

The Praxis® Study Companion

# Psychology

5391



# Welcome to *The Praxis*® Study Companion

## Prepare to Show What You Know

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

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

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

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

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

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

Your teaching career begins with preparation. Good luck!

## Know What to Expect

### Which tests should I take?

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

Before you register for a test, confirm your state or agency's testing requirements at [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://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 39).

### **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](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register).

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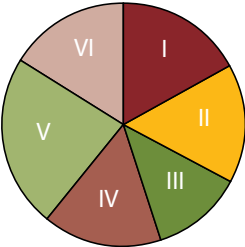
*The Praxis® Study Companion guides you through the steps to success*

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# 1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

## Psychology (5391)

Test at a Glance			
<b>Test Name</b>	Psychology		
<b>Test Code</b>	5391		
<b>Time</b>	2 hours		
<b>Number of Questions</b>	120		
<b>Format</b>	Selected-response questions		
<b>Test Delivery</b>	Computer Delivered		
	<b>Content Categories</b>	<b>Approximate Number of Questions</b>	<b>Approximate Percentage of Test</b>
	I. Methods, Approaches, Ethics and Assessment	20	17%
	II. Biopsychology, Sensation and Perception, and States of Consciousness	19	16%
	III. Life Span Development and Individual Differences	15	12%
	IV. Learning, Memory, and Cognition	19	16%
	V. Personality, Social Psychology, Motivation and Emotion, and Stress	28	23%
	VI. Psychological Disorders and Treatment	19	16%

## About This Test

The Psychology test measures whether entry-level psychology educators have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice.

The development of this test was guided by the *National Standards for High School Curricula*, as developed by the Teaching of Psychology in Secondary Schools, an affiliate of the American Psychological Association.

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

## Test Specifications

Test specifications in this chapter describe the knowledge and skills measured by the test. Study topics to help you prepare to answer test questions can be found on page 30.

### I. Methods, Approaches, Ethics, and Assessment

#### A. History and Approaches

1. Understands that psychology is an empirical science
  - a. explains the scientific method
  - b. demonstrates an understanding of research-based problem solving, intervention, and decision making
2. Understands contemporary approaches to the study of psychology
  - a. describes major characteristics of, and recognizes similarities and differences between, behavioral, cognitive, humanistic, biological, psychodynamic, and evolutionary approaches
  - b. applies contemporary approaches to real-world situations
3. Is familiar with the major psychological subfields and careers
  - a. identifies major characteristics of the subfields of biopsychology, clinical, cognitive, developmental, industrial/organizational, learning, personality, sensation and perception, and social
4. Is familiar with key historical figures in the study of psychology
  - a. identifies the major contributions of historical figures in psychology, such as Ainsworth, Bandura, Erikson, Freud, Horney, James, Jung, Loftus, Maslow, Pavlov, Piaget, Rayner, Skinner, Watson, and Wundt

#### B. Research Methods

1. Is familiar with basic psychological research principles
  - a. differentiates independent, dependent, and control variables
  - b. recognizes appropriate sampling techniques and random assignment
  - c. understands the importance of operational definitions

2. Knows appropriate research methods to study psychological issues
  - a. knows the major characteristics and appropriate use of observation, experimentation, surveys, and case studies; knows correlational, cross-sectional, and longitudinal designs
3. Knows basic statistical concepts
  - a. calculates mean, median, mode
  - b. describes the use of correlation and standard deviation
4. Understands the ethical issues in research with humans and animals
  - a. understands the importance of informed consent, confidentiality, protection from harm, and ethics review boards in research
  - b. knows about major historical research studies and their influence on the development of ethical principles

#### C. Assessment

1. Understands basic principles of assessment
  - a. explains and applies the principles of reliability, validity, standardization, and norms to assessment situations
  - b. understands the limits of assessment outcomes based on assessment characteristics
2. Understands the ethical issues relevant to psychological assessment
  - a. describes the appropriate use of assessments
  - b. understands the importance of the confidentiality of score reports
  - c. recognizes the implications of test bias for interpreting test scores

## II. Biopsychology, Sensation and Perception, and States of Consciousness

### A. Biopsychology

1. Knows basic neuronal structures and their functions
  - a. describes the parts of the neuron
  - b. explains the process of an action potential
  - c. recognizes major neurotransmitters and neuromodulators (e.g., acetylcholine, serotonin, dopamine) and their functions
2. Understands the organization of the nervous system
  - a. recognizes the structure and function of the central and peripheral, somatic and autonomic, and sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems
3. Understands the organization and basic functions of brain structures
  - a. recognizes the structure and function of the frontal, parietal, temporal, and occipital lobes
  - b. knows about the hemispheres of the brain, corpus callosum, and lateralization
  - c. recognizes the structure and function of the limbic system
  - d. recognizes the importance of the cerebellum, hypothalamus, and thalamus
4. Is familiar with clinical and technological methods for studying the brain (e.g., MRI, CT scan, fMRI)
5. Knows the structure and function of the endocrine system
  - a. recognizes the functions of the major glands of the endocrine system (e.g., pituitary, adrenal)
  - b. identifies major hormones (e.g., adrenaline, estrogen, testosterone) and their functions
6. Is familiar with the concept that heredity, evolution, and environment influence behavior
  - a. recognizes the importance of genetic and environmental influences (e.g., nature and nurture) on behavior
  - b. knows the perspective of evolutionary psychology

### B. Sensation and Perception

1. Understands basic sensory concepts and processes (e.g., thresholds, transduction, sensory receptors)
  - a. differentiates absolute and difference thresholds
  - b. describes the structure and function of the visual, auditory, somatosensory, olfactory, gustatory, and vestibular systems
2. Is familiar with perceptual concepts and processes and how the interaction of the person and environment determine perception
  - a. recognizes the Gestalt principles and concepts such as perceptual set, figure-ground, depth perception, and constancy
3. Understands the function of selective attention

### C. States of Consciousness

1. Understands basic concepts of consciousness (e.g., unconscious, preconscious, altered states)
2. Knows the basic characteristics and theories of sleep and dreaming
  - a. knows the major theories of sleep and dreaming (e.g., activation-synthesis, repair and restoration, psychoanalytic)
3. Is familiar with the major categories of psychoactive drugs and their effects
  - a. recognizes common drugs, such as narcotics, depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens, and their effects
  - b. explains aspects of drug use, such as tolerance, dependency, addiction, and withdrawal

### III. Life Span Development and Individual Differences

#### A. Development

1. Knows major themes in development
  - a. describes continuity versus stages, stability versus change, and critical periods
2. Understands that development (e.g., social, cognitive, physical) occurs at every stage of life, including prenatal, childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood
3. Knows the basic principles and theories of physical, sensory, and perceptual development
4. Understands the principles and theories of cognitive and linguistic development
  - a. describes and applies concepts associated with major theories of cognitive development (e.g., Piaget, Vygotsky)
  - b. describes the major stages and theories of language development
5. Understands the principles and theories of emotional, social, and moral development
  - a. describes attachment theory and the strange situation
  - b. lists the order of development of emotions
  - c. describes and applies Kohlberg and Gilligan's theories of moral development
  - d. describes and applies Erikson's psychosocial stages
6. Knows heredity and environmental factors that interact in the process of development

#### B. Individual Differences

1. Is familiar with historical and contemporary theories of intelligence (e.g., Binet, Gardner, Spearman, Sternberg)
2. Is familiar with common intelligence tests (e.g., WISC, WAIS, Stanford-Binet)
3. Knows the limitations of intelligence testing
  - a. explains how cultural bias affects test scores
  - b. recognizes that common intelligence tests focus on verbal skills

### IV. Learning, Memory, and Cognition

#### A. Learning

1. Understands basic principles of learning
  - a. describes the concepts of contingency and timing
  - b. describes and applies the principles of stimulus generalization and stimulus discrimination
  - c. describes acquisition processes and influences
  - d. describes and applies the principles of extinction
2. Understands the principles of classical conditioning
  - a. explains and applies the concepts of unconditioned stimulus, unconditioned response, conditioned stimulus, and conditioned response
3. Understands the principles of operant conditioning
  - a. knows the characteristics of reinforcement and punishment and can apply them
  - b. describes and applies the various schedules of reinforcement
  - c. explains the process of shaping
4. Is familiar with the roles of cognition and culture in learning
  - a. describes the process of social learning
  - b. identifies basic environmental and cultural influences that affect learning
5. Understands the principles of social learning
  - a. understands the principles of modeling, imitation, and vicarious learning

#### B. Memory

1. Understands the basic processes of memory
  - a. describes the processes of encoding, storage, and retrieval
2. Understands the characteristics of memory
  - a. describes sensory memory (e.g., iconic, echoic)
  - b. explains working or short-term memory
  - c. recognizes long-term memory systems (e.g., declarative, procedural)
  - d. describes the process of consolidation from short-term to long-term memory



3. Is familiar with the biological bases of memory (e.g., hippocampus, cortex)
4. Is familiar with methods for improving memory
  - a. identifies various mnemonic devices and describes their use
  - b. describes elaborative rehearsal and levels of processing
  - c. recognizes the effect of context-dependency on memory
5. Is familiar with the concept of constructive memory

### C. Cognition

1. Knows how concepts are formed and knowledge is represented
  - a. describes and differentiates concepts and prototypes
  - b. discusses the concept of schema
2. Knows the processes and limitations of problem solving and decision making
  - a. recognizes the concepts of mental set, functional fixedness, and algorithm
  - b. recognizes the impact of availability, anchoring, and representativeness heuristics
  - c. explains confirmation and hindsight biases

## V. Personality, Social Psychology, Motivation and Emotion, and Stress

### A. Personality

1. Understands personality approaches and theories
  - a. explains the major similarities and differences between trait, psychoanalytic, humanistic, and social-cognitive approaches
  - b. describes the major theories of personality (e.g., Freud, Eysenck, Maslow, Rogers, Bandura, Adler, Horney)
2. Is familiar with common personality assessment tools and their purposes (e.g., MMPI, TAT, Rorschach)

### B. Social Psychology and Culture

1. Understands the basis of attributions and attitudes
  - a. explains the process of attribution and theories of attitude development (e.g., fundamental attribution error, cognitive dissonance, just-world hypothesis)
  - b. describes the relationships among stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination
2. Understands group and interpersonal influences on thought and behavior
  - a. explains and applies the concepts of group dynamics (e.g., groupthink, conformity, deindividuation, diffusion of responsibility)
  - b. explains and applies methods of persuasion (e.g., foot in the door, door in the face)
  - c. understands the relationships among authority, roles, and obedience
3. Understands factors that influence the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (e.g., proximity, similarity, attraction)
4. Knows major social categories (e.g., gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation)
5. Is familiar with the major components of culture (e.g., language, norms, technology)

### C. Motivation and Emotion

1. Understands basic motivational concepts and theories of motivation
  - a. explains extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation and their applications
  - b. explains Maslow's hierarchy of needs and its application
  - c. explains drive-reduction and incentive theories and their applications
2. Knows about the influence of biology, learning, and cultural factors on motivation and emotion
  - a. describes the process of homeostasis
  - b. explains the key biological and environmental mechanisms in hunger, thirst, and sex
  - c. recognizes social motives for behavior
3. Knows about the interaction of the

physiological, affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of emotions (e.g., physiological bases for emotions, affective interpretation of emotions)

- a. describes the major theories of emotion and their applications (e.g., James-Lange, Schachter two-factor, Cannon-Bard, facial feedback)
- b. recognizes the roles of the amygdala and limbic system in emotions
- c. recognizes universal facial expressions of emotion

#### D. Stress and Coping

1. Is familiar with sources of stress
  - a. identifies health problems that cause stress
  - b. recognizes how environmental factors can affect stress levels (e.g., role conflict, socioeconomic status, caregiver burden)
2. Understands physiological reactions to stress
  - a. describes the fight-or-flight response
  - b. discusses Selye's general adaptation syndrome
  - c. recognizes the effect of stress on the immune system and cardiovascular health
3. Understands psychological reactions to stress
  - a. recognizes the relation of stress to psychological disorders (e.g., anxiety disorders, depression)
  - b. recognizes the relationship between stress and performance (e.g., cognitive, behavioral)
4. Is familiar with appropriate cognitive and behavioral strategies for dealing with stress and promoting health
  - a. recognizes the benefit of perceived control
  - b. identifies multiple coping skills

## VI. Psychological Disorders and Treatment

### A. Psychological Disorders

1. Is familiar with the characteristics of psychological disorders and the factors that contribute to their development
  - a. recognizes common symptoms and the diagnoses associated with them
  - b. recognizes how genetic, biological, and environmental factors affect mental health
2. Knows major categories of psychological disorders
  - a. defines and recognizes the differences between various disorders, including anxiety, dissociative, neurodevelopmental, depressive disorders, bipolar and other related disorders, personality, schizophrenic spectrum and other psychotic, and somatic symptom
  - b. recognizes the appropriate uses of the current version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM)

### B. Treatment of Psychological Disorders

1. Understands common methods used to treat individuals with disorders
  - a. explains the basic principles of the behavioral, cognitive, psychodynamic, humanistic, and biological approaches to treatment and applies them to case examples
  - b. recognizes common therapeutic drugs, such as antidepressants, antipsychotics, and antianxiety medication, and their effects
  - c. familiar with evidence based practice
2. Is familiar with the types of practitioners who implement treatment
  - a. recognizes the defining characteristics of various mental health professions (e.g., counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers)
3. Is familiar with legal and ethical issues associated with the treatment of psychological disorders
  - a. describes the concepts of confidentiality and duty to warn

## 2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

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

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

### Understanding Computer-Delivered Questions

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

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

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

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

Remember that with every question you will get clear instructions.

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

## Understanding Selected-Response Questions

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

**Which of the following is a flavor made from beans?**

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

### How would you answer this question?

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

Try following these steps to select the correct answer.

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

### Try a more challenging example

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### How to approach unfamiliar formats

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

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

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

## Understanding Constructed-Response Questions

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

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

Take a look at a few sample essay topics:

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

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

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

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

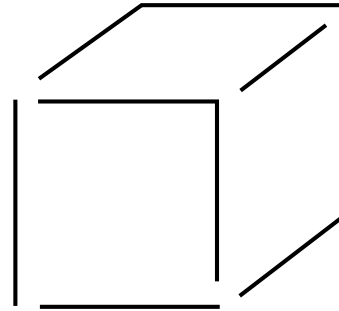
## 3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

### Sample Test Questions

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

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



- Which of the following lists Jean Piaget's stages of cognitive development in the correct sequence?
  - Concrete operational, sensorimotor, preoperational, formal operational
  - Preoperational, formal operational, concrete operational, sensorimotor
  - Preoperational, sensorimotor, formal operational, concrete operational
  - Sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, formal operational
- A psychologist using which of the following psychotherapeutic approaches is most likely to use systematic desensitization techniques?
  - Behavioral
  - Gestalt
  - Psychoanalytic
  - Rational-emotive
- Which of the following theorists proposed that humans are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, the highest of which is a need for self-actualization?
  - Abraham Maslow
  - Carl Jung
  - Sigmund Freud
  - Walter Mischel
- Which of the following schools of psychology has been most interested in explaining why the figure above is perceived as a cube?
  - Psychoanalysis
  - Behaviorism
  - Gestalt
  - Functionalism
- Which of the following terms is a psychologist most likely to use to refer to the categories that people use to classify events, objects, or individuals?
  - Images
  - Concepts
  - Scripts
  - Metacognition
- Electrical stimulation of which of the following parts of the nervous system in rats is most likely to elicit eating, drinking, or attack behavior?
  - Spinal cord
  - Medulla
  - Occipital lobe
  - Hypothalamus

7. Which of the following is an example of Lawrence Kohlberg's conventional morality in an adolescent female?
- (A) She volunteers to work in a soup kitchen on weekends because she believes her teachers would approve of such behavior.
  - (B) She volunteers to work in a soup kitchen on weekends because she believes all members of society are obliged to help others.
  - (C) She refuses to accompany her boyfriend to a party where alcohol will be served because she fears parental punishment for consuming alcohol.
  - (D) She refuses to accompany her boyfriend to a party where alcohol will be served because she disapproves of activities that might harm others.
8. Which of the following scenarios illustrates the just-world phenomenon, which explains our responses to certain behaviors?
- (A) A doctor attributes a fellow practitioner's bankruptcy to poor money management.
  - (B) A figure skater attributes her failure to win a tournament to a loose skate blade.
  - (C) An executive attributes her promotion to her supervisor's misjudgment.
  - (D) A mother blames the noise on the city street outside their home for preventing her son from earning good grades.
9. A father wants his child to take out the trash more often. Which of the following behavioral techniques would be most effective in increasing the behavior?
- (A) Negative reinforcement
  - (B) Habituation
  - (C) Punishment
  - (D) Extinction
10. Which of the following utterances by a psychotherapist to an anxious client would be most typical of a cognitive therapeutic approach?
- (A) "You say you feel you are very nervous."
  - (B) "Can you list or identify how you might be benefiting from your anxiety?"
  - (C) "What are you thinking about when you become anxious?"
  - (D) "Do you feel your parents met your childhood emotional needs adequately?"
11. Which of the following structures is correctly matched with its location in the brain?
- (A) Frontal lobe . . . somatosensory cortex
  - (B) Parietal lobe . . . primary motor cortex
  - (C) Temporal lobe . . . Wernicke's area
  - (D) Occipital lobe . . . Broca's area
12. Jake is a chronic liar, seems incapable of forming attachments to others, and does not experience any guilt for breaking laws or violating the rights of other people. According to the most recent version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Jake would most likely be diagnosed with
- (A) bipolar disorder
  - (B) antisocial personality disorder
  - (C) dissociative identity disorder
  - (D) schizophrenia
13. Barbara is attending a lecture titled "Conditions of Worth as Impediments to the Development of Self-Regard." It is most likely that the individual giving the lecture takes which of the following approaches to the study of personality?
- (A) Humanistic
  - (B) Behavioral
  - (C) Psychodynamic
  - (D) Sociocultural



14. I label the beating of my heart as fear because I evaluate the situation as dangerous.
- Which of the following is the theory of emotion that corresponds best to the statement above?
- (A) James-Lange
  - (B) Schachter's two-factor
  - (C) Opponent-process
  - (D) Cannon-Bard
15. Dogs can be trained to stay within a specific area of a yard by placing a collar on them that signals a tone twelve inches from where a shock will be delivered. After a few trials, the dog will not go beyond the area where the tone signals, thus avoiding the shock. What is the unconditioned stimulus in this example?
- (A) The tone
  - (B) The shock
  - (C) Fear of the shock
  - (D) Fear of the tone
16. Which of the following deficits is most likely to be present in a person who sustains an injury to the hippocampus?
- (A) An inability to learn a doctor's name
  - (B) Failure to recognize the faces of family members
  - (C) Loss of speech or hearing
  - (D) Loss of touch sensation on one side of the body
17. Jack is on his high school track team and has to train often. Which of the following scenarios suggests that Jack is on the team as a result of intrinsic motivation?
- (A) Jack truly enjoys running.
  - (B) Jack's father was a track star and wants Jack to be the best.
  - (C) Jack wants to get accepted to college and being a team member will look good on his transcript.
  - (D) Jack will receive a high school jacket because of his team membership, and this will help him fit in with the popular crowd.
18. The personality theory of which of the following psychologists focuses on unconditional positive regard as the basis for a healthy self-concept?
- (A) Abraham Maslow
  - (B) Carl Rogers
  - (C) Hans Eysenck
  - (D) Sigmund Freud
19. A normally distributed test has a mean of 60 and a standard deviation of 10. Which of the following score ranges is expected for 95 percent of the population who took the test?
- (A) 20 to 100
  - (B) 30 to 90
  - (C) 40 to 80
  - (D) 50 to 70
20. Which of the following techniques is best to use for determining whether an infant can perceive the difference between two colors?
- (A) Habituation
  - (B) The strange situation
  - (C) Negative reinforcement
  - (D) The visual cliff
21. Researchers conducted an experiment to determine whether listening to music while studying can improve performance on spelling tests. Two groups of students studied 30 minutes for a spelling test. One group wore earphones that played music while the students studied. The other group wore earphones that did not play music while the students studied. Which of the following is the dependent variable in the study?
- (A) Whether the students listened to music
  - (B) Whether students were wearing earphones
  - (C) Scores on the spelling test
  - (D) Amount of time spent studying

22. Which of the following is a likely explanation for why bystanders might not intervene to help an injured person?
- (A) Foot-in-the-door phenomenon
  - (B) Diffusion of responsibility
  - (C) Groupthink
  - (D) Group polarization
23. Which of the following senses provides the most information about how one's body, especially one's head, is oriented in the world with respect to gravity?
- (A) Visual
  - (B) Gustatory
  - (C) Vestibular
  - (D) Olfactory
24. A high school student is attempting to memorize the names of the cranial nerves. The student will likely experience greater success by organizing the information by function rather than by simply repeating the names numerous times. The increased likelihood of success in remembering the names of the nerves is due to
- (A) the tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon
  - (B) the Premack principle
  - (C) elaborative rehearsal
  - (D) procedural memory
25. A teacher notices that a student is trying to read a book that is above the student's reading level. The teacher helps by teaching the student how to pronounce and sound out the new words. Which of the following concepts is demonstrated by the teacher's actions?
- (A) Lev Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development
  - (B) Jean Piaget's concept of accommodation
  - (C) Urie Bronfenbrenner's concept of the macrosystem
  - (D) Sigmund Freud's concept of projection
26. Which of the following is most useful in showing the relationship between hours of study and course grade?
- (A) Pie chart
  - (B) Scatter plot
  - (C) Bar graph
  - (D) Normal distribution
27. During a unit on testing and assessment, a student questions the use of a vocational-aptitude test by arguing that it is not very effective in predicting job success. The best way for the teacher to respond to the student's objection is through a discussion of
- (A) reliability
  - (B) norms
  - (C) validity
  - (D) standard deviation
28. Jack is reading a scientific paper entitled "Repression and Unconscious Processes in the Development of Personality." The paper is most likely written from which of the following psychological perspectives?
- (A) Humanistic
  - (B) Behavioral
  - (C) Social cognitive
  - (D) Psychoanalytic

29. A book written by Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*, recounts the author's experiences in the world of low-wage workers and examines how low-paying jobs fulfill or defy the social assumptions about the working poor. To gather her data, Ehrenreich left her life as an established journalist and worked for a number of months as a waitress, a cleaning person, a nursing home aide, and a retail clerk. Which of the following methods of research did Ehrenreich use?
- (A) An experiment
  - (B) Participant observation
  - (C) A survey or interview
  - (D) Secondary data analysis
30. After a serious car accident, a person's feature detectors are damaged, resulting in difficulty identifying objects in the environment. Which part of the brain was most likely damaged?
- (A) Cerebellum
  - (B) Thalamus
  - (C) Hippocampus
  - (D) Occipital lobe

## Answers to Practice Questions

1. The correct answer is (D). According to Piaget, the sequence of stages is invariant.
2. The correct answer is (A). Systematic desensitization is a behavioral therapy, as opposed to Gestalt, psychoanalytic, and rational-emotive therapies.
3. The correct answer is (A). Maslow was a humanistic theorist who believed that certain basic needs, such as physiological needs, must be fulfilled before higher needs, such as esteem, are fulfilled. Jung and Freud were psychoanalytic theorists, and Mischel believed that the situation is a stronger determinant of behavior than are personality traits.
4. The correct answer is (C). Closure, one of the Gestalt principles, describes the tendency to complete figures that have gaps in them.
5. The correct answer is (B). Concepts is a term used to describe the classes or categories that people use for events, objects, individuals, or the relationships between them. Images, scripts, and metacognition are not terms that refer to classification.
6. The correct answer is (D). Electrical stimulation of the hypothalamus of rats has induced aggressive behavior, as well as eating and drinking behavior. Electrical stimulation of the other structures has not produced the same reactions.
7. The correct answer is (A). The girl's actions are motivated by approval of others. This is conventional moral judgment (stage 3). In the other choices, the girl's judgment is motivated by the morality of social contract, fear of punishment, and consideration of higher principles, respectively.
8. The correct answer is (A). The just-world phenomenon is the belief that there is fairness in the world, such that good people are rewarded and bad people are punished. In the situation in (A), someone is assumed to have done something wrong and been punished for it. In the other situations there is neither a wrong act being punished nor a good act being rewarded.
9. The correct answer is (A). In negative reinforcement, the removal of an unpleasant stimulus increases the probability of occurrence of a behavior. Habituation does not increase or decrease the frequency of a behavior. Punishment and extinction both decrease the frequency of a behavior.
10. The correct answer is (C). A cognitive therapist helps the client identify and change thoughts that contribute to maladaptive responses. The therapist does not focus on reflection of feelings, reinforcement of responses, or emotional aspects of past relationships.
11. The correct answer is (C). This question requires matching the structures in the cerebral cortex with the correct lobe. All but (C) are incorrectly paired. The somatosensory cortex is in the parietal lobe. The primary motor cortex and Broca's area are in the frontal lobe.
12. The correct answer is (B). Based on the most recent version of the DSM, the symptoms of lack of guilt and chronic violations of others' rights are consistent with the diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder.
13. The correct answer is (A). Conditions of worth and self-regard are constructs described by Carl Rogers, a humanistic psychologist. Behavioral psychologists focus on environmental consequences and how they affect behavior. Psychodynamic psychologists focus on how inner conflicts affect behavior, and psychologists with a sociocultural perspective are interested in how society or culture affects the individual.
14. The correct answer is (B). According to Schachter's two-factor theory, the experience of emotion begins with physiological arousal and then moves to a cognitive appraisal of that arousal. In other words, once one experiences physical arousal, one looks to what is going on in the environment to evaluate the meaning of the arousal. The other theories do not include a cognitive evaluation.
15. The correct answer is (B). The shock is the unconditioned stimulus. Without training, it elicits the unconditioned response (fear of the shock). The tone is the conditioned stimulus. The fear of the tone is the conditioned response.

16. The correct answer is (A). The hippocampus is involved in the storage of new information into memory. Failure to recognize faces might follow damage to the right parietal lobe, loss of speech or hearing might follow damage to the left temporal and frontal lobes, and loss of sensation might follow damage to the somatosensory cortex of either parietal lobe.

17. The correct answer is (A). When Jack is running for the pleasure of running rather than for an external reward, he is demonstrating internal rather than external motivation.

18. The correct answer is (B). Carl Rogers was a humanist who proposed the idea that a healthy self-concept arises from unconditional positive regard, or acceptance and support of a person regardless of the person's behavior. The other psychologists listed did not include unconditional positive regard in their personality theories.

19. The correct answer is (C). In a normally distributed set of scores, 95 percent of the scores will be within two standard deviations of the mean. With a mean of 60 and a standard deviation of 10, two standard deviations below will be 40, and two standard deviations above will be 80. Thus 95 percent of the scores will fall between 40 and 80.

20. The correct answer is (A). Habituation is the research technique used to determine whether an infant can perceive colors. The infant is shown a colored stimulus and a response (i.e., looking at the stimulus) is measured. As the infant habituates to the stimulus, the response decreases. The color is then changed. If the infant's response frequency or duration increases, there is evidence that the infant can perceive the change in color. If the response frequency or duration does not increase, there is evidence that the infant cannot perceive the change in color.

21. The correct answer is (C). The dependent variable is the variable being observed and measured as a result of manipulation of the independent variable. The variable being measured in this study is the score on the spelling test. The independent variable is whether the students listened to music. The other two choices were held constant in this study.

22. The correct answer is (B). Diffusion of responsibility can often explain why bystanders do not come to the aid of someone who obviously needs help. It typically occurs when there are a number of people present and each person assumes that one of the others will take, or already has taken, responsibility for the situation. The foot-in-the-door phenomenon is associated with persuasion, and groupthink and group polarization affect attitudes in group settings.

23. The correct answer is (C). The vestibular system provides information about how the head and body are oriented in the world with respect to gravity. The visual system contributes information to the vestibular system but does not process the gravity-related information. The other two systems are not involved at all.

24. The correct answer is (C). Organizing the information to be remembered by function, in comparison to just repeating it, provides an elaborative function and thus deepens the level of processing of the information. Information processed more deeply is more likely to be recalled. The tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon reduces, rather than increases, recall, the Premack principle is a behavioral phenomenon, and procedural memory is not used in this scenario.

25. The correct answer is (A). Lev Vygotsky believed in the zone of proximal development, a level of learning at which children cannot perform a task on their own, but can perform the task with the assistance of a more advanced student or a teacher. The other three answer choices describe components of various theories of development, but they do not match the scenario.

26. The correct answer is (B). A scatter plot is used to show the relationship between two continuous variables. One variable is mapped on the x-axis and the other variable is mapped on the y-axis. The result is a scatter of points representing people's scores on the two variables. Pie charts, bar graphs, and normal distributions are also methods for reporting data but are not the best way to report scores on two continuous variables.

27. The correct answer is (C). An aptitude test's intended use is to predict future performance. If the vocational-aptitude test does not predict future performance, there is a problem with validity. Validity assesses whether a test measures or predicts what it purports to. Reliability is about the consistency of scores. Norms are about the interpretation of scores. Standard deviation is about the variability of scores.

28. The correct answer is (D). Psychoanalytic theory is based on the belief that people's behavior is motivated by unconscious conflicts. Humanistic theory focuses on behavior being motivated by self-actualization. Behavioral theory emphasizes behavior being determined by reinforcement, punishment, and shaping. Social-cognitive theory describes behavior as being influenced by social and cognitive forces.

29. The correct answer is (B). Participant observation is when a researcher joins in the everyday activities of the people he or she is studying and records the activities. By integrating into the group, the researcher gains a deeper understanding of the people's behavior. Experiments, surveys, and secondary data analyses are other ways of collecting and analyzing data that do not involve participating in the everyday activities of the people being studied.

30. The correct answer is (D). Feature detectors are found in the occipital lobe, where visual information is processed. The cerebellum, thalamus, and hippocampus are not responsible for feature detection.

## 4. Determine Your Strategy for Success

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

### Overview

Effective *Praxis* test preparation doesn't just happen. You'll want to set clear goals and deadlines for yourself along the way. Otherwise, you may not feel ready and confident on test day.

#### 1) Learn what the test covers.

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

You'll find specific information on the test you're taking on page 5, which outlines the content categories that the test measures and what percentage of the test covers each topic. Visit [www.ets.org/praxis/testprep](http://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](http://www.ets.org/praxis/testprep). Test preparation materials include sample questions and answers with explanations.

#### 4) Plan and organize your time.

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

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

### 5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

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

### 6) Understand how questions will be scored.

Scoring information can be found on page 42.

### 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 28 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 28, 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 15.
- **Prepare your presentation for the group.** When it's your turn to present, prepare something that is more than a lecture. Write two or three original questions to pose to the group. Practicing writing actual questions can help you better understand the topics covered on the test as well as the types of questions you will encounter on the test. It will also give other members of the group extra practice at answering questions.



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

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

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

## 5. Develop Your Study Plan

*Develop a personalized study plan and schedule*

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

**Use this worksheet to:**

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

**Praxis Test Name (Test Code):** Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading (5712)

**Test Date:** 9/15/15

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
<b>Key Ideas and Details</b>						
Close reading	Draw inferences and implications from the directly stated content of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/15	7/15/15
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the main idea or primary purpose of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/15	7/17/15
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the supporting ideas and specific details in a reading selection	3	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/15	7/21/15
<b>Craft, Structure, and Language Skills</b>						
Interpreting tone	Determine the author's attitude toward material discussed in a reading selection	4	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/15	7/26/15
Analysis of structure	Identify key transition words and phrases in a reading selection and how they are used	3	Middle and high school English textbook, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/15	7/27/15
Analysis of structure	Identify how a reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution, etc.	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15
Author's purpose	Determine the role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in an author's discussion or argument	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/15	8/1/15

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

## My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

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

Praxis Test Name (Test Code): \_\_\_\_\_

Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

(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

## 6. Review Study Topics

*Review study topics with questions for discussion*

### Using the Study Topics That Follow

The Psychology test is designed to measure the knowledge and skills necessary for a beginning teacher.

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

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

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

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

### Discussion Areas

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

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

## Study Topics

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

### I. Methods, Approaches, Ethics, and Assessment

#### A. History and Approaches

1. Understands that psychology is an empirical science
  - a. explains the scientific method
  - b. demonstrates an understanding of research-based problem solving, intervention, and decision making
2. Understands contemporary approaches to the study of psychology
  - a. describes major characteristics of, and recognizes similarities and differences between, behavioral, cognitive, humanistic, biological, psychodynamic, and evolutionary approaches
  - b. applies contemporary approaches to real-world situations
3. Is familiar with the major psychological subfields and careers
  - a. identifies major characteristics of the subfields of biopsychology, clinical, cognitive, developmental, industrial/organizational, learning, personality, sensation and perception, and social
4. Is familiar with key historical figures in the study of psychology
  - a. identifies the major contributions of historical figures in psychology, such as Ainsworth, Bandura, Erikson, Freud, James, Jung, Maslow, Pavlov, Piaget, Skinner, Watson, and Wundt

#### B. Research Methods

1. Is familiar with basic psychological research principles
  - a. differentiates independent, dependent, and control variables
  - b. recognizes appropriate sampling techniques and random assignment
  - c. understands the importance of operational definitions

2. Knows appropriate research methods to study psychological issues
  - a. knows the major characteristics and appropriate use of observation, experimentation, surveys, and case studies; knows correlational, cross-sectional, and longitudinal designs
3. Knows basic statistical concepts
  - a. calculates mean, median, mode
  - b. describes the use of correlation and standard deviation
4. Understands the ethical issues in research with humans and animals
  - a. understands the importance of informed consent, confidentiality, protection from harm, and ethics review boards in research
  - b. knows about major historical research studies and their influence on the development of ethical principles

#### C. Assessment

1. Understands basic principles of assessment
  - a. explains and applies the principles of reliability, validity, standardization, and norms to assessment situations
  - b. understands the limits of assessment outcomes based on assessment characteristics
2. Understands the ethical issues relevant to psychological assessment
  - a. describes the appropriate use of assessments
  - b. understands the importance of the confidentiality of score reports
  - c. recognizes the implications of test bias for interpreting test scores

#### Discussion areas: Methods, Approaches, Ethics, and Assessment

- Which of the approaches to psychology are based on learning theory?
- What makes psychology an empirical science?
- What does it mean when you have a positive correlation?
- What are the major components of an experiment?
- How do you know a test is valid?
- Name one major intelligence test and its major properties.

## II. Biopsychology, Sensation and Perception, and States of Consciousness

### A. Biopsychology

1. Knows basic neuronal structures and their functions
  - a. describes the parts of the neuron
  - b. explains the process of an action potential
  - c. recognizes major neurotransmitters and neuromodulators (e.g., acetylcholine, serotonin, dopamine) and their functions
2. Understands the organization of the nervous system
  - a. recognizes the structure and function of the central and peripheral, somatic and autonomic, and sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems
3. Understands the organization and basic functions of brain structures
  - a. recognizes the structure and function of the frontal, parietal, temporal, and occipital lobes
  - b. knows about the hemispheres of the brain, corpus callosum, and lateralization
  - c. recognizes the structure and function of the limbic system
  - d. recognizes the importance of the cerebellum, hypothalamus, and thalamus
4. Is familiar with clinical and technological methods for studying the brain (e.g., MRI, CT scan)
5. Knows the structure and function of the endocrine system
  - a. recognizes the functions of the major glands of the endocrine system (e.g., pituitary, adrenal)
  - b. identifies major hormones (e.g., adrenaline, estrogen, testosterone) and their functions
6. Is familiar with the concept that heredity, evolution, and environment influence behavior
  - a. recognizes the importance of genetic and environmental influences (e.g., nature and nurture) on behavior
  - b. knows the perspective of evolutionary psychology

### B. Sensation and Perception

1. Understands basic sensory concepts and processes (e.g., thresholds, transduction, sensory receptors)
  - a. differentiates absolute and difference thresholds
  - b. describes the structure and function of the visual, auditory, somatosensory, olfactory, gustatory, and vestibular systems
2. Is familiar with perceptual concepts and processes and how the interaction of the person and environment determine perception
  - a. recognizes the Gestalt principles and concepts such as perceptual set, figure-ground, depth perception, and constancy
3. Understands the function of selective attention

### C. States of Consciousness

1. Understands basic concepts of consciousness (e.g., unconscious, preconscious, altered states)
2. Knows the basic characteristics and theories of sleep and dreaming
  - a. knows the major theories of sleep and dreaming (e.g., activation-synthesis, repair and restoration, psychoanalytic)
3. Is familiar with the major categories of psychoactive drugs and their effects
  - a. recognizes common drugs, such as narcotics, depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens, and their effects
  - b. explains aspects of drug use, such as tolerance, dependency, addiction, and withdrawal



**Discussion areas: Biopsychology, Sensation and Perception, and States of Consciousness**

- Why are kinship studies used to look at the relative influence of genes and environment on behavior?
- What behavior would let you know that someone had their corpus callosum cut?
- What technological method would be used to determine what stage of sleep someone is in
- What is an absolute threshold?
- How does a person's prior experience influence their perception?

### III. Life Span Development and Individual Differences

#### A. Development

1. Knows major themes in development
  - a. describes continuity versus stages, stability versus change, and critical periods
2. Understands that development (e.g., social, cognitive, physical) occurs at every stage of life, including prenatal, childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood
3. Knows the basic principles and theories of physical, sensory, and perceptual development
4. Understands the principles and theories of cognitive and linguistic development
  - a. describes and applies concepts associated with major theories of cognitive development (e.g., Piaget, Vygotsky)
  - b. describes the major stages and theories of language development
5. Understands the principles and theories of emotional, social, and moral development
  - a. describes attachment theory and the strange situation
  - b. lists the order of development of emotions
  - c. describes and applies Kohlberg and Gilligan's theories of moral development

- d. describes and applies Erikson's psychosocial stages
6. Knows heritable and environmental factors that interact in the process of development

#### B. Individual Differences

1. Is familiar with historical and contemporary theories of intelligence (e.g., Binet, Gardner, Spearman, Sternberg)
2. Is familiar with common intelligence tests (e.g., WISC, WAIS, Stanford-Binet)
3. Knows the limitations of intelligence testing
  - a. explains how cultural bias affects test scores
  - b. recognizes that common intelligence tests focus on verbal skills

**Discussion areas: Life Span Development and Individual Differences**

- Would Jean Piaget argue that development was quantitative or qualitative?
- When does a human develop most rapidly?

### IV. Learning, Memory, and Cognition

#### A. Learning

1. Understands basic principles of learning
  - a. describes the concepts of contingency and timing
  - b. describes and applies the principles of stimulus generalization and stimulus discrimination
  - c. describes acquisition processes and influences
  - d. describes and applies the principles of extinction
2. Understands the principles of classical conditioning
  - a. explains and applies the concepts of unconditioned stimulus, unconditioned response, conditioned stimulus, and conditioned response
3. Understands the principles of operant conditioning
  - a. knows the characteristics of reinforcement and punishment and can apply them
  - b. describes and applies the various schedules of reinforcement
  - c. explains the process of shaping

4. Is familiar with the roles of cognition and culture in learning
  - a. describes the process of social learning
  - b. identifies basic environmental and cultural influences that affect learning
5. Understands the principles of social learning
  - a. understands the principles of modeling, imitation, and vicarious learning

### B. Memory

1. Understands the basic processes of memory
  - a. describes the processes of encoding, storage, and retrieval
2. Understands the characteristics of memory
  - a. describes sensory memory (e.g., iconic, echoic)
  - b. explains working or short-term memory
  - c. recognizes long-term memory systems (e.g., declarative, procedural)
  - d. describes the process of consolidation from short-term to long-term memory
3. Is familiar with the biological bases of memory (e.g., hippocampus, cortex)
4. Is familiar with methods for improving memory
  - a. identifies various mnemonic devices and describes their use
  - b. describes elaborative rehearsal and levels of processing
  - c. recognizes the effect of context-dependency on memory
5. Is familiar with the concept of constructive memory

### C. Cognition

1. Knows how concepts are formed and knowledge is represented
  - a. describes and differentiates concepts and prototypes
  - b. discusses the concept of schema
2. Knows the processes and limitations of problem solving and decision making
  - a. recognizes the concepts of mental set, functional fixedness, and algorithm
  - b. recognizes the impact of availability, anchoring, and representativeness heuristics
  - c. explains confirmation and hindsight biases

### Discussion areas: Learning, Memory, and Cognition

- Which schedule of reinforcement allows for the quickest acquisition of a new behavior?
- According to more recent learning theorists, cognition affects learning. How would this change some of the basic learning theories?
- What techniques are best for preparing for a test?
- Why are eye witnesses notoriously unreliable?
- What historical figure described the language acquisition device?

## V. Personality, Social Psychology, Motivation and Emotion, and Stress

### A. Personality

1. Understands personality approaches and theories
  - a. explains the major similarities and differences between trait, psychoanalytic, humanistic, and social-cognitive approaches
  - b. describes the major theories of personality (e.g., Freud, Eysenck, Maslow, Rogers, Bandura, Adler, Horney)
2. Is familiar with common personality assessment tools and their purposes (e.g., MMPI, TAT, Rorschach)

### B. Social Psychology and Culture

1. Understands the basis of attributions and attitudes
  - a. explains the process of attribution and theories of attitude development (e.g., fundamental attribution error, cognitive dissonance, just-world hypothesis)
  - b. describes the relationships among stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination
2. Understands group and interpersonal influences on thought and behavior
  - a. explains and applies the concepts of group dynamics (e.g., groupthink, conformity, deindividuation, diffusion of responsibility)

- b. explains and applies methods of persuasion (e.g., foot in the door, door in the face)
  - c. understands the relationships among authority, roles, and obedience
3. Understands factors that influence the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (e.g., proximity, similarity, attraction)
  4. Knows major social categories (e.g., gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation)
  5. Is familiar with the major components of culture (e.g., language, norms, technology)

### C. Motivation and Emotion

1. Understands basic motivational concepts and theories of motivation
  - a. explains extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation and their applications
  - b. explains Maslow's hierarchy of needs and its application
  - c. explains drive-reduction and incentive theories and their applications
2. Knows about the influence of biology, learning, and cultural factors on motivation and emotion
  - a. describes the process of homeostasis
  - b. explains the key biological and environmental mechanisms in hunger, thirst, and sex
  - c. recognizes social motives for behavior
3. Knows about the interaction of the physiological, affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of emotions (e.g., physiological bases for emotions, affective interpretation of emotions)
  - a. describes the major theories of emotion and their applications (e.g., James-Lange, Schachter two-factor, Cannon-Bard, facial feedback)
  - b. recognizes the roles of the amygdala and limbic system in emotions
  - c. recognizes universal facial expressions of emotion

### D. Stress and Coping

1. Is familiar with sources of stress
  - a. identifies health problems that cause stress
  - b. recognizes how environmental factors can affect stress levels (e.g., role conflict, socioeconomic status, caregiver burden)
2. Understands physiological reactions to stress
  - a. describes the fight-or-flight response
  - b. discusses Selye's general adaptation syndrome
  - c. recognizes the effect of stress on the immune system and cardiovascular health
3. Understands psychological reactions to stress
  - a. recognizes the relation of stress to psychological disorders (e.g., anxiety disorders, depression)
  - b. recognizes the relationship between stress and performance (e.g., cognitive, behavioral)
4. Is familiar with appropriate cognitive and behavioral strategies for dealing with stress and promoting health
  - a. recognizes the benefit of perceived control
  - b. identifies multiple coping skills

#### Discussion areas: Personality, Social Psychology, Motivation and Emotion, and Stress

- In what ways are groupthink and deindividuation related?
- When at college in a dormitory, who are you most likely to form friendships with?
- How do drive-reduction and incentive theories of motivation differ?

## VI. Psychological Disorders and Treatment

### A. Psychological Disorders

1. Is familiar with the characteristics of psychological disorders and the factors that contribute to their development
  - a. recognizes common symptoms and the diagnoses associated with them
  - b. recognizes how genetic, biological, and environmental factors affect mental health
2. Knows major categories of psychological disorders
  - a. defines and recognizes the differences between various disorders, including anxiety, dissociative, neurodevelopmental, mood, personality, schizophrenic spectrum and other psychotic, and somatic symptom
  - b. recognizes the appropriate uses of the current version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM)

### B. Treatment of Psychological Disorders

1. Understands common methods used to treat individuals with disorders
  - a. explains the basic principles of the behavioral, cognitive, psychodynamic, humanistic, and biological approaches to treatment and applies them to case examples
  - b. recognizes common therapeutic drugs, such as antidepressants, antipsychotics, and anti-anxiety medication, and their effects
  - c. is familiar with evidence based practice
2. Is familiar with the types of practitioners who implement treatment
  - a. recognizes the defining characteristics of various mental health professions (e.g., counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers)
3. Is familiar with legal and ethical issues associated with the treatment of psychological disorders
  - a. describes the concepts of confidentiality and duty to warn

#### Discussion areas: Psychological Disorders and Treatment

- What symptoms might a person diagnosed with schizophrenia display?
- What method of treatment does research show is most effective for the treatment of depression?

## 7. Review Smart Tips for Success

*Follow test-taking tips developed by experts*

### Overview

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*<sup>®</sup> or other tests. It doesn’t matter on the *Praxis* tests whether you score very high or barely pass. If you meet the minimum passing scores for your state and you meet the state’s other requirements for obtaining a teaching license, you will receive a license. In other words, what matters is meeting the minimum passing score. You can find passing scores for all states that use the *Praxis* tests at <https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/> or on the web site of the state for which you are seeking certification/licensure.
- 6. Use your energy to take the test, not to get frustrated by it.** Getting frustrated only increases stress and decreases the likelihood that you will do your best. Highly qualified educators and test development professionals, all with backgrounds in teaching, worked diligently to make the test a fair and valid measure of your knowledge and skills. Your state painstakingly reviewed the test before adopting it as a licensure requirement. The best thing to do is concentrate on answering the questions.

## 8. Check on Testing Accommodations

*See if you qualify for accommodations to take the Praxis test*

### What if English is not my primary language?

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

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

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

- Extended testing time
- Additional rest breaks
- Separate testing room
- Writer/recorder of answers
- Test reader
- Sign language interpreter for spoken directions only
- Perkins 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](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register/disabilities).

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

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

## 9. Do Your Best on Test Day

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

### Overview

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

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

On the day of the test, you should:

- be well rested
- wear comfortable clothes and dress in layers
- eat before you take the test
- bring an acceptable and valid photo identification with you
- bring an approved calculator only if one is specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at [http://www.ets.org/praxis/test\\_day/policies/calculators](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](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](http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/bring).

### Are You Ready?

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

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

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

# 10. Understand Your Scores

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

## Overview

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](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states) for the most up-to-date information.

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

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

### Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

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

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

## Content category scores and score interpretation

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

## Score scale changes

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

These resources may also help you interpret your scores:

- *Understanding Your Praxis Scores* (PDF), found at [www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand](http://www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand)
- *The Praxis Passing Scores*, found at <https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/>
- State requirements, found at [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states)

## Appendix: Other Questions You May Have

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

### What do the *Praxis* tests measure?

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

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

### Who takes the tests and why?

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

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

### Do all states require these tests?

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

### What is licensure/certification?

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

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

### Why does my state require the *Praxis* tests?

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

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

## How were the tests developed?

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

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

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

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

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

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

## How long will it take to receive my scores?

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

## Can I access my scores on the web?

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

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

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

\*[ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness](#) (2014, Princeton, N.J.) are consistent with the [Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing](#), industry standards issued jointly by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (2014, Washington, D.C.).

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