ETS® PRAXIS®

Measuring the Power of Learning.®

The *Praxis*® Study Companion

Professional School Counselor

5421

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® 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 41).

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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The Praxis® Study Companion guides you through the steps to success

1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

Professional School Counselor (5421)

Test at a Glance	
Test Name	Professional School Counselor
Test Code	5421
Time	2 hours
Number of Questions	120
Format	Selected-response questions
Test Delivery	Computer delivered

	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Foundations	22	18%
	II. Delivery of Services	54	45%
	III. Management	18	15%
	IV. Accountability	26	22%

About This Test

The Professional School Counselor test measures whether entry-level school counselors have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice. The test is designed to follow the American School Counselor Association's ASCA National Model®. There are four major components of the test that mirror ASCA's model. The Foundations component focuses on the history and role of the professional counselor, knowledge about human development, and ethical and legal principles. The Delivery of Services component focuses on individual, group, classroom-guidance and schoolwide interventions, as well as, consultation and collaboration. The Management component focuses on appropriate methods for developing and maintaining a comprehensive guidance program. Finally, the Accountability component focuses on program evaluation, research, and assessment.

Test questions call on the individual's knowledge of research-based counseling practices as well as the ability to apply knowledge and principles to situations that occur in the schools. The test taker will be asked to analyze and respond to situations involving individual students, classroom situations, and school and community events at grade levels kindergarten through twelfth grade.

All questions are selected-response questions. This test may contain questions that will not count toward your score.

NOTE: The fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) was published in May 2013 with revisions to the criteria for the diagnosis and classifications of mental disorders. In the interest of fairness, and to allow time for educator preparation programs to integrate such changes into their curricula, Praxis test materials will continue to reference the terminology, criteria, and classifications referred to in the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) until further notice.

Test Specifications

Test specifications in this chapter describe the knowledge and skills measured by the test. Study topics to help you prepare to answer test questions can be found on page 16.

I. Foundations

A. History and Role of the Professional School Counselor

1. Knows how to use current research to advocate for the profession
   a. knows how to access research resources
   b. is able to interpret research
   c. is able to use research to demonstrate professional impact on student learning

2. Knows the benefits of membership in professional organizations for school and guidance counselors (e.g., resources, networking, insurance)
   a. recognizes that there are different levels of professional organizations (e.g., national, state, local)
   b. describes the benefits of these organizations (advocacy, professional development, lobbying efforts, liability insurance, networking, accessibility to resources and current research, leadership development)

3. Is familiar with the development of school guidance and counseling as a profession
   a. names the major benchmarks in the development of the profession
   b. describes how trends in educational systems impact the role of professional school counselor (e.g., response to intervention, positive behavior support, professional learning communities)

4. Understands the current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs
   a. identifies the components of the ASCA National Model

   recognizes the importance of alignment between a school counseling program and the ASCA National Model

5. Understands the current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Standards for academic, career, and personal/social development of students
   a. describes the domains of the ASCA Standards
   b. utilizes the student competencies of the ASCA standards when planning counseling services

6. Understands the roles of counselor, leader, advocate, collaborator, consultant, and coordinator as they apply to school guidance-counseling-related duties
   a. identifies the tasks related to the various roles of the professional school counselor

7. Knows similarities and differences in the school guidance counselor's responsibilities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels
   a. identifies and differentiates the responsibilities of the professional school counselor at the various grade levels

8. Understands the difference between counselor responsibilities and non-counselor tasks (e.g., disciplining, substitute teaching, and managing school functions)
   a. identifies and differentiates between counselor and non-counselor responsibilities

B. Human Growth and Development

1. Knows major theories regarding physical development throughout the human life span
   a. describes the stages of physical development from early childhood through older adulthood

2. Knows how to use current research to promote holistic student development
   a. applies current research (e.g., nutrition, socioeconomic status, family system) to promote holistic student development

3. Knows major theories regarding cognitive development throughout the human life span
   a. describes and applies the components of major theories (e.g., Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky) to student development and behavior

4. Knows major theories regarding personality and emotional development throughout the human life span

   a. describes and applies the components of major theories (e.g., Erik Erikson, B.F. Skinner, Carl Rogers) to student development and behavior

5. Knows major theories regarding social and character development throughout the human life span

   a. describes and applies the components of major theories (e.g., Alfred Adler, Lawrence Kohlberg, Erich Fromm) to student development and behavior

6. Is familiar with major theories regarding family systems

   a. recognizes the components of major theories (e.g., family systems theory, ecological theory) and how they relate to student development and behavior

C. Ethics

1. Knows current ethical guidelines of technology use for professionals and students

   a. applies current ethical guidelines to computerized/online testing or evaluation and virtual schooling

   b. recognizes scope of responsibility in social networking and electronic communication (e.g., online bullying, dual relationships, e-mail, texting) between the professional school counselor and stakeholders

   c. recognizes the importance of protecting privacy and confidentiality when using electronic communications and student information systems/databases

2. Understands the need for self-awareness of personal biases and limitations that may affect the counseling relationship

   a. recognizes implications of counselor biases that affect the counseling relationship (eg, religious, cultural, sexual orientation)

   b. recognizes personal limitations and duty to refer

Possesses a working knowledge of the current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Ethical Standards for School Counselors

   c. applies the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (e.g., parents' rights and responsibilities, dual relationships, parent/guardians and confidentiality) to daily practice

3. Is familiar with the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics

   a. recognizes the sections of the ACA Code of Ethics that relate to the professional school counselor

4. Understands the need for ongoing professional development designed for school guidance counselors

   a. recognizes the current delivery modes (e.g., professional conferences, webinars) for professional development

   b. recognizes professional development activities designed for professional school counselors that are role-appropriate and licensure-specific

5. Knows and utilizes ways to remain mentally healthy, stay motivated, and avoid burnout

   a. identifies symptoms of stress

   b. identifies healthy coping strategies

   c. identifies the consequences of neglecting mental health maintenance and motivation

D. Legal Issues

1. Knows how changes in major public policy and laws affect student rights and school guidance counselor responsibilities

   a. applies current local, state, and federal laws as they affect professional school counselor activities

Understands the role of the school guidance counselor in relation to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, PL 101-336, 1990) in advocating for the legal rights of students with disabilities

   b. describes a Section 504 plan as it might impact the professional school counselor

   c. recognizes a student's need for and the potential benefits of a Section 504 plan

Understands the role of the school guidance counselor in relation to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, PL 108-446, 2004) in advocating for students' legal rights

   d. defines an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and how it might impact the professional school counselor

   e. recognizes a student's need for and the potential benefits of an IEP

Understands the Buckley Amendment and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA, PL 93-380) and its impact on student and parent rights

 f. applies FERPA requirements to professional school counselors' responsibilities

 g. identifies appropriate information to include in student records (e.g., cumulative folder, student information system)

2. Is familiar with the appropriate constitutional rights as they apply to educational settings for students and parents (e.g., freedom of speech, citizenship)

 a. recognizes students' rights and limits to their rights (e.g., freedom of speech, right to privacy, equal protection) as they relate to the educational setting

3. Knows the relevance of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (PL 92-318) to education and school activities

 a. describes Title IX as it relates to student rights

4. Is familiar with Title II of the Education Amendments of 1976 (PL 105-332) and its relevance to equal opportunities in career counseling

 a. recognizes the impact of Title II on equal opportunities in career counseling

5. Understands the detection and mandated reporting requirements of child abuse and neglect

 a. identifies various types of abuse (e.g., sexual, physical, emotional)

 b. recognizes the signs of suspected child abuse and neglect

 c. describes situations in which reporting to appropriate social service agencies and/or law enforcement is mandated

6. Understands the concept of duty to warn and the difference between privileged communication and confidentiality

 a. describes situations in which a professional school counselor has a duty to warn (e.g., threatened harm to self or others)

 b. recognizes privileged communication always belongs to the student or client

 c. recognizes confidentiality has limits and may or may not be a legal issue

II. Delivery of Service

A. Guidance and Counseling

1. Is familiar with basic methods of analyzing student behavior

 a. identifies procedures used to collect data to assess student behavior (e.g., behavior checklists, anecdotal reports)

2. Knows how to appropriately use a variety of technological resources to deliver school guidance and counseling services

 a. recognizes the importance of technology in the delivery of services in a comprehensive school counseling program

 b. identifies benefits of technological resources (e.g., career interest inventories, college, and scholarship search services)

3. Understands the purposes and theories of individual counseling and applies them appropriately

 a. describes basic counseling theories (e.g., Brief solution-focused, Behavioral, Cognitive)

 b. applies counseling theories to case scenarios

4. Understands the purposes and theories of group counseling and applies them appropriately

 a. describes basic group counseling theories (e.g., reality, cognitive-behavioral)

 b. describes group counseling processes and procedures (e.g., stages, group types, selection, facilitation)

 c. recognizes ethical issues as related to group counseling (e.g. confidentiality, biases)

 d. applies group counseling theories to case scenarios

5. Knows the purpose and can apply techniques of educational planning (e.g., grade-level transition, academic-intervention plans)

 a. applies age-appropriate strategies for educational planning (e.g., course selection, transitioning, kindergarten readiness)

 b. applies appropriate counseling skills to develop academic intervention plans

6. Understands the purposes and theories and can apply processes of career development and planning for students at each age level

 a. describes basic career development theories (e.g., trait factor, developmental, psychological)

b. applies career development theories to case scenarios

c. recognizes how to assist students making post-secondary and career plans at every stage of development

7. Is familiar with the purposes and theories and can apply techniques of large-group guidance (e.g., grade-level student meetings, group academic advising, school wide assemblies)

   a. describes how to facilitate grade-level student meetings

   b. describes the process of group academic advising

   c. describes how to conduct school-wide assemblies

8. Understands the purpose and instructional theories and can apply techniques of classroom guidance and strategies of classroom management

   a. recognizes the need for and benefits of classroom guidance

   b. applies instructional and behavior management strategies to classroom situations

9. Understands the purposes and theories and can apply techniques of crisis intervention (e.g., school-level crises, individual crises)

   a. recognizes the importance of having procedures for multi-level school crises (school violence, natural disaster)

   b. recognizes the importance of having procedures for individual crises

10. Knows the purpose and can apply techniques of peer mediation and conflict resolution

    a. describes the purpose and applies techniques of peer mediation

    b. applies strategies of conflict resolution to case scenarios (e.g., relational aggression, in-school fighting, teacher-student conflicts)

11. Understands methods for preventing and addressing common student concerns (e.g., stress, drug use, bullying)

    a. applies research and strategies to prevent or intervene in common student/teacher issues (e.g., alcohol/drug use, stress, bullying)

12. Understands and can respond to the needs of students with various levels of ability (e.g., physical, emotional, cognitive)

a. identifies the needs of students at various ability levels (e.g., physical, emotional, cognitive)

b. describes and apply strategies to respond to various needs

13. Knows and responds to the needs of students from various backgrounds (e.g., socioeconomic, cultural, linguistic)

    a. describes the potential impact of socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic differences on academic and social outcomes

    b. applies interventions to meet the needs of a variety of students

14. Knows the needs of and responds to students with diverse issues (e.g., sexual orientation, family situations, alcoholism/drug use)

    a. describes the potential impact of diversity issues (sexual orientation, family situations, drug and alcohol abuse effects) on academic and social outcomes

    b. applies interventions to meet the needs of a variety of students

B. Consultation and Collaboration

Knows the role of the school guidance counselor in the support of the development and implementation of student service plans (e.g., Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, Section 504 plans)

   a. Describes the role of the professional school counselor in the development, implementation, and support of student service plans (e.g., Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, Section 504 plans)

1. Understands the basic characteristics of consultation

2. Is familiar with the purposes, theories, and techniques of consultation models as they apply to school guidance and counseling

   a. identifies the purpose and basic characteristics of consultation

   b. recognizes the major methods of consultation as used in common school situations (e.g., parent conferences, teacher consultations)

3. Is familiar with the differing needs of teachers, other professionals, administrators, parents, and community contacts for consultation and collaboration

   a. recognizes the appropriate professional needs of stakeholders (e.g., classroom management, student support, programming)

4. Understands the characteristics of effective collaborative relationships

   a. describes the characteristics of effective collaborative relationships (e.g., the Four Is of collaborative relationships)

   b. applies the appropriate techniques of effective collaborative relationships (e.g. solution-focused, leaderless collaboration)

5. Is familiar with common pedagogical techniques used in the classroom to provide consultation services as they apply to academic support

   a. identifies common pedagogical techniques used in the classroom to consult with teachers (e.g., lesson planning, behavior management, differentiated instruction)

6. Knows interventions and accommodations available to students with various needs

   a. describes interventions and accommodations (preferential seating, extended time) available to students

   b. recognizes the needs of and support available to students with varying mental and physical disorders (e.g., eating disorders, hearing impaired, learning disorders)

III.   Management

1. Is familiar with how to use technology to manage and evaluate school guidance and counseling programs

   a. identifies ways to use technology to manage and evaluate school counseling programs (e.g., spreadsheets, student information systems, electronic surveys)

2. Knows the school guidance and counseling program as an integral part of the total educational process

   a. describes how the school counseling program is an integral part of the total educational process (e.g., leadership roles, curriculum, committees)

3. Understands how to design, develop, and implement a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program

   a. describes how to use data to design and implement school counseling services

4. Is familiar with the design, staffing, and maintenance of programs for support of students at risk

   a. recognizes the design, staffing, and maintenance of services for at risk students (e.g., mentoring, parent education, community resources)

5. Knows how to manage various types of referrals

   a. differentiates between internal and external referrals (e.g., school nurse, social service agencies, pro bono services)

   b. recognizes the importance of developing procedures for management of various types of referrals

IV.   Accountability

1. Knows the need for accountability in a school guidance and counseling program

   a. defines accountability as it relates to a school counseling program

   b. describes how to use counseling program data and research to advocate for school counseling programs

2. Knows the goals and methods of evaluating achievement, program effectiveness, and student outcomes

   a. describes various methods of measuring accountability and effectiveness of the school counseling program (e.g., assessment results, surveys, research)

   b. describes various methods of measuring student outcomes (e.g., graduation rates, attendance records, disciplinary records)

3. Knows how to apply data analysis results for program improvement (e.g., needs assessment, program evaluation)

   a. analyzes data and determine program improvements as necessary

4. Knows methods of gathering background data to assist in selecting appropriate assessments (e.g., interviewing, records review)

   a. identifies methods of gathering background data (e.g., records review, observation, student work samples) to assist in selecting appropriate assessments

5. Is familiar with the various types of assessments (criterion-referenced, aptitude, achievement)

   a. describes the differences among the various types of assessments (e.g., criterion-referenced, aptitude, achievement)

6. Understands the appropriate use and limitations of standardized testing

   a. describes the appropriate use and limitations of standardized testing

7. Knows basic principles and interpretation of measurement (e.g., trends, stanine, percentile rank)

   a. defines basic principles of interpreting measurement (e.g., trends, stanine, percentile rank)

8. Knows the concepts of validity and reliability as applied to assessment

   a. defines and differentiates the concepts of validity and reliability as they apply to assessment

9. Understands requirements for administration and interpretation of individual and group assessments

   a. describes the requirements for administration of individual and group standardized assessments

   b. describes the requirements for interpretation of individual and group standardized assessments

10. Knows how to interpret and appropriately use the results of personality, emotional, social, and behavioral assessments

    a. describes how to interpret and appropriately use the results of personality, emotional, social, and behavioral assessments

11. Knows how to interpret and appropriately use the results of intelligence assessments

    a. describes how to interpret and appropriately use the results of intelligence assessments

12. Knows how to interpret and appropriately use the results of achievement tests and measures of learning (e.g., standardized assessment, portfolio, formative/summative)

    a. defines and differentiates among achievement tests and measures of learning (e.g., standardized assessment, portfolios, formative/summative assessments)

    b. describes how to interpret and appropriately use the results of achievement tests and measures of learning

13. Knows the characteristics of and how to appropriately administer and interpret career assessments (e.g., interest inventories, aptitude/skills tests)

    a. defines and differentiates among career assessments (e.g., interest inventories, aptitude/skills tests, work values)

    b. describes how to administer, interpret, and appropriately use the results of career assessments

14. Knows how cultural, linguistic, and disability issues relate to student test performance, test accommodations, and test interpretation

    a. recognizes student differences (e.g., cultural, linguistic, and disability issues) and their effects on student test performance and results

    b. recognizes student differences when interpreting test results

    c. identifies appropriate accommodations to address student differences

2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

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

The *Praxis* 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 answer choices.

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

- **Clicking more than one oval** to select answers from a list of choices.
- **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 choices and drag your answers to the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting answer choices from a drop-down menu.** You may be asked to choose answers by selecting choices 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.
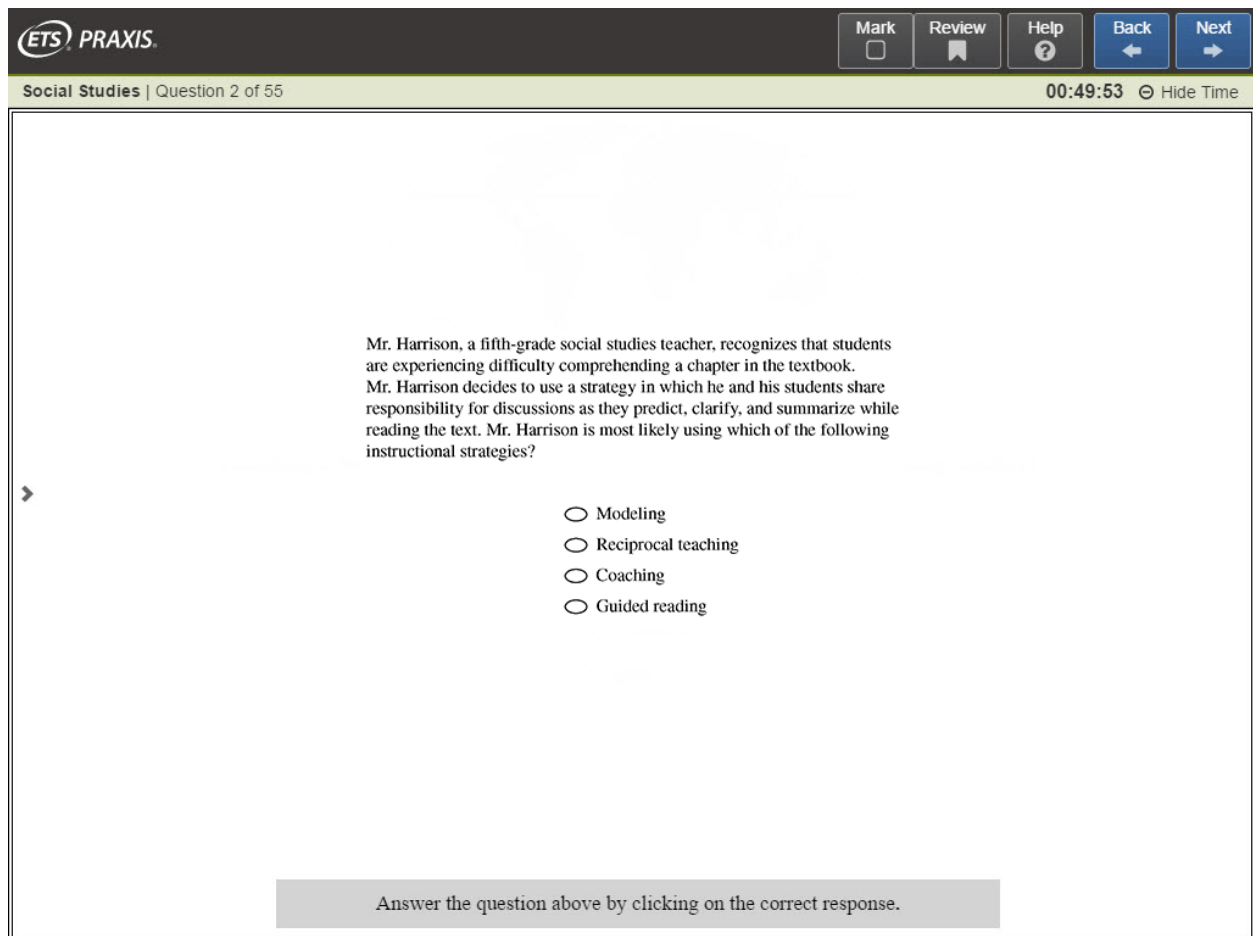
QUICK TIP: You may find that it helps to take notes on scratch paper so that you don't miss any details. Then you'll be sure to have all the information you need to answer the question.

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Computer Delivery

This test is available via computer delivery. To illustrate what the computer-delivered test looks like, the following sample question shows an actual screen used in a computer-delivered test. For the purposes of this guide, sample questions are provided as they would appear in a paper-delivered test.

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.

1. A school counseling program is to be established in a new public school that has just opened in an expanding school district. The first step in developing the program is to

   (A) survey the guidance and counseling needs of the student body

   (B) devise behavioral objectives for classroom management

   (C) decide on minimum competency levels for student progression to higher grade levels

   (D) gather appropriate counseling and guidance materials, such as tests and occupational information

2. A professional school counselor faxed a copy of an attendance contract to the school principal to assist with an intervention for a chronically absent student. The school counselor's input is an example of

   (A) collaboration

   (B) responsive services

   (C) prescriptive mode

   (D) facilitation

3. In consulting with a teacher about disciplinary problems in the teacher's classroom, a high school counselor demonstrates keen interest in the teacher's various concerns by listening and empathizing with her. By doing this the counselor is assuming the role of

   (A) a supervisor

   (B) an evaluator

   (C) a collaborator

   (D) a helper

4. A student and her family lost all their possessions in a recent tornado. The student reports difficulty sleeping, recurrent nightmares, and loss of appetite. The student is most likely suffering from

   (A) schizophrenia

   (B) obsessive-compulsive disorder

   (C) oppositional defiant disorder

   (D) posttraumatic stress disorder

5. Several students in a middle school setting have experienced significant losses within a school year. Teachers and family members are asked to identify students who might benefit from a counseling group based on grief and loss. Once these students are identified, the professional school counselor's next step should include which of the following?

   (A) Inviting all students suggested for the group to join

   (B) Choosing students with whom the counselor is familiar

   (C) Asking the teachers and family members to complete a survey to determine which students should be part of the group

   (D) Conducting brief individual interviews with the students to determine whether each of them will be a good candidate for the group

6. Which of the following types of data is most beneficial in evaluating a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program?

   (A) Data that include program process, perception, and outcome results

   (B) Data that focus on closing-the-gap results

   (C) Data that include the number of program participants and their ages

   (D) Data that illustrate student academic performance

7. Classroom guidance programming typically is considered a form of

    (A) group counseling

    (B) primary prevention

    (C) secondary prevention

    (D) tertiary prevention

8. When working with students who have disabilities, a professional school counselor should communicate with outside doctors and therapists to enhance school-based services. By doing so, the counselor is taking on the role of

    (A) investigator

    (B) collaborator

    (C) enabler

    (D) coordinator

9. Ms. Reger has 10 students from the same class referred to her anger-management group. She decides to use the opportunity to evaluate the effects of her favorite small-group anger-management program. She plans to use all 10 students in her experiment. Given the information provided, her sampling method is best described as

    (A) cluster

    (B) convenience

    (C) quota

    (D) simple random

10. Which of the following is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)?

    (A) An 18-year-old student can view his or her own academic records.

    (B) A noncustodial parent without any legal rights to the student can review a student's academic records.

    (C) A private psychologist who contacts the school on his or her own without the parent's knowledge can review a student's records.

    (D) Colleges and universities that are seeking information about a student can obtain a student's records without student or parental consent.

11. Ashley, a high school sophomore, tells the school counselor that she is depressed about her recent breakup with her boyfriend. During the conversation, Ashley says she wishes she "could go to sleep and never wake up." In this situation, the counselor should

    (A) immediately call the local mental health facility for a psychiatric evaluation

    (B) assess whether Ashley is suicidal and intervene if she is

    (C) recognize that Ashley's statement is only a cry for help and should not be taken seriously

    (D) see if there is any chance of reconciliation for Ashley and her boyfriend

12. The process in which a school counselor assists a teacher, administrator, parent, or other person in finding a solution to a problem that concerns a student is called

    (A) coordinating

    (B) consulting

    (C) evaluating

    (D) counseling

13. A professional school counselor is concerned about bullying at the middle school and plans to collect data to determine what intervention is most appropriate to decrease bullying. Which of the following types of data is most useful to collect?

    (A) Depression-rating-scale data from students who do not attend school frequently

    (B) Functional behavioral assessment (FBA) data from specific students

    (C) Process data from students who participate in group counseling

    (D) Perception data from students and teachers in all middle school grades

14. Jessie, a fifth-grade student, reports to the professional school counselor that her best friend, Ashley, confided that her parents often physically abuse her when she is disobedient. When the counselor questions Ashley, she denies that she is abused, telling the counselor that she made up the story to impress her friend. As Ashley is leaving the office, the counselor notices welts and bruises on her leg that look recent. What action should the school counselor take next?

    (A) Do nothing, because Ashley denied the abuse.

    (B) Tell Ashley's teachers to watch for any signs of abuse.

    (C) Call the police and ask them to arrest her parents.

    (D) Contact the office of child protective services, because there is reason to suspect abuse.

15. A parent requests a meeting with the professional school counselor to discuss her son's recent diagnosis of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), which was made by the student's pediatrician. The student has difficulty focusing during periods of long instruction and is often unable to complete classroom tasks. His grades and achievement are poor compared to those of his peers. This student would most likely meet the criteria for which of the following?

    (A) An Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

    (B) A behavior intervention plan (BIP)

    (C) A Section 504 Plan

    (D) Child Find

16. Jaime, a tenth-grade student, asks Mr. Martin, the professional school counselor, to be her friend on a social networking site. Mr. Martin explains that he cannot ethically befriend students on social networking sites. The counselor makes this statement in an effort to prevent which of the following from occurring?

    (A) Forming dual relationships

    (B) Hurting other students' feelings by not accepting their friend requests

    (C) Angering the parents of the student

    (D) Sharing the student's private information with her teachers

17. The professional school counselors at a school implemented an intervention that resulted in a reduction of students assigned to in-school suspension. The data supporting this claim are an example of which of the following?

    (A) Accountability

    (B) Advocacy

    (C) Professional development

    (D) Management

18. Which of the following actions by a professional school counselor is an example of using appraisal as a strategy for individual planning?

    (A) Referring students who have a learning disability to the special education teachers

    (B) Disaggregating absentee data by gender and ethnicity to better understand absentee rates

    (C) Collaborating with teachers to better guide students' career plans

    (D) Advising students on their course selection based on the results of a career-interest inventory

19. A professional school counselor created a campaign against using offensive words and phrases. Students created and displayed posters in the hallways, and the counselor prepared related classroom sessions. The students learned to use appropriate language to express frustration and disapproval. In this way, the counselor acted in the role of

   (A) teacher

   (B) consultant

   (C) leader

   (D) agent of change

20. A professional school counselor notices that two high school siblings have missed school every Monday during the first two months of school. After discussing the absences with the school nurse to rule out any sicknesses on those days, the school counselor will most likely?

   (A) Call the students to the counseling office and ask them why they have been absent

   (B) Call the parents and ask them why the students have been absent

   (C) Refer the students to the school social worker for excessive absences

   (D) Refer the students to the assistant principal's office for excessive absences

21. A counselor encounters inappropriate behavior by a student group member. The counselor should do which of the following to discourage the behavior?

   (A) Nod or smile at the student

   (B) Address the student warmly

   (C) Shift posture to lean toward the student

   (D) Avoid responding or close the eyes

22. Which of the following is the best example of a responsive service that a professional school counselor might provide?

   (A) Developing closing-the-gap action plans

   (B) Participating in professional development opportunities to enhance counseling skills

   (C) Assisting students with the postsecondary transition process and providing them with recommendations

   (D) Providing individual and small-group counseling to facilitate the adjustment process to middle school

23. A school counselor creates an advisory council of various stakeholders to make recommendations about how to improve the school counseling program activities. The school counselor's actions align most closely with which of the following components of the ASCA National Model®?

   (A) Foundations

   (B) Management

   (C) Delivery

   (D) Accountability

24. When selecting an appropriate assessment, a counselor will most need key information about which of the following?

   (A) The purpose of the assessment

   (B) The cost of the assessment

   (C) The length of time needed to administer the assessment

   (D) The type of scaling used to report the results

25. Ms. Johnson is a middle school professional counselor who has developed a positive working relationship with other staff members at her school. Mr. Green, a sixth-grade teacher, refers a student to Ms. Johnson for counseling services. The next week, Mr. Green approaches Ms. Johnson in the hallway to ask how the student has been progressing and whether Ms. Johnson has been able to get any information from the student. How can Ms. Johnson best respond to the request in a professional and ethical manner?

    (A) Tell Mr. Green that the information discussed is confidential, and walk away.

    (B) Have a discussion in the hallway about the information the student shared during the session, but ask Mr. Green to keep the information confidential.

    (C) Ask Mr. Green to meet with her in her office, confirm that she has been working with the student, and inform him that it is important to maintain confidentiality so that she is able to build a working relationship with the student.

    (D) Ask Mr. Green to meet with her in her office, confirm that she has been working with the student, and allow him to read the counselor's notes taken during the session.

26. School systems often utilize standardized tests that assess what students have learned in many different areas. These tests assess which of the following?

    (A) Achievement
    (B) Aptitude
    (C) Behavior
    (D) Intelligence

27. According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model®, how often must a professional school counselor program be reviewed and evaluated to appraise the progress of the program development and implementation?

    (A) Twice during the school year
    (B) Three times during the school year
    (C) Every other school year
    (D) Annually

28. A student who cares more about how his peers view him than about how his family views him is said to be functioning at which one of Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development?

    (A) Basic trust versus mistrust
    (B) Industry versus inferiority
    (C) Intimacy versus isolation
    (D) Ego identity versus role confusion

29. Which of the following examples best demonstrates the professional school counselor acting as an advocate for a student?

    (A) The school counselor advises a teacher to create a behavior plan for a disruptive student.

    (B) The school counselor conducts a classroom guidance lesson on bullying.

    (C) The school counselor addresses a concern with a teacher about a student feeling degraded.

    (D) The school counselor conducts a meeting with the principal and parent to address absences.

30. Several tenth-grade students have requested information on possible career paths from the professional school counselor. Which of the following is the first step the school counselor must take to address the needs of the students?

    (A) Creating a presentation that outlines a variety of career resources

    (B) Advising the teachers that it is their responsibility to address these concerns during class

    (C) Setting up several business and college trips that present a variety of career options

    (D) Surveying students interests and aptitudes to assist them in choosing potential career paths

Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (A). Survey approaches used to determine counseling needs in the school are valuable for the completeness of the data collected and the coverage provided. Surveys are probably the most frequently used appraisal method in the school. Survey approaches tend to emphasize the availability of activities, staff, facilities, and programs.

2. The correct answer is (A). The school counselor's assistance is helping the principal complete the task more effectively.

3. The correct answer is (D). In the school, counselors are those specialists who are expected to assist in the management of social-emotional dimensions of problem situations. They help clients manage problems. Good helpers listen intelligently to clients and respond within the client's frame of reference.

4. The correct answer is (D). The student was exposed to a traumatic event and exhibits sleep disturbance, distressing dreams, and diminished interest in a significant activity (eating). These are all symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder but not of the other disorders listed.

5. The correct answer is (D). The role of the counselor is that of group facilitator. It is the counselor's responsibility to ensure that group members will not be harmed by the process nor will they impede the work of the group. Additionally, the counselor should select participants whose needs and goals are compatible with the goals of the group.

6. The correct answer is (A). It incorporates the three most important forms of data for analyzing the success of a comprehensive school counseling program according to the ASCA National Model.

7. The correct answer is (B). Classroom guidance programming is traditionally viewed as a primary prevention because it is taught to entire classrooms or schools and typically focuses on stopping problems before they occur.

8. The correct answer is (B). Other professionals, school-based or not, can provide valuable tools and even key phrases that can help to develop treatment goals and plans to help students with disabilities succeed socially and emotionally.

9. The correct answer is (B). Convenience sampling is when a sample is chosen based on availability or convenience. The students in this study were already referred, so they were an easy group to use.

10. The correct answer is (A). Once an individual turns 18, he or she has a right to review his or her own records.

11. The correct answer is (B). The student's comment clearly indicates some suicidal ideation, but she needs to be assessed further to determine the level of suicide risk and the appropriate intervention. (A) is premature without a suicide risk assessment and (C) and (D) inappropriately ignore the risk of suicide entirely.

12. The correct answer is (B). When a school counselor works with a third party to resolve an issue a student is having, it is called consulting.

13. The correct answer is (D). Perception data describe people's knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs about an event or phenomenon. In this case, collecting perception data would allow the professional school counselor to determine what the students and teachers in the middle school grades believe to be the underlying causes of the bullying problem and would enable the school counselor to select an appropriate intervention based on this information.

14. The correct answer is (D). The counselor has reasonable suspicion that abuse is occurring. The welts and bruises on Ashley's legs seem consistent with the report that her friend told the counselor. The school counselor must report the potential abuse to child protective services for further investigation.

15. The correct answer is (C). The student has a mental impairment that is affecting learning, therefore, he qualifies for a Section 504 Plan.

16. The correct answer is (A). According to the ASCA ethical standards, teachers should avoid forming dual relationships with students by declining to become friends with them on social media.

17. The correct answer is (A). School counselors assess their programs with data, which allows them to document how successful their programs are. This holds the school counselors accountable for their programs.

18. The correct answer is (D). Appraisal is the analysis and evaluation of data to determine students' abilities, interests, skills, and achievement levels to develop students' long- and short-term academic and career goals.

19. The correct answer is (D). The school counselor noticed behavior that was inappropriate and developed and implemented a plan to change the behavior. In this way, the school counselor was acting as a change agent.

20. The correct answer is (A). After ruling out sicknesses with the nurse, the most logical step is to ask the students why they have been out. Since the students are in high school, they are able to state why they have been absent. The other steps may occur after the counselor has spoken to the students.

21. The correct answer is (D). Avoiding a response or closing the eyes is a good way to extinguish or discourage inappropriate behavior in a group. The other choices all positively reinforce the inappropriate behavior, making it more likely to occur.

22. The correct answer is (D). Individual and group counseling are examples of services where responses or actions are solicited.

23. The correct answer is (B). Advisory councils review the school counselor's policies and programs and make recommendations for improvement. Selecting such councils is part of the management responsibility of a school counselor.

24. The correct answer is (A). The most important criterion for selecting an appropriate assessment tool is the purpose of the assessment. The professional school counselor needs to determine what information is needed from the assessment and how that information will be used. The cost of the administration, the length of time required, and the type of scaling used in reporting are issues that may be considered, but the decision should not be based on any of these without full consideration of the purpose.

25. The correct answer is (C), which is the only option that addresses the ethical concern of maintaining confidentiality while also building relationships with other school staff.

26. The correct answer is (A). Achievement tests measure what an individual has learned, not his or her ability to learn.

27. The correct answer is (D). According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) standards, the school counselor program should be reviewed once a year.

28. The correct answer is (D). Ego identity versus role confusion occurs from the time a child is 12-19 years old. During this stage, a child learns how to develop a personal identity and seeks validation from peers, rather than family.

29. The correct answer is (C). In this situation, the professional school counselor must work to advocate for the student. (A) is incorrect because in this situation the school counselor is taking on the role of consultant. (B) is incorrect because conducting a classroom guidance lesson addresses a broad range of student needs and does not involve advocating for a specific student. (D) is incorrect because the school counselor is acting as a collaborator.

30. The correct answer is (D). It is important that the professional school counselor first gain knowledge about the interests and aptitudes of the students to best assist them in the process of exploring career paths.

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.

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 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/dates_centers**.
- 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 on page 44.

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 29 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 29, 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 16.

- **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 "Test Specifications" 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 chapter 1.
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 (Test Code):   Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading (5712)
Test Date: 9/15/15

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
Key Ideas and Details						
Close reading	Draw inferences and implications from the directly stated content of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/15	7/15/15
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the main idea or primary purpose of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/15	7/17/15
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the supporting ideas and specific details in a reading selection	3	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/15	7/21/15
Craft, Structure, and Language Skills						
Interpreting tone	Determine the author's attitude toward material discussed in a reading selection	4	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/15	7/26/15
Analysis of structure	Identify key transition words and phrases in a reading selection and how they are used	3	Middle and high school English textbook, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/15	7/27/15
Analysis of structure	Identify how a reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution, etc.	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Author's purpose	Determine the role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in an author's discussion or argument	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15

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
Language in different contexts	Determine whether information presented in a reading selection is presented as fact or opinion	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Contextual meaning	Identify the meanings of words as they are used in the context of a reading selection	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Figurative Language	Understand figurative language and nuances in word meanings	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/8/15	8/8/15
Vocabulary range	Understand a range of words and phrases sufficient for reading at the college and career readiness level	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/15/15	8/17/15
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas						
Diverse media and formats	Analyze content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/22/15	8/24/15
Evaluation of arguments	Identify the relationship among ideas presented in a reading selection	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/24/15	8/24/15
Evaluation of arguments	Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to the arguments in a reading selection	3	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/27/15	8/27/15
Evaluation of arguments	Determine the logical assumptions upon which an argument or conclusion is based	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/28/15	8/30/15
Evaluation of arguments	Draw conclusions from material presented in a reading selection	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/30/15	8/31/15
Comparison of texts	Recognize or predict ideas or situations that are extensions of or similar to what has been presented in a reading selection	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	9/3/15	9/4/15
Comparison of texts	Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	9/5/15	9/6/15

My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

1. **Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in chapter 1.
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 (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

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

6. Review Study Topics

Review study topics with questions for discussion

Using the Study Topics That Follow

The Professional School Counselor test is intended primarily for students who are completing master's-level programs to become professional school counselors.

This chapter is intended to help you organize your preparation for the test and to give you a clear indication of the depth and breadth of the knowledge required for success on the test.

Virtually all accredited programs address the topics covered by the test; however, you are not expected to be an expert on all aspects of the topics that follow.

You are likely to find that the topics below are covered by most introductory textbooks. Consult materials and resources, including lecture and laboratory notes, from all your coursework. You should be able to match up specific topics and subtopics with what you have covered in your courses.

Try not to be overwhelmed by the volume and scope of content knowledge in this guide. Although a specific term may not seem familiar as you see it here, you might find you can understand it when applied to a real-life situation. Many of the items on the actual test will provide you with a context to apply to these topics or terms.

Discussion Areas

Interspersed throughout the study topics are discussion areas, presented as open-ended questions or statements. These discussion areas are intended to help test your knowledge of fundamental concepts and your ability to apply those concepts to situations in the classroom or the real world. Most of the areas require you to combine several pieces of knowledge to formulate an integrated understanding and response. If you spend time on these areas, you will gain increased understanding and facility with the subject matter covered on the test. You may want to discuss these areas and your answers with a teacher or mentor.

Note that this study companion *does **not** provide answers for the discussion area questions*, but thinking about the answers to them will help improve your understanding of fundamental concepts and will probably help you answer a broad range of questions on the test.

Study Topics

An overview of the areas covered on the test, along with their subareas, follows.

I. Foundations

A. History and Role of the Professional School Counselor

1. Knows how to use current research to advocate for the profession
   a. knows how to access research resources
   b. is able to interpret research
   c. is able to use research to demonstrate professional impact on student learning

2. Knows the benefits of membership in professional organizations for school and guidance counselors (e.g., resources, networking, insurance)
   a. recognizes that there are different levels of professional organizations (e.g., national, state, local)
   b. describes the benefits of these organizations (advocacy, professional development, lobbying efforts, liability insurance, networking, accessibility to resources and current research, leadership development)

3. Is familiar with the development of school guidance and counseling as a profession
   a. names the major benchmarks in the development of the profession
   b. describes how trends in educational systems impact the role of the professional school counselor (e.g., response to intervention, positive behavior support, professional learning communities)

4. Understands the current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs
   a. identifies the components of the ASCA National Model

   recognizes the importance of alignment between a school counseling program and the ASCA National Model

5. Understands the current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Standards for academic, career, and personal/social development of students
   a. describes the domains of the ASCA Standards
   b. utilizes the student competencies of the ASCA standards when planning counseling services

6. Understands the roles of counselor, leader, advocate, collaborator, consultant, and coordinator as they apply to school guidance-counseling-related duties
   a. identify the tasks related to the various roles of the professional school counselor

7. Knows similarities and differences in the school guidance counselor's responsibilities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels
   a. identifies and differentiates the responsibilities of the professional school counselor at the various grade levels

8. Understands the difference between counselor responsibilities and non-counselor tasks (e.g., disciplining, substitute teaching, and managing school functions)
   a. identifies and differentiates between counselor and non-counselor responsibilities

B. Human Growth and Development

1. Knows major theories regarding physical development throughout the human life span
   a. describes the stages of physical development from early childhood through older adulthood

2. Knows how to use current research to promote holistic student development
   a. applies current research (e.g., nutrition, socioeconomic status, family system) to promote holistic student development

3. Knows major theories regarding cognitive development throughout the human life span
   a. describes and applies the components of major theories (e.g., Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky) to student development and behavior

4. Knows major theories regarding personality and emotional development throughout the human life span

   a. describes and applies the components of major theories (e.g., Erik Erikson, BF Skinner, Carl Rogers) to student development and behavior

5. Knows major theories regarding social and character development throughout the human life span

   a. describes and applies the components of major theories (e.g., Alfred Adler, Lawrence Kohlberg, Erich Fromm) to student development and behavior

6. Is familiar with major theories regarding family systems

   a. recognizes the components of major theories (e.g., family systems theory, ecological theory) and how they relate to student development and behavior

C. Ethics

1. Knows current ethical guidelines of technology use for professionals and students

   a. applies current ethical guidelines to computerized/online testing or evaluation and virtual schooling

   b. recognizes scope of responsibility in social networking and electronic communication (e.g., online bullying, dual relationships, e-mail, texting) between the professional school counselor and stakeholders

   c. recognizes the importance of protecting privacy and confidentiality when using electronic communications and student information systems/databases

2. Understands the need for self-awareness of personal biases and limitations that may affect the counseling relationship

   a. recognizes implications of counselor biases that affect the counseling relationship (e.g., religious, cultural, sexual orientation)

   b. recognize personal limitations and duty to refer

Possesses a working knowledge of the current American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Ethical Standards for School Counselors

   c. applies the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (e.g., parents' rights and responsibilities, dual relationships, parent/guardians and confidentiality) to daily practice

3. Is familiar with the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics

   a. recognizes the sections of the ACA Code of Ethics that relate to the professional school counselor

4. Understands the need for ongoing professional development designed for school guidance counselors

   a. recognizes the current delivery modes (e.g., professional conferences, webinars) for professional development

   b. recognizes professional development activities designed for professional school counselors that are role-appropriate and licensure-specific

5. Knows and utilizes ways to remain mentally healthy, stay motivated, and avoid burnout

   a. identifies symptoms of stress

   b. identifies healthy coping strategies

   c. identifies the consequences of neglecting mental health maintenance and motivation

D. Legal Issues

1. Knows how changes in major public policy and laws affect student rights and school guidance counselor responsibilities

   a. applies current local, state, and federal laws as they affect professional school counselor activities

Understands the role of the school guidance counselor in relation to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, PL 101-336, 1990) in advocating for the legal rights of students with disabilities

   b. describes a Section 504 plan as it might impact the professional school counselor

   c. recognizes a student's need for and the potential benefits of a Section 504 plan

Understands the role of the school guidance counselor in relation to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, PL 108-446, 2004) in advocating for students' legal rights

   d. defines an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and how it might impact the professional school counselor

   e. recognizes a student's need for and the potential benefits of an IEP

Understands the Buckley Amendment and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA, PL 93-380) and its impact on student and parent rights

   f. applies FERPA requirements to professional school counselors' responsibilities

   g. identifies appropriate information to include in student records (e.g., cumulative folder, student information system)

2. Is familiar with the appropriate constitutional rights as they apply to educational settings for students and parents (e.g., freedom of speech, citizenship)

   a. recognizes students' rights and limits to their rights (e.g., freedom of speech, right to privacy, equal protection) as they relate to the educational setting

3. Knows the relevance of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (PL 92-318) to education and school activities

   a. describes Title IX as it relates to student rights

4. Is familiar with Title II of the Education Amendments of 1976 (PL 105-332) and its relevance to equal opportunities in career counseling

   a. recognizes the impact of Title II on equal opportunities in career counseling

5. Understands the detection and mandated reporting requirements of child abuse and neglect

   a. identifies various types of abuse (e.g., sexual, physical, emotional)

   b. recognizes the signs of suspected child abuse and neglect

   c. describes situations in which reporting to appropriate social service agencies and/or law enforcement is mandated

6. Understands the concept of duty to warn and the difference between privileged communication and confidentiality

   a. describes situations in which a professional school counselor has a duty to warn (e.g., threatened harm to self or others)

   b. recognizes privileged communication always belongs to the student or client

   c. recognizes confidentiality has limits and may or may not be a legal issue

Discussion areas: History and Role of the Professional School Counselor

• What are the major components of the ASCA National Model?

• What are the major roles of the counselor and what roles are inappropriate for a counselor?

Discussion areas: Human Growth and Development

• What are the stages of Erik Erikson's theory of personality development?

• What are the stages of Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development?

• Know how the major theorists view the process of learning.

Discussion areas: Ethics

• What are the rights of parents to information about their children's counseling?

• What is required for confidential information about a student's counseling to be released to third parties?

• How does the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004) affect the role and activities of the professional school counselor?

• What is the effect of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) on the work of the professional school counselor?

• How long should the professional school counselor keep records of counseling with students?

• Which school staff, including professional school counselors, are required to report child abuse and neglect?

• What is meant by the term mandated reporter?

Discussion areas: Legal Issues

- What are considered to be the core conditions of effective counseling?

- What are the major components of an effective crisis management program?

- How would you apply various counseling theories to a case?

- What are some of the considerations professional school counselors should be aware of when counseling ethnically diverse students?

II. Delivery of Service

A. Guidance and Counseling

1. Is familiar with basic methods of analyzing student behavior
   a. identifies procedures used to collect data to assess student behavior (e.g., behavior checklists, anecdotal reports)

2. Knows how to appropriately use a variety of technological resources to deliver school guidance and counseling services
   a. recognizes the importance of technology in the delivery of services in a comprehensive school counseling program
   b. identifies benefits of technological resources (e.g., career interest inventories, college, and scholarship search services)

3. Understands the purposes and theories of individual counseling and applies them appropriately
   a. describes basic counseling theories (e.g., Brief solution-focused, Behavioral, Cognitive)
   b. applies counseling theories to case scenarios

4. Understands the purposes and theories of group counseling and applies them appropriately
   a. describes basic group counseling theories (e.g., reality, cognitive-behavioral)
   b. describes group counseling processes and procedures (e.g. stages, group types, selection, facilitation)
   c. recognizes ethical issues as related to group counseling (e.g. confidentiality, biases)
   d. applies group counseling theories to case scenarios

5. Knows the purpose and can apply techniques of educational planning (e.g., grade-level transition, academic-intervention plans)
   a. applies age-appropriate strategies for educational planning (e.g., course selection, transitioning, kindergarten readiness)
   b. applies appropriate counseling skills to develop academic intervention plans

6. Understands the purposes and theories and can apply processes of career development and planning for students at each age level
   a. describes basic career development theories (e.g., trait factor, developmental, psychological)
   b. applies career development theories to case scenarios
   c. recognizes how to assist students making post-secondary and career plans at every stage of development

7. Is familiar with the purposes and theories and can apply techniques of large-group guidance (e.g., grade-level student meetings, group academic advising, school wide assemblies)
   a. describes how to facilitate grade-level student meetings
   b. describes the process of group academic advising
   c. describes how to conduct school-wide assemblies

8. Understands the purpose and instructional theories and can apply techniques of classroom guidance and strategies of classroom management
   a. recognizes the need for and benefits of classroom guidance
   b. applies instructional and behavior management strategies to classroom situations

9. Understands the purposes and theories and can apply techniques of crisis intervention (e.g., school-level crises, individual crises)
   a. recognizes the importance of having procedures for multi-level school crises (school violence, natural disaster)
   b. recognizes the importance of having procedures for individual crises

10. Knows the purpose and can apply techniques of peer mediation and conflict resolution
    a. describes the purpose and applies techniques of peer mediation
    b. applies strategies of conflict resolution to case scenarios (e.g. relational aggression, in-school fighting, teacher-student conflicts)

11. Understands methods for preventing and addressing common student concerns (e.g., stress, drug use, bullying)
    a. applies research and strategies to prevent or intervene in common student/teacher issues (e.g., alcohol/drug use, stress, bullying)

12. Understands and can respond to the needs of students with various levels of ability (e.g., physical, emotional, cognitive)
    a. identifies the needs of students at various ability levels (e.g., physical, emotional, cognitive)
    b. describes and apply strategies to respond to various needs

13. Knows and responds to the needs of students from various backgrounds (e.g., socioeconomic, cultural, linguistic)
    a. describes the potential impact of socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic differences on academic and social outcomes
    b. applies interventions to meet the needs of a variety of students

14. Knows the needs of and responds to students with diverse issues (e.g., sexual orientation, family situations, alcoholism/drug use)
    a. describes the potential impact of diversity issues (sexual orientation, family situations, drug and alcohol abuse effects) on academic and social outcomes
    b. applies interventions to meet the needs of a variety of students

B. Consultation and Collaboration

Knows the role of the school guidance counselor in the support of the development and implementation of student service plans (e.g., Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, Section 504 plans)

Describes the role of the professional school counselor in the development, implementation, and support of student service plans (e.g., Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, Section 504 plans)

1. Understands the basic characteristics of consultation

2. Is familiar with the purposes, theories, and techniques of consultation models as they apply to school guidance and counseling
    a. identifies the purpose and basic characteristics of consultation
    b. recognizes the major methods of consultation as used in common school situations (e.g., parent conferences, teacher consultations)

3. Is familiar with the differing needs of teachers, other professionals, administrators, parents, and community contacts for consultation and collaboration
    a. recognizes the appropriate professional needs of stakeholders (e.g., classroom management, student support, programming)

4. Understands the characteristics of effective collaborative relationships
    a. describes the characteristics of effective collaborative relationships (e.g., the Four Is of collaborative relationships)
    b. applies the appropriate techniques of effective collaborative relationships (e.g., solution-focused, leaderless collaboration)

5. Is familiar with common pedagogical techniques used in the classroom to provide consultation services as they apply to academic support
    a. identifies common pedagogical techniques used in the classroom to consult with teachers (e.g., lesson planning, behavior management, differentiated instruction)

6. Knows interventions and accommodations available to students with various needs
    a. describes interventions and accommodations (preferential seating, extended time) available to students
    b. recognizes the needs of and support available to students with varying mental and physical disorders (e.g., eating disorders, hearing impaired, learning disorders)

Discussion areas: Guidance and Counseling

- What type of counseling strategies would be appropriate with elementary students?

- What type of counseling strategies would be appropriate with adolescent students?

- Who might might be the appropriate stakeholders in supporting a student with academic challenges?

- How might cognitive therapy be applied in a school setting?

- What would an effective group counseling session look like?

Discussion areas: Consultation and Collaboration

- What are some ways to help an outside agency understand the school system's approach to referral of students?

- How should the professional school counselor respond to requests from outside agencies to visit the school to work with students?

- What is the role of the professional school counselor when a teacher discloses his or her own personal struggles and asks for help?

- How would a professional school counselor best respond to a teacher concerned about bullying by some students in the classroom

III. Management

1. Is familiar with how to use technology to manage and evaluate school guidance and counseling programs
    a. identifies ways to use technology to manage and evaluate school counseling programs (e.g., spreadsheets, student information systems, electronic surveys)

2. Knows the school guidance and counseling program as an integral part of the total educational process
    a. describes how the school counseling program is an integral part of the total educational process (e.g., leadership roles, curriculum, committees)

3. Understands how to design, develop, and implement a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program
    a. describes how to use data to design and implement school counseling services

4. Is familiar with the design, staffing, and maintenance of programs for support of students at risk
    a. recognizes the design, staffing, and maintenance of services for at risk students (e.g., mentoring, parent education, community resources)

5. Knows how to manage various types of referrals
    a. differentiates between internal and external referrals (e.g., school nurse, social service agencies, pro bono services)
    b. recognizes the importance of developing procedures for management of various types of referrals

Discussion areas: Management

- What are the major components of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program?

- What types of student development are the focus of a comprehensive guidance program?

- When is referral the most appropriate school counselor response to a student's needs?

- What are some ways to help an outside agency understand the school system's approach to referral of students?

IV. Accountability

1. Knows the need for accountability in a school guidance and counseling program
    a. defines accountability as it relates to a school counseling program
    b. describes how to use counseling program data and research to advocate for school counseling programs

2. Knows the goals and methods of evaluating achievement, program effectiveness, and student outcomes
    a. describes various methods of measuring accountability and effectiveness of the school counseling program (e.g., assessment results, surveys, research)
    b. describes various methods of measuring student outcomes (e.g., graduation rates, attendance records, disciplinary records)

3. Knows how to apply data analysis results for program improvement (e.g., needs assessment, program evaluation)

   a. analyzes data and determine program improvements as necessary

4. Knows methods of gathering background data to assist in selecting appropriate assessments (e.g., interviewing, records review)

   a. identifies methods of gathering background data (e.g., records review, observation, student work samples) to assist in selecting appropriate assessments

5. Is familiar with the various types of assessments (criterion-referenced, aptitude, achievement)

   a. describes the differences among the various types of assessments (e.g., criterion-referenced, aptitude, achievement)

6. Understands the appropriate use and limitations of standardized testing

   a. describes the appropriate use and limitations of standardized testing

7. Knows basic principles and interpretation of measurement (e.g., trends, stanine, percentile rank)

   a. defines basic principles of interpreting measurement (e.g., trends, stanine, percentile rank)

8. Knows the concepts of validity and reliability as applied to assessment

   a. defines and differentiates the concepts of validity and reliability as they apply to assessment

9. Understands requirements for administration and interpretation of individual and group assessments

   a. describes the requirements for administration of individual and group standardized assessments

   b. describes the requirements for interpretation of individual and group standardized assessments

10. Knows how to interpret and appropriately use the results of personality, emotional, social, and behavioral assessments

    a. describes how to interpret and appropriately use the results of personality, emotional, social, and behavioral assessments

11. Knows how to interpret and appropriately use the results of intelligence assessments

    a. describes how to interpret and appropriately use the results of intelligence assessments

12. Knows how to interpret and appropriately use the results of achievement tests and measures of learning (e.g., standardized assessment, portfolio, formative/summative)

    a. defines and differentiates among achievement tests and measures of learning (e.g., standardized assessment, portfolios, formative/summative assessments)

    b. describes how to interpret and appropriately use the results of achievement tests and measures of learning

13. Knows the characteristics of and how to appropriately administer and interpret career assessments (e.g., interest inventories, aptitude/skills tests)

    a. defines and differentiates among career assessments (e.g., interest inventories, aptitude/skills tests, work values)

    b. describes how to administer, interpret, and appropriately use the results of career assessments

14. Knows how cultural, linguistic, and disability issues relate to student test performance, test accommodations, and test interpretation

    a. recognizes student differences (e.g., cultural, linguistic, and disability issues) and their effects on student test performance and results

    b. recognizes student differences when interpreting test results

    c. identifies appropriate accommodations to address student differences

Discussion areas: Accountability

- What would be the best method for demonstrating accountability?

- How might a student's test score be affected by a recent death in the family?

- What is the mean of a test?

7. 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* tests at https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/ 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.

8. Check on Testing Accommodations

See if you qualify for accommodations 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 **https://www.ets.org/praxis/register/plne_accommodations/**.

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 Brailler
- 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 **https://www.ets.org/s/praxis/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**.

9. 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 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!

10. 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* 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 *Praxis* test or other *Praxis* tests in 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* Passing Score Requirements, found at **https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/**

- 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 the *Praxis* Subject Assessments for professional licensing.

Do all states require these tests?

The *Praxis* 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* tests?

Your state chose the *Praxis* 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* test development process. First, ETS asked them what 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/dates_centers 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 (2014, Princeton, N.J.) 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 (2014, Washington, D.C.).

Your professional 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:

www.ets.org/praxis/testprep

To purchase official test prep made by the creators
of the *Praxis* tests, visit the ETS Store:

www.ets.org/praxis/store

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