

The *Praxis*® Study Companion

Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications

5015



Welcome to *The Praxis*® Study Companion

Prepare to Show What You Know

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

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

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

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

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

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

Your teaching career begins with preparation. Good luck!

Know What to Expect

Which tests should I take?

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

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

How are the *Praxis* tests given?

Praxis tests are given on computer. Other formats are available for test takers approved for accommodations (see page 40)

What should I expect when taking the test on computer?

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

Where and when are the *Praxis* tests offered?

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

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

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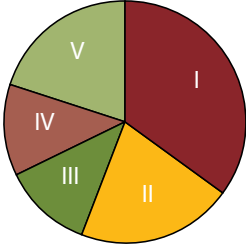
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1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications (5015)

Test at a Glance			
Test Name	Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications		
Test Code	5015		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	90 selected-response questions; 4 short constructed-response questions		
Format	Selected-response and constructed-response questions		
Test Delivery	Computer delivered		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Reading/Language Arts	40	35%
	II. Mathematics	24	21%
	III. Science	13	12%
	IV. Social Studies	13	12%
	V. Applications (constructed response)	4	20%

About This Test

The Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications test is designed for prospective teachers of students in the elementary grades. Examinees typically have completed a bachelor's degree program in elementary/middle school education or have prepared themselves through some alternative certification program.

The test questions cover the breadth of material a beginning teacher needs to know to begin safe and effective practice. They assess knowledge of content as well as pedagogical principles and processes. The questions cover basic understanding of curriculum planning, instructional design, and assessment of student learning; pose particular problems that teachers routinely face in the classroom; and may be based on authentic examples of student work. Some of the questions concern general issues, but the majority of them are set in the context of the subject matter most commonly taught in elementary school: reading and language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The 90 selected-response questions constitute 80 percent of the total test score.

The four short constructed-response questions are designed to measure how well prospective teachers of students in the elementary grades can respond to tasks that require thoughtful, written responses. The questions pose problems for the test taker to analyze and solve, thereby assessing the examinee's in-depth understanding of elementary education necessary for safe and effective practice.

Each of the four constructed-response questions presents a specific teaching situation and is set in the context of a subject area (or integrated subject areas). For example, the test taker might be asked to evaluate an authentic student work sample and outline the steps necessary to achieve an instructional goal related to the sample.

One question will focus on reading and language arts and one on mathematics. The remaining questions will focus on science and social studies. At least one question will ask the test taker to show an understanding of interdisciplinary instruction.

Each short constructed-response question will be scored independently by two trained and calibrated raters who have demonstrated they can effectively apply the general rubric and question-specific rubrics for the test. The four questions together will contribute 20 percent of the total test score.

This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

Topics Overview

Across the subject matter fields covered in the test, the questions address topics in three broad areas:

Curriculum topics examine the organization, materials, and resources of each content area and the implications for using them:

- Components of curricula and how they are organized
- Integration of concepts within each content area and across content areas and the pedagogical implications of that integration
- Types of curricular materials, media, and resources, such as basal readers and trade books in reading, maps and globes in social studies, measurement equipment in math, equipment and displays in science, and technologies, including computer software and video

Instruction topics examine content-specific teaching and learning principles and their application for appropriate and effective instruction:

- Methods to identify, assess, activate, and build on the prior knowledge, experiences, and skills that a given group of students brings to learning in each content area

- Methods for preparing, evaluating, and justifying instructional activities in each content area and across content areas for a given group of students
- Selection of teaching and learning strategies—such as demonstration, cooperative learning, guided oral and silent work, use of journals, graphic organizers, and the inquiry method—that help individual students and groups of students to see and understand varied topics and concepts
- Methods for adjusting instruction to meet students' needs, including corrective and developmental instruction, reteaching, follow-up, and enrichment instruction
- Strategies for motivating and encouraging student success
- Theoretical and empirical bases of various methods of instruction
- Diversity: Working with diverse students, such as students with special needs, second language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in all areas

Assessment topics examine content-specific and general assessment and evaluation procedures and the implications for using these procedures appropriately and effectively:

- Traditional and standardized testing methodologies—such as standardized tests, basal reader tests, and screening tests—that are appropriate for use in each content area and in general instruction
- Informal, classroom-based, and nontraditional assessment strategies—such as observation, questioning, oral reports, running records, informal reading inventories, portfolios, and performance samples—that are appropriate for use in each content area and in general instruction
- Interpretation of data obtained from various assessment strategies in each content area and in general instruction
- Anticipation and identification of common points of confusion in the content areas, such as errors, patterns of error, inaccuracies, misconceptions, and buggy algorithms

Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each content category—reading and language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies—are provided below. However, the list is not exhaustive.

I. READING/LANGUAGE ARTS contains approximately 35 percent of the test, or 40 questions. Within the reading and language arts content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the development, delivery, and evaluation of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

A. Curriculum

Reading

1. **Phonological awareness:** Listening habits, phoneme awareness, segmenting, blending, manipulating, rhyming sounds, oral language development
2. **Phonics:** Alphabetic principle, orthography (spelling patterns), morphology (structural analysis), syllabication, onset and rime
3. **Fluency:** Automaticity, prosody, rate, accuracy, sight words
4. **Vocabulary:** Structural analysis, concept vocabulary, content vocabulary, expressive/receptive vocabulary, semantics, sight words, word-learning strategies
5. **Comprehension:** Schema (textual connections), literal versus inferential understanding, prereading, during reading, postreading, previewing, questioning, summarizing
6. **Features of children's fiction and nonfiction books:** Character, theme, setting, index, glossary, pictures/photographs

Writing

7. **Types of writing** (e.g., narrative, persuasive, descriptive, journaling); **traits of writing** (e.g., ideas, organization, word choice, voice, fluency, conventions, tone, purpose, audience); **types of text** (e.g., descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive); **structure of text** (e.g., story grammar, comparison, cause/effect, order/sequence); **progression of writing expectations** (e.g., words to phrases to transitions); **stages of writing development** (e.g., language experience approach, developmental spelling, handwriting)

Speaking, listening, and viewing

8. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing, and the interrelatedness of the strands

B. Instruction

Reading

1. **Phonological awareness:** Elkonin (phoneme) boxes, phonemes, segmenting, blending, manipulating sounds, rhymes
2. **Phonics:** Decoding, letter sounds and spelling, word families, word wall, word building (making words), explicit, systematic instruction, automaticity
3. **Fluency:** Read-alouds, repeated readings, choral and echo reading, readability levels, sight words, readers' theater
4. **Vocabulary:** Sight words, word wall, graphic organizers, context clues, direct instruction, levels of word knowledge, contextual information, analogies, categorizing, concept maps, linear arrays, high frequency words
5. **Comprehension:** Graphic organizers, story structure, text elements, genre, think-alouds, predict and confirm, literature circles and book clubs, grand conversation

Writing

6. **Process writing** (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing); **writing conventions** (e.g., spelling, grammar, mechanics); **writing instruction** (e.g., guided, interactive, shared writing); **technology** (e.g., how to analyze sources via writing software)

Speaking, listening, and viewing

7. Theories of language acquisition (constructivist, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and English-language acquisition); use of technology
8. **Diversity:** Working with diverse students, such as students with special needs, second language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in reading and language arts

C. Assessment

Reading

1. **Phonological awareness:** Phonemic segmentation, phonemic deletion and substitution
2. **Phonics:** Spelling tests, nonsense-word fluency, running records, informal reading inventories
3. **Fluency:** Oral reading fluency, leveled phrases such as in Dolch Basic and Fry Instant word lists, running records, miscue analysis, sight words
4. **Vocabulary:** Word-use fluency, informal writing and speaking samples, word sorts, cloze activities
5. **Comprehension:** Retellings, summarizations, informal reading inventories

Writing

6. Benchmark writing, portfolios, analyzing students' writing, rubrics

Speaking, listening, and viewing

7. Student presentations, rubrics

- II. MATHEMATICS** contains approximately 21 percent of the test, or 24 questions. Within the mathematics content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of number operations, prealgebra and algebra concepts, geometry and measurement, and probability, statistics, and data analysis concepts.

A. Curriculum

1. **Number operations:** Number sense; model building and forecasting; prenumber and number concepts; base-10 numeration system; arithmetic operations (e.g., addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals; number theory; number terminology; number properties; rational numbers
2. **Prealgebra and algebra:** Patterns, expressions, equations, formulas, variables, xy-coordinate system, additive and multiplicative inverses, equalities and inequalities, quantitative and qualitative change, mathematical relations, representations

3. **Geometry and measurement:** Geometric figures and relationships, geometric relationships, symmetry, dimension, motion geometry, coordinate geometry, informal geometry, nonmetric and metric units of measurements, metric and standard units, nonstandard units, length, area, volume, weight, angles, time, temperature, distance, rates
4. **Probability, statistics, and data analysis:** Counting; organizing, representing, and interpreting data; intuitive concepts of chance; mean, median, and mode; average; range; spread

B. Instruction

1. **Teaching methods:** Guided discovery, laboratory approach, problem solving, exposition and direct instruction, games, situations and recreations, investigations
2. **Problem solving:** Investigating and understanding content, formulating problems from everyday situations, verifying and interpreting results, identifying and solving problems that are developmentally appropriate
3. **Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology in mathematics instruction such as spinners, number cubes, balls in a jar, software, the Internet, handheld calculators, and spreadsheets
4. **Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Personal, social, and emotional development of students; language and communication; developmentally appropriate instruction; various methods to adjust instruction: what is appropriate and why; effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, and extensions
5. **Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students, such as students with special needs, second language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in mathematics

C. Assessment

1. **Analysis of student work to guide mathematics instruction:** What students can do correctly; concepts students are grasping or developing; student misconceptions and errors; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring student work and understanding
2. **Evaluation of mathematics instructional effectiveness and student progress**

- a. *informal and/or authentic mathematics assessment:* Teacher observation and questioning; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, and student work; organizing data, problem solving; comparing and contrasting; model building; planning, forecasting, and decision making
- b. *formal mathematics assessments:* Unit or chapter tests, standardized state tests and national tests, normed tests, and criterion-referenced tests

- III. **SCIENCE** contains approximately 12 percent of the test, or 13 questions. Within the science content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of life science, Earth and space science, physical science, and health concepts.

A. Curriculum

1. **Life science:** Characteristics of organisms, life cycles of organisms, organisms and environments
2. **Earth and space science:** Interrelationships in Earth systems and space systems; Earth patterns, cycles, and change; geology; hydrology; meteorology; oceanography; soil science
3. **Physical science:** Physical and chemical changes; temperature and heat; sound; light; electricity and magnetism; force, motion, and energy; matter; astronomy
4. **Health:** Healthy living, growth, nutrition, safety and well-being, communicable diseases, substance abuse, common diseases

B. Instruction

1. **Science concepts and processes:** Understanding unifying concepts and processes in science—that is, providing connections between traditional scientific disciplines, systems, subsystems, models, and conservation; personal and social perspective of science; history and nature of science
2. **Scientific inquiry:** Constructing ideas and explanations; asking questions and using appropriate questioning techniques; developing testable questions and hypotheses; planning, conducting, and observing simple investigation; constructing explanations and communicating results; solving problems
3. **Scientific data:** Choosing the appropriate tools of science to gather data; organizing and using data to construct reasonable explanations; explaining and communicating investigations, data, evidence, and results; organizing and analyzing data in the form of databases, spreadsheets, and graphics programs
4. **Model building and forecasting:** Use of plans and computer simulations
5. **Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology in science in the form of graphic organizers, displays, rulers, balances, thermometers, textbooks, trade books, software, the Internet, graphing calculators, videomicroscopes, film, and computer simulations; justifications for use of materials, equipment, texts, and technology
6. **Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, extensions; language and communication; developmentally appropriate instruction
7. **Teaching methods:** Guided discovery, laboratory approach, problem solving, exposition and direct instruction, games, situations and recreations, investigations
8. **Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students, such as students with special needs, second language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in science: what is appropriate and why

C. Assessment

1. **Analysis of student work to guide science instruction:** What students can do correctly; ideas students are conceptualizing or developing; misconceptions and errors students may be having difficulty with; how students are progressing; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring
2. **Evaluation of science instructional effectiveness and student progress**
 - a. *informal and/or authentic science assessment:* Teacher observation and questioning; journals and/or logs; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, and student work; comparing and contrasting
 - b. *formal science assessments:* Unit or chapter tests and teacher-made tests, standardized state or national tests

IV. SOCIAL STUDIES contains approximately 12 percent of the test, or 13 questions. Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences to promote civic responsibilities. Within social studies, this section covers the teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of geography; history; government, civics, and economics; anthropology and sociology; and historical analysis and interpretation.

A. Curriculum

1. **Geography:** Uses of geography; locations, place, and human movement; environment and society; places and regions; human and physical systems; state, regions, United States, and the world
2. **History:** Society, democracy, chronological thinking, relationships between past and present; U.S. history from founding to twentieth century; twentieth-century developments and transformations in the United States; classical civilizations: Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China
3. **Government, civics, and economics:** Market economy; economic decision making as consumers, employers, and workers; global marketplace; politics; local, state, and federal government; constitution of the United States; citizenship; industrialization; government's role in economics and impact of economics on government

4. **Anthropology and sociology:** Impact of conditions and events; how people of different cultural backgrounds interact with their environment; self, family, neighborhoods, and communities; interactions between different communities; connections between causes and effects of events; communication; transportation; technology; social organization and human behavior in society
5. **Historical analysis and interpretation:** Causes of events; compare and contrast events; hypothesize how past influenced present

B. Instruction

1. **Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Various methods to adjust social studies instruction to meet students' needs: what is appropriate and why; effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, and extensions; multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary; separate subjects; integration strategies, such as reading and writing across the curriculum
2. **Teaching methods:** Activating learning, projects, guided discovery, problem solving, exposition and direct instruction, games, situations and recreations, investigations
3. **Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students, such as students with special needs, second language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in social studies
4. **Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology in social studies, such as physical, topographic, political, and weather maps; globes, aerial imagery, satellite images, graphs, tables, diagrams, graphic organizers, pictures, real-word resources, and trade books, including multicultural texts and narrative texts as well as information from various sources, software, and the Internet

C. Assessment

1. Analysis of student work to guide social

studies instruction: What students can do correctly; ideas students are conceptualizing or developing; student misconceptions or errors; how students are progressing; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring student work and understanding

2. Evaluation of instructional effectiveness and student progress

- a. *informal and/or authentic social studies assessment:* Teacher observation and questioning; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, oral reports, and student work; comparing and contrasting; organizing data; problem solving; critical thinking; model building; planning, forecasting, and decision making
- b. *formal assessments in social studies:* Unit or chapter tests and teacher-made tests, standardized state or national tests

2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

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

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

Understanding Computer-Delivered Questions

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

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

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

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

Remember that with every question you will get clear instructions.

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

Understanding Selected-Response Questions

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

Which of the following is a flavor made from beans?

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

How would you answer this question?

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

Try following these steps to select the correct answer.

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

Try a more challenging example

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How to approach unfamiliar formats

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

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

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

Understanding Constructed-Response Questions

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

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

Take a look at a few sample essay topics:

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

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

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

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


For tests that have constructed-response questions, more detailed information can be found in "1. Learn About Your Test" on page 5.

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Sample Test Questions

This test is available via computer delivery only. The following sample question provides a preview of an actual screen used in a computer-delivered test. For the purposes of this Study Companion, the sample questions are shown as they would appear in a paper-delivered test.



Question 1 of 94

Review

Mark

Help

Back

Next

Show Time

While planning units for science instruction, a teacher includes weekly quizzes, a project, and end of chapter tests. Which of the following best describes the primary purpose for including such activities while planning instruction?

- ☐ To determine students' prior knowledge
- ☐ To monitor students' progress
- ☐ To forecast students' success rate in state tests
- ☐ To compare student achievement with that of previous classes

Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response.

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. Mr. Harrison, a fourth-grade social studies teacher, recognizes that students are experiencing difficulty comprehending a chapter in the textbook. Mr. Harrison decides to use a strategy in which he and his students share responsibility for discussions as they predict, clarify, and summarize while reading the text. Mr. Harrison is most likely using which of the following instructional strategies?
 - (A) Modeling
 - (B) Reciprocal teaching
 - (C) Coaching
 - (D) Guided reading

2. Terry is a third-grade student in Ms. Henley's class. In his response journal, Terry wrote the following.

Manuel is tallest than his brother.

Which of the following statements can Ms. Henley make to provide Terry with the most specific positive feedback?

 - (A) "Terry, this is a great sentence."
 - (B) "Terry, this sentence needs more description. Can you use a dictionary to add more detail?"
 - (C) "Terry, the subject and verb in your sentence need to agree."
 - (D) "Terry, the word 'tallest' is used to compare more than two things. Can you think of another way to write the sentence and show me the revision?"

3. A fifth-grade teacher in an urban school is having the class read the book *The Noontday Friends*, set in New York City's Greenwich Village, by Mary Stolz. Joanne, a new student who lived in a rural community for her entire life prior to moving to the school, is having difficulty understanding the novel, although she has read many books of comparable difficulty. Which of the following is the most likely reason for Joanne's difficulty in comprehension?
 - (A) Joanne's instructional level is significantly below that of the other students.
 - (B) Joanne's experiences do not include background knowledge of certain topics in the story.
 - (C) Joanne's previous instruction has focused on building word recognition skills and fluency.
 - (D) Joanne's oral language abilities are significantly above her reading comprehension skills.

4. A fourth-grade teacher organizes the class into literature circles and allows each group to choose a book of interest to them. Before students begin to read independently, the teacher gives students a story map to complete while reading. When students meet in their literature circles, they use the story map to guide discussion of the story. Which of the following reading skills is best reinforced by the activity?
 - (A) Word recognition
 - (B) Comprehension
 - (C) Fluency
 - (D) Vocabulary development

5. A teacher asks students to look at the words "boil" and "caught" and notice how the two vowels in each word begin with one vowel sound and move or glide to another within the same syllable. The examples best illustrate which of the following concepts?
 - (A) Diphthong
 - (B) Blend
 - (C) Digraph
 - (D) Onset

6. Which of the following is the most effective way to help young children strengthen their emerging literacy skills?
- (A) Allowing children to play games matching letters and sounds
 - (B) Giving students phonics worksheets to complete
 - (C) Reading to children and providing opportunities for the children to read independently
 - (D) Teaching children how to use a picture dictionary
7. In an elementary language arts class, the students selected and read two stories from *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Which of the following activities is most appropriate to encourage students' critical-reading skills?
- (A) Selecting and memorizing a passage from one of the fairy tales
 - (B) Completing a graphic organizer to compare the two fairy tales
 - (C) Skimming the fairy tales to create a list of unknown words to define
 - (D) Preparing an oral summary of one of the fairy tales to present to the class
8. During a writing activity a teacher writes two sentences from a sample of a student's writing on the whiteboard. The teacher shows the students how to use appropriate proofreading marks and asks them to proofread the first paragraph of their own writing samples. Which of the following traits of writing is the teacher's focus?
- (A) Ideas
 - (B) Voice
 - (C) Conventions
 - (D) Organization
9. A teacher says to the students, "Let's put together these sounds: /ch/-/i/-/n/ (chin)." The primary focus of the activity is to foster students' development in which of the following areas?
- (A) Alphabetic principle
 - (B) Phonemic awareness
 - (C) Sight words
 - (D) Syllable formation

10. Given the handwriting sample above of a second-grade student, which of the following is probably true?
- (A) The student needs more practice in proper word spacing.
 - (B) The student needs more practice in correctly connecting letters.
 - (C) The student needs more practice in under strokes but not over strokes.
 - (D) The student needs more practice in baseline function.
11. A fourth-grade student is struggling to understand the following mathematics problem.
- Riding on a school bus are 18 students in first grade, 12 in second grade, 9 in third grade, and 11 in fourth grade. What percent of the students on the bus are in first grade?
- Which of the following guiding questions will help the student understand the meaning of percent in the context of the problem?
- (A) Percent means per hundred, so what would the numerator be if the denominator was 100?
 - (B) When you divide 18 by 50 you get 0.36. What do you do to the decimal point to change to percent?
 - (C) If the ratios stayed the same and there were 100 students on the bus, how many would be in first grade?
 - (D) If the ratios stayed the same, how many buses would you need to have 100 students in first grade?

12. Students in a fifth-grade class are using centimeter grid paper and scissors to explore how some two-dimensional figures can be folded into three-dimensional figures. Which of the following are the students exploring?

(A) Rotations
(B) Reflections
(C) Nets
(D) Translations

13. To introduce students to geometry, a first-grade teacher gives the students objects with different shapes from around the classroom. Which of the following concepts is most appropriate for the students to explore?

(A) Measurement of angles
(B) Plane and solid figures
(C) Areas and perimeters
(D) Reflection and rotation

14. A third-grade student makes errors in subtraction problems because of a lack of understanding of place value. Which of the following strategies is most likely to be effective in assisting the student?

(A) Giving the student the correct answers
(B) Allowing the student to use a calculator to solve a set of subtraction exercises
(C) Asking the student to use concrete aids to represent the subtraction process
(D) Showing the student where the errors were made and having the student redo the problems

$$30 \div 6, 53 \div 7, 84 \div 8, 75 \div 9$$

15. Third graders studying division were asked to solve and check the four division problems above and then write a story for each problem. Which of the following is the most likely reason for asking the students to write the stories?

(A) To have students demonstrate that division can mean partitioning a set of objects
(B) To have students practice division skills through drill-and-check exercises
(C) To help students write quotients that might contain a decimal
(D) To have students practice the strategy of solving a simpler problem than those presented

16. Which of the following activities will best help students make real-life connections?

(A) First graders use pennies as manipulatives to help them solve subtraction problems
(B) Third graders write journal entries explaining their solution strategies for multiplication problems
(C) Kindergarteners write fractions to represent proportions that the teacher demonstrates with fraction pies
(D) Fifth graders use cardboard cutouts to make small boxes for a holiday-gift drive

65	17	45
<u>+28</u>	<u>+74</u>	<u>+15</u>
813	811	510

17. Given the student work sample above, the most likely reason for the errors is that the student has difficulty

(A) recalling addition facts
(B) recognizing a reasonable answer
(C) interpreting arithmetic symbols
(D) rounding up whole numbers

18. For a social studies unit, students in a third-grade class will be learning about the town in which they live. Since most of the students have lived in the town all their lives, the teacher plans to begin the unit with an activity that will activate their prior knowledge. Which of the following activities will be most effective in meeting the teacher's goal?
- (A) Having students brainstorm as a group about the important events in the town's history
 - (B) Asking each student to make a list of the important events in the town's history
 - (C) Allowing each student to pick an event in the town's history to write an essay about
 - (D) Showing a video of the town's history and having students summarize the important events
19. Students in a social studies class are studying the three branches of government and how power is shared among them through the system of checks and balances. The teacher asks the students to come up with examples of when their choices have been limited as a result of their being a member of a family or group. The activity will require the students to use which of the following levels of cognition?
- (A) Analysis
 - (B) Synthesis
 - (C) Application
 - (D) Knowledge
20. Primary-grade teachers in a school plan to invite guests from service industries to speak to their classes. The activity best fits with which of the following units from the social studies curriculum?
- (A) Government
 - (B) Geography
 - (C) Economics
 - (D) History
21. Which of the following best integrates literature into a unit about settling the frontier beyond the Appalachian Mountains?
- (A) Having students work in pairs to identify why settlers moved from the original colonies to the frontier
 - (B) Asking students to pretend that they are pioneers traveling into the frontier areas and keep a diary of their experience, as suggested by the journal of Jedidiah Morse
 - (C) Asking students to research the daily life of the American pioneers and find drawings that illustrate interesting events that took place at that time
 - (D) Having students read and do a report on one of the books of Laura Ingalls Wilder, which tell about the experience of a family homestead in the 1800s
22. After conducting an experiment to test a hypothesis they proposed, two students concluded that the hypothesis was incorrect. Assuming their data are accurate, which of the following is the best next step for the teacher?
- (A) Asking the students to use the Internet to search for information relating to the hypothesis
 - (B) Recommending that the students reformulate their hypothesis with the new data in mind
 - (C) Suggesting that the students repeat the experiment until their results confirm the hypothesis
 - (D) Explaining to the students what they did wrong
23. Information regarding which of the following needs to be taught prior to a unit for elementary students about the life cycles of organisms?
- (A) Classification of plants and animals
 - (B) Habitats and adaptations
 - (C) Biodiversity
 - (D) Genetics

24. Fifth-grade students have been learning about famous inventors, including the Wright brothers, who invented and built the first airplane. Their teacher suggests that the students design paper planes that will fly. Then she suggests that the students test them, make changes, and come up with a design for a paper airplane contest. The scenario given reflects the effective use of
- (A) inquiry teaching
 - (B) reciprocal teaching
 - (C) cooperative teaching
 - (D) interdisciplinary teaching
25. While planning units for science instruction, a teacher includes weekly quizzes, a project, and end-of-chapter tests. Which of the following best describes the primary purpose for including such activities while planning instruction?
- (A) To determine students' prior knowledge
 - (B) To monitor students' progress
 - (C) To forecast students' success rates in state tests
 - (D) To compare student achievement with that of previous classes

Answers to Sample Questions

1. This question asks you to apply your understanding of instructional strategies that will aid comprehension. Reciprocal teaching (B) is an instructional approach that features interactive dialogue between the teacher and the students. Initially, the teacher models strategies such as clarifying, predicting, questioning, and summarizing, and then gradually turns over the responsibility to the students. The students take turns being the teacher and leading small-group discussions of the text. Modeling (A) refers to a description that is intended to show the flow of an overall process. Coaching (C) is the process of using direct instruction to support an individual to achieve a specific goal. Guided reading (D) describes reading instruction in which the teacher provides the structure and purpose for reading and for responding to the material read. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

2. This question asks you to apply your understanding of evaluating students' writing and providing appropriate feedback. In (D), the teacher provides the student with specific feedback, pointing out the error in the sentence. The teacher also provides the student with a next step by asking him to think of another way to write the sentence. In (A), the sentence is positive but does not give the student adequate feedback. In (B), the response is inaccurate and does not address the problem in the sentence. In (C), the feedback is neither specific nor accurate about the student's work. The correct answer, therefore, is (D).

3. This question asks you to apply your knowledge of selecting appropriate reading materials and the factors that affect reading comprehension. Readers use their background knowledge to help them comprehend the information in a text. In the process of comprehending, readers relate the new information presented by the author to old information stored in their minds. It is highly probable that the student had little or no prior knowledge about the topic and, therefore, had difficulty constructing meaning. With the information given, (A), (C), and (D) are not correct because the student had previously read books of a comparable reading level. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

4. This question asks you to apply your understanding of instructional strategies that foster reading comprehension. The task requires students to summarize a selection using a graphic organizer and then use that graphic organizer to guide a discussion of the story. The activity does not require students to decode words (A, word recognition) or look for the meaning of new words (D, vocabulary development). The activity also does not foster fluency (C) since it does not focus on how well the students are able to read the text. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

5. This question asks you to apply your understanding of phonics and phonological awareness. Diphthongs (A) refer to vowel sounds produced when the tongue glides from one vowel sound toward another vowel sound in the same syllable. Blends (B) describe the joining of two or more letters with minimal change in those sounds. Digraphs (C) are two letters that represent one speech sound. Onsets (D) are the consonants preceding the vowel of a syllable. The correct answer, therefore, is (A).

6. This question asks you to apply your understanding of activities that foster the development of children's reading skills. Emergent literacy is a continuously evolving ability that results from one's experiences and experiments with language in literacy contexts. Emergent literacy focuses on the reading and writing development of young children before they attain conventional literacy skills and strategies. Highlights of a child's progression toward conventional literacy include developing an understanding of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and a sense of story. (A) and (B) are incorrect because they are skills that children acquire later in the literacy development process. (D) is not relevant. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

7. This question asks you to apply your understanding of effective questioning strategies. Critical-reading skills are the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize what one reads. It is also the ability to see relationships between different ideas used in a story and to use that information as an aid in reading. (A) describes rote learning, (C) describes vocabulary development, and (D) describes an activity that fosters comprehension and oral language development. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

8. This question asks you to apply your understanding of the traits of writing. Ideas (A) refer to the message the writer hopes to convey. Voice (B) describes the writer's emotions, opinions, and personality. Conventions (C) are the editing and revising components of the writing process. Organization (D) describes how a writer clarifies and organizes his or her thoughts. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

9. This question asks you to apply your understanding of phonics and reading development. The teacher is providing the students with the individual component sounds that make up a word and showing them how to blend the sounds into one word. Alphabetic principle (A) describes the assumption underlying the alphabetic writing systems—that each speech sound or phoneme of a language should have its own distinctive graphic representation. Phonemic awareness (B) is the perception of the sounds that make up spoken words. Sight words (C) are words that are immediately recognized as a whole and do not require word analysis for identification. Syllables (D) describe the unit of organization of a sequence of sounds. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

10. This question asks you to apply understanding of the stages of writing development and the evaluation of a student's work. With the given sample, the student connected the letters in cursive correctly (B), used appropriate spacing between words (A), and used correct letter formation (C). However, the student needs more practice in baseline formation because the letters do not reside appropriately on the lines. The correct answer, therefore, is (D).

11. This question asks you to apply your understanding of effective reteaching strategies. (A) and (B) would help the student get the answer but do not explain the concept of percents. (C) uses the context of the problem given to explain percents. (D) is wrong because the number of buses required is irrelevant to answering the question. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

12. This question asks you to apply your understanding of geometric figures and relationships. A net (C) is a closed-plane figure that can be folded into a closed three-dimensional figure. A rotation (A) is a figure that turns around a point. A reflection (B) is a transformation in which a figure is flipped over a line. Translation (D) refers to moving a shape without rotating or flipping it; the shape still looks exactly the same but is in a different place. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

13. This question asks you to apply your understanding of curriculum planning and selecting appropriate activities for different age groups or grade levels. Students in first grade are already familiar with some shapes, and by using this prior knowledge the teacher can introduce the students to other shapes and vocabulary used in geometry. The topics in (A), (C), and (D) are more advanced and are, therefore, not appropriate for this grade level. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

14. This question asks you to apply your understanding of using appropriate strategies to support students' learning. When students make computational errors, an effective way to guide them is by allowing the students to use manipulative or visual aids to model the process. (A) does not teach the student anything and would not guard against future mistakes. (B) does not foster the student's understanding. Showing the student the error (D) does not give the student an opportunity for self-correction. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

15. This question asks you to apply your understanding of appropriate teaching methods. In writing word problems, students need to demonstrate an understanding of arithmetic operations, different terms that are equivalent to a specific operation, and how to use those terms appropriately in word problems. (B) is incorrect because drill-and-check exercises help students memorize math facts. (C) is incorrect because in third grade, students will most likely deal with remainders as a leftover. Word problems in most instances require students to think critically about the situation presented, so (D) is wrong. The correct answer, therefore, is (A).

16. This question asks you to apply your understanding of selecting appropriate teaching methods. Reality-based instruction helps convey complex concepts. Instruction is explicit, and interactive techniques let students spend time with ideas, manipulating them and grasping them. (A) is not appropriate for first graders and is not being used in real-life context. (B) helps students clarify their thoughts, but will not help students make real-life connections. (C) uses manipulatives to help clarify students' understanding of fractions, but does not provide a real-life connection. The correct answer, therefore, is (D).

17. This question asks you to apply your understanding of analyzing students' work to guide mathematics instruction. From the samples provided, the student does not make any errors adding the columns. The student added the numbers, and the questions do not require rounding up. (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect. From two-digit numbers all less than 100, the student arrives at sums ranging between 500 and 800. Since the numbers being added are all less than 100, the student should have noticed that the answers were far too large to be correct, and the sums should be less than one hundred. This shows that the student was unable to recognize the value of an appropriate answer. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

18. This question asks you to apply your understanding of appropriate ways to foster students' learning. Activating prior knowledge requires finding out what background knowledge students have. One way to activate prior knowledge is by brainstorming with students about the topics or ideas in a reading assignment. Asking relevant questions reveals background information that students have. Although (B) requires the student to list important events, it is not effective in capturing all the information a student knows about the town. In (C) and (D), the students are using resources to learn about the town, which does not require them to use prior knowledge. The correct answer, therefore, is (A).

19. This question asks you to apply your understanding of using appropriate strategies to enrich and extend students' learning. The activity requires students to use newly acquired information to connect with their personal experiences. Analysis (A) describes the process of examining and breaking down information into parts. Synthesis (B) refers to compiling information in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern. Application (C) describes solving problems by applying acquired knowledge, facts, and techniques in different situations. Knowledge (D) is remembering previously learned material; i.e., recalling facts, terms, or basic concepts from stated text. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

20. This question asks you to apply your knowledge of economics to the types of jobs people do. Service industries are in the sector of the economy that provides services (i.e., activities where people offer their knowledge and time to improve productivity, performance, potential, and sustainability) rather than create goods. (A), (B), and (D) refer to civics, geography, and history. The correct answer, therefore, is (C).

21. This question asks you to apply your understanding of effective curriculum integration. Successfully integrating literature into a social studies unit should involve activities that will best utilize the students' literacy skills, such as reading, writing, and oral presentations. (A) focuses on teamwork and requires students to use research skills. (B) focuses on students' creativity and imagination. (C) focuses on research. In (D), students read and report on a book, which requires skills such as summarizing and organizing information. The correct answer, therefore, is (D).

22. This question asks you to apply your understanding of the process of scientific inquiry; i.e., developing testable questions and hypotheses. Scientific inquiry is a powerful way of understanding science content. Students learn how to ask questions and use evidence to answer them. In the process of learning the strategies of scientific inquiry, students learn to conduct an investigation and collect evidence from a variety of sources, develop an explanation from the data, and communicate and defend their conclusions. Since the data the students used are accurate, the next best step for the students will be to redevelop their hypotheses given the evidence collected. (A) and (C) do not support the fact that the data is correct, while (D) is not an appropriate way to support the students' learning process. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

23. This question asks you to apply your understanding of how the components of a curriculum are organized. To learn about life cycles and reproduction, students need to know the characteristics of living things (feeding habits, habitat, and structures that help them adjust to their environment in order to survive). (A) refers to how living things are grouped given shared characteristics. (C) refers to the variation of life forms within an ecosystem. (D) is the study of heredity. Knowledge of those areas of science is not necessary for elementary students to learn about life cycles. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

24. This question asks you to apply your understanding of the instructional process and scientific inquiry. With inquiry teaching (A), the teacher provides the question and procedure while students generate an explanation supported by the evidence they have collected. In reciprocal teaching (B), students become the teacher in small-group reading sessions. The teacher models, then helps students learn to guide group discussions. Cooperative teaching (C) is a strategy in which small teams of teachers, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Interdisciplinary teaching (D) is a method used to teach a unit across different curricular disciplines. The correct answer, therefore, is (A).

25. This question asks you to apply your understanding of analyzing students' progress to guide science instruction. Formative assessments are embedded into the learning process and provide information that helps monitor students' progress and evaluate instructional effectiveness. The assessments also help teachers to differentiate learning, thereby improving student achievement. (A), (C), and (D) are not examples of purposes of formative assessments. The correct answer, therefore, is (B).

Sample Constructed-Response Questions

This section presents two sample constructed-response questions and sample responses at each of the score points, along with the standards used in scoring the responses. When you read the sample responses, keep in mind that they are less polished than they would be if they had been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented. The examinees do not know what questions they will be asked and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. The scorers of the questions take these circumstances into account when evaluating the responses. Scorers will assign scores based on the following general scoring guide:

General Scoring Guide

Score of 3

The response demonstrates a strong, thorough understanding of the content, pedagogy, and student development relevant to the question.

A response in this category

- Answers all parts of the question clearly and specifically
- Shows strong knowledge of content and content-specific pedagogy
- Provides strong explanations that are well supported by examples or details

Score of 2

The response demonstrates a basic, adequate understanding of the content, pedagogy, and student development relevant to the question.

A response in this category

- Answers all parts of the question adequately
- Shows adequate knowledge of content and content-specific pedagogy
- Provides adequate explanations that are somewhat supported by examples or details

Score of 1

The response demonstrates a weak, limited understanding of the content, pedagogy, and student development relevant to the question.

A response in this category

- Answers the question in a limited way
- Demonstrates one or more of the following weaknesses
 - Failure to answer most parts of the question
 - Limited knowledge of content and pedagogy
 - Weak explanations inadequately supported by examples or details

Score of 0

The response demonstrates minimal or no understanding of the content, pedagogy, and student development relevant to the question.

A response in this category

- Fails to respond appropriately to any part of the question
- Shows virtually no knowledge of content or content-specific pedagogy
- Provides incoherent or no explanations or supporting examples

Also receiving a score of 0 would be responses that are blank or almost blank, completely off topic, or not written in English.

Reading and Language Arts Question

A third-grade class is exploring the theme of friendship in language arts. One of the stories the class will be reading is *Angelina and Alice* by Katharine Holabird. The book is about two friends who help each other learn gymnastic tricks to perform at the town fair. The friends learn that by working together and helping each other, they not only improve their performance but also become closer friends.

- a) Describe ONE instructional technique or strategy that you would use during the reading of the story to enhance the students' comprehension of the theme.
- b) Explain what you would do to determine that the strategy was successful in helping the students understand the theme.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

a) I would have the students read the story independently and list events in the story related to the theme of friendship. Then I would assign them to groups of four. Each group will combine their events into one list. A presenter will be chosen by the group to share their list with the class. During the presentations, I will organize the events on the board, and then we will discuss how the events relate to the theme of friendship. I will make sure each student in the class has a chance to say something related to the theme or to add to the organizer I have on the board.

The independent reading activity is appropriate because it is not totally teacher directed; the small-group work provides an opportunity for students to share their ideas and work together, and the whole-group work provides an opportunity to think critically about the events in the story that tell us about friendship. Students will use their oral language, visual, and listening skills, as the list is compiled and analyzed.

b) I would know the strategy was successful by having each student write a short story that tells us more about the friendship between Angelina and Alice. This extends the story, connects reading and writing, and provides a chance to practice the steps of process writing.

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 3

The response was scored a 3 because it shows a strong and convincing understanding of the principles of reading instruction that are developmentally appropriate for third graders. It contains a description of an instructional strategy and an explanation of how the strategy might enhance student comprehension of the theme. A group of students in third grade can be reading at many different levels. By reading independently, the students can pace themselves and are more apt to speak within their small group about what they have read. The activity also describes the teacher assessing comprehension individually and in small- and whole-group settings.

The follow-up writing activity is an ideal way to find out that the students understand how to depict the theme of friendship in their own writing.

Note: For this test, a *description* is more than a list. It is a picture in words that helps a reader get an image of what something is like. It requires that the writer provide details to help the reader get the picture. An *explanation* makes something clear and gives the reasons for doing it. It helps the reader (in this case, a trained rater) understand why you would do something.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

a) As I read the story aloud, modeling how to read with expression, I would stop periodically and ask the class questions about what is happening in the story. I would also have them predict what is going to happen at the end of the story.

b) We would discuss their predictions and whether they were right or wrong. We would also review the sequence of events so I could see if they understood what happened in the story from the beginning to the middle and to the end. This would help me check for understanding.

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 2

The response was scored a 2 because it describes the instructional strategy of modeling fluent reading—checking for understanding, asking questions, predicting, and discussing. The instructional strategy is appropriate; however, the explanation of how the teacher would check for understanding is not strong or detailed. In addition, there is very little explicit tie-in to the theme of friendship.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

a) I would begin by reading part of the story to the class myself, modeling fluent reading. Then I would choose someone else to read a page or two. The taking turns would continue until the reading of the story was complete and everyone had a chance to read.

b) I can tell if a student understands what she is reading if the reading is smooth and fluent.

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 1

The response was scored a 1 because the activity reflects a limited understanding of the principles of reading instruction for third-grade students. Modeling fluent reading is a good overall strategy, but round-robin reading is not. Students do not have to pay attention once they have had a turn reading, and there is no way to check for understanding of the story or theme when someone else is reading. The assessment suggested in part (b) is insufficient and subjective. It gives no explanation why understanding of the theme can be assessed that way.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 0

a) The instructional strategy I would use is to put the students into pairs to read the story. After reading the story, each group would make up a friendship game.

b) The students could pretend to be Alice and Angelina and decide which group's game they would like to play. If they have fun playing the game, I will know they are learning about getting along and being friends.

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 0

The response was scored a 0 because it shows minimal understanding of reading-instruction strategies. Pairing students is a grouping strategy to prepare for instruction, but no instruction is discussed in the response. There is also no mention of how to assess student comprehension of friendship as a theme in a story.

Mathematics Question

It is the first month of a new school year. Your objective is to teach second graders addition of two- and three-digit numbers without regrouping, but you find that your students do not understand place value.

- a) Describe ONE activity to help students understand place value. Be sure to include details of what the students would be doing during the activity.
- b) Explain how you would assess students' understanding of place value after the students have practiced with the activity.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

a) *The students could play a game using a place value chart and play coins. They practice trading ones for tens and tens for hundreds. To play: A student, Chris, rolls a 6 on a number cube, counts out 6 pennies, and places them in the ones section of the place value chart. On the next turn, Chris rolls a 5, places 5 pennies on the chart, trades 10 of the pennies for a dime, and places the dime in the tens column, keeping a penny in the ones column. Chris will then see that she has represented the number 11. When Chris has 10 dimes, Chris trades them for 1 silver dollar. At each stage of the game, Chris needs to say what she is doing and why she is doing it.*

b) *The teacher needs to make informal observations by sitting in on the games and taking notes on each student, perhaps using a prepared checklist. As a follow-up assessment, the students could be given a blank place value chart and two numbers on cards, such as 54 and 77. The student needs to represent the numbers on the place value chart, model the sum, and write the sum in numerals on the chart. The teacher can assess the student's understanding of place value by asking her to explain her thinking and saying the number in the sum she has modeled. Then the student could be given 3 numbers to model, add, and explain. Next step is to learn the addition algorithm.*

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 3

The response was scored a 3 because it is a strong response with an appropriate activity, clear examples of what the students would be doing, and an explanation of how the students would be assessed after completing the activity. The students will be using pennies and dimes to count with. The place value chart allows them to manipulate the money into the ones and tens columns. This hands-on approach will make an abstract idea more concrete for the students and, therefore, easier to understand. Also, by using a game format, students will feel more comfortable participating and seeking help from their classmates during the game if they are confused. The teacher is able to informally and formally assess individual student understanding by sitting in on each game and then by giving a follow-up assignment on place value. Having more than one assessment for a difficult and challenging concept like place value is extremely important.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

a) *The students would play a game using a place value chart. For example, a student rolls a 6 with a number cube. They count out 6 pennies and place them in the ones section of their place value chart. On their next turn they roll a 5 and have to trade 10 pennies for a dime and place the dime in the tens column, keeping a penny in the ones column, for a total of 11. And so on.*

b) *The teacher could assess the students' understanding by watching what the students do as they observe each round of the game.*

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 2

The response was scored a 2 because it provided an adequate response containing an activity of having students play a place value game. The response also provides examples of what the students will be doing by rolling the number cube and trading pennies for a dime. Although the teacher will be informally assessing the students, that is not enough of an assessment to truly know if the students understand place value. The students need to be able to explain their thinking and apply their knowledge to a new situation or type of problem.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

a) The students would play a game using a place value chart. They would use pennies and dimes in the ones and tens columns to show they understand place value. They would exchange dimes for dollars as well.

b) Students play the game until they feel they understand place value and are ready to learn an algorithm for adding numbers with regrouping.

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 1

The response was scored a 1 because the activity reflects a limited understanding of place value and lacks examples of what the students will be doing during the activity. There is also no explanation of how students' understanding of place value would be assessed. A student may say he or she understands something, but this is not sufficient as an assessment tool.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 0

a) The students would play a game using a place value chart, number cubes, play coins, calculators, and work sheets. b) The students will make up games using number cubes and calculators, perhaps trying to predict outcomes in multiple tosses of the cubes.

Commentary on Response That Received a Score of 0

The response was scored a 0 because it shows minimal understanding of place value. Having the students play a game is an acceptable activity, but there are no details given about the game in the response. There is also no assessment of the students' understanding of place value.

4. Determine Your Strategy for Success

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

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

1) Learn what the test covers.

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

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

2) Assess how well you know the content.

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

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

3) Collect study materials.

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

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

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

4) Plan and organize your time.

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

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

5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

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

6) Understand how questions will be scored.

Scoring information can be found in "9. Understand Your Scores" on page 43.

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 36 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 36, 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 “Topics Covered” information beginning on page 5 to help complete it.

Use this worksheet to:

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

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

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

(continued on next page)

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

My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

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

Praxis Test Name: _____

Praxis Test Code: _____

Test Date: _____

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

(continued on next page)

[illegible]

6. Review Smart Tips for Success

Follow test-taking tips developed by experts

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

Should I Guess?

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

Can I answer the questions in any order?

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

Are there trick questions on the test?

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

Are there answer patterns on the test?

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

Can I write on the scratch paper I am given?

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

Smart Tips for Taking the Test

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

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

7. Check on Testing Accommodations

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

What if English is not my primary language?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. Do Your Best on Test Day

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

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

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

On the day of the test, you should:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Test centers assume no responsibility for your personal items.

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

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

Are You Ready?

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

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

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

9. Understand Your Scores

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

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

What are the score requirements for my state?

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

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

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

How do I know whether I passed the test?

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

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

What your *Praxis* scores mean

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

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

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

Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

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

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

Content category scores and score interpretation

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

Score scale changes

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

These resources may also help you interpret your scores:

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

Appendix: Other Questions You May Have

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

What do the *Praxis* tests measure?

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

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

Who takes the tests and why?

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

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

Do all states require these tests?

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

What is licensure/certification?

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

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

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

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

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

How were the tests developed?

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

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

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

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

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

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

How long will it take to receive my scores?

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

Can I access my scores on the Web?

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

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

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

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

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