will be covered at the next meeting and who will present each topic. Use the topic headings and subheadings in the Test at a Glance table on page 5 to select topics, and then select practice questions, beginning on page 12.
- **Prepare your presentation for the group.** When it's your turn to present, prepare something that is more than a lecture. Write two or three original questions to pose to the group. Practicing writing actual questions can help you better understand the topics covered on the test as well as the types of questions you will encounter on the test. It will also give other members of the group extra practice at answering questions.

- **Take a practice test together.** The idea of a practice test is to simulate an actual administration of the test, so scheduling a test session with the group will add to the realism and may also help boost everyone's confidence. Remember, complete the practice test using only the time that will be allotted for that test on your administration day.
- **Learn from the results of the practice test.** Review the results of the practice test, including the number of questions answered correctly in each content category. For tests that contain constructed-response questions, look at the Sample Test Questions section, which also contain sample responses to those questions and shows how they were scored. Then try to follow the same guidelines that the test scorers use.
- **Be as critical as you can.** You're not doing your study partner(s) any favors by letting them get away with an answer that does not cover all parts of the question adequately.
- **Be specific.** Write comments that are as detailed as the comments about the sample responses. Indicate where and how your study partner(s) are doing an inadequate job of answering the question. Writing notes in the margins of the answer sheet may also help.
- **Be supportive.** Include comments that point out what your study partner(s) got right.

Then plan one or more study sessions based on aspects of the questions on which group members performed poorly. For example, each group member might be responsible for rewriting one paragraph of a response in which someone else did an inadequate job.

Whether you decide to study alone or with a group, remember that the best way to prepare is to have an organized plan. The plan should set goals based on specific topics and skills that you need to learn, and it should commit you to a realistic set of deadlines for meeting those goals. Then you need to discipline yourself to stick with your plan and accomplish your goals on schedule.

5. Develop Your Study Plan

Develop a personalized study plan and schedule

Planning your study time is important because it will help ensure that you review all content areas covered on the test. Use the sample study plan below as a guide. It shows a plan for the *Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading* test. Following that is a study plan template that you can fill out to create your own plan. Use the “Learn about Your Test” and “Topics Covered” information beginning on page 5 to help complete it.

Use this worksheet to:

1. **Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in the Topics Covered section.
2. **Determine Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each content area.
3. **Identify Resources:** Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use for each content area.
4. **Study:** Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

Praxis Test Name: Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading
Praxis Test Code(s): 5712
Test Date: 9/15/14

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Core Academic Skills for Educators:						
Main Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of main idea or primary purpose of reading selection	3	Middle school English text book	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/14	7/15/14
Supporting Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of supporting ideas and specific details in reading selection	3	Middle school English text book	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/14	7/17/14
Organization	Identify how reading selection is organized in terms of cause/ effect and compare/ contrast	3	Middle and high school English text book	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/14	7/21/14
Organization	Identify key transition words/phrases in reading selection and how used	4	Middle and high school English text book	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/14	7/26/14
Vocabulary in Context	Identify meanings of words as used in context of reading selection	3	Middle and high school English text book, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/14	7/27/14

(continued on next page)

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Craft, Structure, and Language Skills						
Evaluation	Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to arguments in reading selection	5	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Determine role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in author's discussion/argument	5	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Determine if information presented is fact or opinion	4	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Identify relationship among ideas presented in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas						
Inferential Reasoning	Determine logical assumptions on which argument or conclusion is based	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/8/14	8/8/14
Inferential Reasoning	Determine author's attitude toward materials discussed in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/15/14	8/17/14
Generalization	Recognize or predict ideas/situations that are extensions of, or similar to, what has been presented in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/22/14	8/24/14
Generalization	Draw conclusions from materials presented in reading selection	4	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/24/14	8/24/14
Generalization	Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations	3	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/27/14	8/27/14

My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

- 1. **Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in the Learn about Your Test and Topics Covered sections.
- 2. **Determine Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each content area.
- 3. **Identify Resources:** Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use for each content area.
- 4. **Study:** Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

Praxis Test Name: _____

Praxis Test Code: _____

Test Date: _____

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for this content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study this content	Date completed

(continued on next page)

[illegible]

6. Review Smart Tips for Success

Follow test-taking tips developed by experts

Learn from the experts. Take advantage of the following answers to questions you may have and practical tips to help you navigate the *Praxis* test and make the best use of your time.

Should I Guess?

Yes. Your score is based on the number of questions you answer correctly, with no penalty or subtraction for an incorrect answer. When you don't know the answer to a question, try to eliminate any obviously wrong answers and then guess at the correct one. Try to pace yourself so that you have enough time to carefully consider every question.

Can I answer the questions in any order?

You can answer the questions in order or skip questions and come back to them later. If you skip a question, you can also mark it so that you can remember to return and answer it later. Remember that questions left unanswered are treated the same as questions answered incorrectly, so it is to your advantage to answer every question.

Are there trick questions on the test?

No. There are no hidden meanings or trick questions. All of the questions on the test ask about subject matter knowledge in a straightforward manner.

Are there answer patterns on the test?

No. You might have heard this myth: the answers on tests follow patterns. Another myth is that there will never be more than two questions in a row with the correct answer in the same position among the choices. Neither myth is true. Select the answer you think is correct based on your knowledge of the subject.

Can I write on the scratch paper I am given?

Yes. You can work out problems on the scratch paper, make notes to yourself, or write anything at all. Your scratch paper will be destroyed after you are finished with it, so use it in any way that is helpful to you. But make sure to select or enter your answers on the computer.

Smart Tips for Taking the Test

1. **Skip the questions you find extremely difficult.** Rather than trying to answer these on your first pass through the test, you may want to leave them blank and mark them so that you can return to them later. Pay attention to the time as you answer the rest of the questions on the test, and try to finish with 10 or 15 minutes remaining so that you can go back over the questions you left blank. Even if you don't know the answer the second time you read the questions, see if you can narrow down the possible answers, and then guess. Your score is based on the number of right answers, so it is to your advantage to answer every question.

2. **Keep track of the time.** The on-screen clock will tell you how much time you have left. You will probably have plenty of time to answer all of the questions, but if you find yourself becoming bogged down, you might decide to move on and come back to any unanswered questions later.
3. **Read all of the possible answers before selecting one.** For questions that require you to select more than one answer, or to make another kind of selection, consider the most likely answers given what the question is asking. Then reread the question to be sure the answer(s) you have given really answer the question. Remember, a question that contains a phrase such as “Which of the following does NOT ...” is asking for the one answer that is NOT a correct statement or conclusion.
4. **Check your answers.** If you have extra time left over at the end of the test, look over each question and make sure that you have answered it as you intended. Many test takers make careless mistakes that they could have corrected if they had checked their answers.
5. **Don’t worry about your score when you are taking the test.** No one is expected to answer all of the questions correctly. Your score on this test is not analogous to your score on the *GRE*® or other tests. It doesn’t matter on the *Praxis* tests whether you score very high or barely pass. If you meet the minimum passing scores for your state and you meet the state’s other requirements for obtaining a teaching license, you will receive a license. In other words, what matters is meeting the minimum passing score. You can find passing scores for all states that use *The Praxis Series* tests at http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/passing_scores.pdf or on the Web site of the state for which you are seeking certification/licensure.
6. **Use your energy to take the test, not to get frustrated by it.** Getting frustrated only increases stress and decreases the likelihood that you will do your best. Highly qualified educators and test development professionals, all with backgrounds in teaching, worked diligently to make the test a fair and valid measure of your knowledge and skills. Your state painstakingly reviewed the test before adopting it as a licensure requirement. The best thing to do is concentrate on answering the questions.

7. Check on Testing Accommodations

See if you qualify for accommodations that may make it easier to take the Praxis test

What if English is not my primary language?

Praxis tests are given only in English. If your primary language is not English (PLNE), you may be eligible for extended testing time. For more details, visit www.ets.org/praxis/register/accommodations/plne.

What if I have a disability or other health-related need?

The following accommodations are available for *Praxis* test takers who meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act disability requirements:

- Extended testing time
- Additional rest breaks
- Separate testing room
- Writer/recorder of answers
- Test reader
- Sign language interpreter for spoken directions only
- Perkins Braille
- Braille slate and stylus
- Printed copy of spoken directions
- Oral interpreter
- Audio test
- Braille test
- Large print test book
- Large print answer sheet
- Listening section omitted

For more information on these accommodations, visit www.ets.org/praxis/register/disabilities.

Note: Test takers who have health-related needs requiring them to bring equipment, beverages, or snacks into the testing room or to take extra or extended breaks must request these accommodations by following the procedures described in the *Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities or Health-Related Needs* (PDF), which can be found at http://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/bulletin_supplement_test_takers_with_disabilities_health_needs.pdf.

You can find additional information on available resources for test takers with disabilities or health-related needs at www.ets.org/disabilities.

8. Do Your Best on Test Day

Get ready for test day so you will be calm and confident

You followed your study plan. You prepared for the test. Now it's time to prepare for test day.

Plan to end your review a day or two before the actual test date so you avoid cramming. Take a dry run to the test center so you're sure of the route, traffic conditions, and parking. Most of all, you want to eliminate any unexpected factors that could distract you from your ultimate goal—passing the *Praxis* test!

On the day of the test, you should:

- be well rested
- wear comfortable clothes and dress in layers
- eat before you take the test
- bring an acceptable and valid photo identification with you
- bring a pen or pencil to use on the scratch paper you are given
- bring an approved calculator only if one is specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/policies/calculators)
- be prepared to stand in line to check in or to wait while other test takers check in

You can't control the testing situation, but you can control yourself. Stay calm. The supervisors are well trained and make every effort to provide uniform testing conditions, but don't let it bother you if the test doesn't start exactly on time. You will have the allotted amount of time once it does start.

You can think of preparing for this test as training for an athletic event. Once you've trained, prepared, and rested, give it everything you've got.

What items am I restricted from bringing into the test center?

You cannot bring into the test center personal items such as:

- handbags, knapsacks, or briefcases
- water bottles or canned or bottled beverages
- study materials, books, or notes
- pens, pencils, scrap paper, or calculators, unless specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/policies/calculators)
- any electronic, photographic, recording, or listening devices

Personal items are not allowed in the testing room and will not be available to you during the test or during breaks. You may also be asked to empty your pockets. At some centers, you will be assigned a space to store your belongings, such as handbags and study materials. Some centers do not have secure storage space available, so please plan accordingly.

Test centers assume no responsibility for your personal items.

If you have health-related needs requiring you to bring equipment, beverages or snacks into the testing room or to take extra or extended breaks, you need to request accommodations in advance. Procedures for requesting accommodations are described in the [Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities or Health-related Needs \(PDF\)](#).

Note: All cell phones, smart phones (e.g., Android® devices, iPhones®, etc.), and other electronic, photographic, recording, or listening devices are strictly prohibited from the test center. If you are seen with such a device, you will be dismissed from the test, your test scores will be canceled, and you will forfeit your test fees. If you are seen *using* such a device, the device will be confiscated and inspected. For more information on what you can bring to the test center, visit www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/bring.

Are You Ready?

Complete this checklist to determine whether you are ready to take your test.

- ☐ Do you know the testing requirements for the license or certification you are seeking in the state(s) where you plan to teach?
- ☐ Have you followed all of the test registration procedures?
- ☐ Do you know the topics that will be covered in each test you plan to take?
- ☐ Have you reviewed any textbooks, class notes, and course readings that relate to the topics covered?
- ☐ Do you know how long the test will take and the number of questions it contains?
- ☐ Have you considered how you will pace your work?
- ☐ Are you familiar with the types of questions for your test?
- ☐ Are you familiar with the recommended test-taking strategies?
- ☐ Have you practiced by working through the practice questions in this study companion or in a study guide or practice test?
- ☐ If constructed-response questions are part of your test, do you understand the scoring criteria for these questions?
- ☐ If you are repeating a *Praxis* test, have you analyzed your previous score report to determine areas where additional study and test preparation could be useful?

If you answered “yes” to the questions above, your preparation has paid off. Now take the *Praxis* test, do your best, pass it—and begin your teaching career!

9. Understand Your Scores

Understand how tests are scored and how to interpret your test scores

Of course, passing the *Praxis* test is important to you so you need to understand what your scores mean and what your state requirements are.

What are the score requirements for my state?

States, institutions, and associations that require the tests set their own passing scores. Visit www.ets.org/praxis/states for the most up-to-date information.

If I move to another state, will my new state accept my scores?

The *Praxis Series* tests are part of a national testing program, meaning that they are required in many states for licensure. The advantage of a national program is that if you move to another state that also requires *Praxis* tests, you can transfer your scores. Each state has specific test requirements and passing scores, which you can find at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

How do I know whether I passed the test?

Your score report will include information on passing scores for the states you identified as recipients of your test results. If you test in a state with automatic score reporting, you will also receive passing score information for that state.

A list of states and their passing scores for each test are available online at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

What your *Praxis* scores mean

You received your score report. Now what does it mean? It's important to interpret your score report correctly and to know what to do if you have questions about your scores.

Visit http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/sample_score_report.pdf to see a sample score report.

To access *Understanding Your Praxis Scores*, a document that provides additional information on how to read your score report, visit www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand.

Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

- Your score and whether you passed
- The range of possible scores
- The raw points available in each content category
- The range of the middle 50 percent of scores on the test

If you have taken the same test or other tests in *The Praxis Series* over the last 10 years, your score report also lists the highest score you earned on each test taken.

Content category scores and score interpretation

Questions on the *Praxis* tests are categorized by content. To help you in future study or in preparing to retake the test, your score report shows how many raw points you earned in each content category. Compare your “raw points earned” with the maximum points you could have earned (“raw points available”). The greater the difference, the greater the opportunity to improve your score by further study.

Score scale changes

ETS updates *Praxis* tests on a regular basis to ensure they accurately measure the knowledge and skills that are required for licensure. When tests are updated, the meaning of the score scale may change, so requirements may vary between the new and previous versions. All scores for previous, discontinued tests are valid and reportable for 10 years, provided that your state or licensing agency still accepts them.

These resources may also help you interpret your scores:

- *Understanding Your Praxis Scores* (PDF), found at www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand
- *The Praxis Series Passing Scores* (PDF), found at www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand
- State requirements, found at www.ets.org/praxis/states

Appendix: Other Questions You May Have

Here is some supplemental information that can give you a better understanding of the *Praxis* tests.

What do the *Praxis* tests measure?

The *Praxis* tests measure the specific knowledge and skills that beginning teachers need. The tests do not measure an individual's disposition toward teaching or potential for success, nor do they measure your actual teaching ability. The assessments are designed to be comprehensive and inclusive but are limited to what can be covered in a finite number of questions and question types. Teaching requires many complex skills that are typically measured in other ways, including classroom observation, video recordings, and portfolios.

Ranging from Agriculture to World Languages, there are more than 80 *Praxis* tests, which contain selected-response questions or constructed-response questions, or a combination of both.

Who takes the tests and why?

Some colleges and universities use the *Praxis* Core Academic Skills for Educators tests (Reading, Writing, and Mathematics) to evaluate individuals for entry into teacher education programs. The assessments are generally taken early in your college career. Many states also require Core Academic Skills test scores as part of their teacher licensing process.

Individuals entering the teaching profession take the *Praxis* content and pedagogy tests as part of the teacher licensing and certification process required by many states. In addition, some professional associations and organizations require *Praxis II* tests for professional licensing.

Do all states require these tests?

The *Praxis Series* tests are currently required for teacher licensure in approximately 40 states and United States territories. These tests are also used by several professional licensing agencies and by several hundred colleges and universities. Teacher candidates can test in one state and submit their scores in any other state that requires *Praxis* testing for licensure. You can find details at www.ets.org/praxis/states.

What is licensure/certification?

Licensure in any area—medicine, law, architecture, accounting, cosmetology—is an assurance to the public that the person holding the license possesses sufficient knowledge and skills to perform important occupational activities safely and effectively. In the case of teacher licensing, a license tells the public that the individual has met predefined competency standards for beginning teaching practice.

Because a license makes such a serious claim about its holder, licensure tests are usually quite demanding. In some fields, licensure tests have more than one part and last for more than one day. Candidates for licensure in all fields plan intensive study as part of their professional preparation. Some join study groups, others study alone. But preparing to take a licensure test is, in all cases, a professional activity. Because a licensure exam surveys a broad body of knowledge, preparing for a licensure exam takes planning, discipline, and sustained effort.

Why does my state require *The Praxis Series* tests?

Your state chose *The Praxis Series* tests because they assess the breadth and depth of content—called the “domain”—that your state wants its teachers to possess before they begin to teach. The level of content knowledge, reflected in the passing score, is based on recommendations of panels of teachers and teacher

educators in each subject area. The state licensing agency and, in some states, the state legislature ratify the passing scores that have been recommended by panels of teachers.

How were the tests developed?

ETS consulted with practicing teachers and teacher educators around the country during every step of *The Praxis Series* test development process. First, ETS asked them which knowledge and skills a beginning teacher needs to be effective. Their responses were then ranked in order of importance and reviewed by hundreds of teachers.

After the results were analyzed and consensus was reached, guidelines, or specifications, for the selected-response and constructed-response tests were developed by teachers and teacher educators. Following these guidelines, teachers and professional test developers created test questions that met content requirements and ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness.*

When your state adopted the research-based *Praxis* tests, local panels of teachers and teacher educators evaluated each question for its relevance to beginning teachers in your state. During this “validity study,” the panel also provided a passing-score recommendation based on how many of the test questions a beginning teacher in your state would be able to answer correctly. Your state’s licensing agency determined the final passing-score requirement.

ETS follows well-established industry procedures and standards designed to ensure that the tests measure what they are intended to measure. When you pass the *Praxis* tests your state requires, you are proving that you have the knowledge and skills you need to begin your teaching career.

How are the tests updated to ensure the content remains current?

Praxis tests are reviewed regularly. During the first phase of review, ETS conducts an analysis of relevant state and association standards and of the current test content. State licensure titles and the results of relevant job analyses are also considered. Revised test questions are then produced following the standard test development methodology. National advisory committees may also be convened to review and revise existing test specifications and to evaluate test forms for alignment with the specifications.

How long will it take to receive my scores?

Scores for tests that do not include constructed response questions are available on screen immediately after the test. Scores for tests that contain constructed-response questions or essays aren’t available immediately after the test because of the scoring process involved. Official score reports are available to you and your designated score recipients approximately two to three weeks after the test date for tests delivered continuously, or two to three weeks after the testing window closes for other tests. See the test dates and deadlines calendar at www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates for exact score reporting dates.

Can I access my scores on the Web?

All test takers can access their test scores via My *Praxis* Account free of charge for one year from the posting date. This online access replaces the mailing of a paper score report.

The process is easy—simply log into My *Praxis* Account at www.ets.org/praxis and click on your score report. If you do not already have a *Praxis* account, you must create one to view your scores.

Note: You must create a *Praxis* account to access your scores, even if you registered by mail or phone.

*ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness (2003, Princeton, NJ) are consistent with the “Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing,” industry standards issued jointly by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (1999, Washington, DC).

Your teaching career is worth preparing for, so start today!
Let the *Praxis® Study Companion* guide you.



To search for the *Praxis* test prep resources
that meet your specific needs, visit:

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