

Elementary Education: Content Area Exercises (0012)

Test at a Glance

Test Name	Elementary Education: Content Area Exercises		
Test Code	0012		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	4 essays		
Format	Four 30-minute exercises pose problems requiring extended written responses		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Reading/Language Arts	1	25%
	II. Mathematics	1	25%
	III. Science or Social Studies	1	25%
	IV. Interdisciplinary Instruction	1	25%

About This Test

The Elementary Education: Content Area Exercises test is designed to measure how well prospective teachers of students in the elementary grades can respond to extended exercises that require thoughtful, written responses. The exercises pose challenging problems for the test taker to analyze and solve, thereby assessing the examinee's in-depth understanding of elementary education necessary for safe and effective practice.

Each of four essay exercises is set in the context of a subject area (or integrated subject areas) and in the context of a classroom situation. Each exercise presents a specific teaching situation; the examinee is asked to discuss an instructional approach or to develop an instructional goal or solve an instructional problem and outline the steps necessary to achieve the goal or solve the problem. The examinee must justify the steps or decisions based on his or her understanding of issues in curriculum, instruction, or assessment. For example, an exercise might cover instructional approaches using trade books to teach reading/language arts in a first-grade classroom.

The four essay exercises cover topics in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, as described in the Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Test 0011. Each topic is considered in the context of reading/language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies. One exercise concerns reading/language arts; one concerns mathematics; and one concerns either science or social studies. The remaining exercise requires understanding of interdisciplinary instruction in elementary subject areas, such as the integration of reading/language arts and social studies or other integrated subject areas. Physical education and fine arts content are not covered in this test. Each exercise represents 25 percent of the total test score.

Sample Test Questions

This section presents a sample essay question and some sample responses to the question, along with the standards used to score the responses. When you read these sample responses, keep in mind that they will be less polished than if they had been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented.

Examinees do not know what questions will be asked and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. Readers take these circumstances into account when scoring the responses.

Readers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide.

Scoring Guide

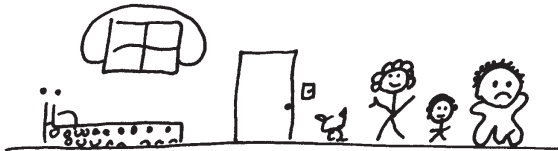
- 6**
- Answers all parts of the exercise clearly and successfully
 - Demonstrates a superior understanding of the subject matter, human growth and development, and pedagogy required by the exercise
 - Provides coherent, well-organized, and fully developed explanations of key ideas
 - Gives clear, well-chosen examples or supporting details
- 5**
- Answers all important parts of the exercise clearly and successfully
 - Demonstrates a strong understanding of the subject matter, human growth and development, and pedagogy required by the exercise
 - Provides coherent, organized, and developed explanations of key ideas
 - Gives clear and relevant examples or supporting details
- 4**
- Answers all important parts of the exercise adequately
 - Demonstrates an accurate, if somewhat limited, understanding of the subject matter, human growth and development, and pedagogy required by the exercise
 - Provides clear, appropriate explanations of key ideas
 - Gives relevant examples or supporting details
- 3**
- Answers only some parts of the exercise adequately
 - Demonstrates some understanding of the subject matter, human growth and development, and pedagogy required by the exercise, with few serious inaccuracies
 - Provides explanations of key ideas, but they lack clarity and depth
 - Gives only some relevant examples or supporting details
- 2**
- Answers no parts of the exercise adequately and only some in a limited way
 - Demonstrates a limited understanding of the content required by the exercise
 - May provide explanations, but they are unclear and/or undeveloped
 - May give examples or details, but they contain inaccuracies
- 1**
- Answers no part of the exercise adequately
 - Demonstrates a serious lack of knowledge in the areas required by the exercise
 - May have such serious problems in organization and development that the response is generally incoherent
 - May give no accurate examples or supporting details
- 0**
- Blank, off topic, or illegible

Sample Question

This question refers to the following representative writing samples produced by one student as part of the writing activities in a second-grade class. The writing program in this class includes daily writing activities for all students and is based on a process-writing approach to instruction.

Jan. 18

The room is messy
The room is dark theres shadow
Its' spooky. I don't like it.
my sister is with me. were
hugin cus were sckard. Theres
toys thrown around. I tund
on the lithe. I clind it up.



Jan 24

My Terrible, Herrible, No Good
Very Bad Day
In the morning I take a bath
but my sisster ruinit. She
comes and gets in with me
The I get out and my mom
dresses her. Then Im late for
School. In the afternoon
I eat. but my sisster comes
some times. at nite I to
bed at 8:30. It's 8:30. bye!

1. List five (5) important aspects of writing/text production that the student seems to understand or seems to be able to control.

Feb 3.

Bank robbing

The pepple were atthe bank.
A Robber stold a million
dollers. That night was a
terrible night.

The next night they cot
the robber.

They saw the lisenplate.

He was in jail.

in jail intel he was a dd man.

2. Describe two (2) ways the teacher could assist this student in the continued development of writing skills. The first example should include one or more activities that would build on the student's strengths in written expression. The second example should suggest a way for building on the student's strengths in the mechanics of writing.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 5:

1. It seems to me that the student who wrote these stories has an understanding of sequencing events. In each of these paragraphs, he/she has put all of the events in chronological order, using good transition words. Secondly, this student has control over the concept of presenting the main idea of the story in the first few sentences. In each of these stories, it is clear to the reader what the topic is going to be. The student also understands the concept of creating a new paragraph to start a new idea or thought. For example, in his/her "Bank Robbing" story, a new paragraph was started for the events of the new day. This student also understands the concept of supporting the main idea throughout the story. In each of his/her stories, the main topic is stated and most of the sentences afterwards pertain to that main topic. Finally, this student matches these events that he/she is writing about with his feelings. For example, when the room was dark, he/she was "scared". When the robber stole money, it was a terrible night.
2. One suggestion I would make to the teacher to develop this student's writing would be to encourage the increase of his vocabulary. This could be done by way of a brainstorming activity with the entire class. As a class, you could come up with many words that are "describing" words that will eventually be used to create an exciting story. Secondly, I think the teacher should encourage the identification of characters. For instance, in the Bank Robbing story, "they" was used but "they" is not identified. We do not know who saw the license plate. Finally, I think the teacher should encourage this student to clarify his thoughts. In the story about his Bad day he mentions that his "sister comes some times" — we do not know if that is bad or not, or when he is referring to. This could be done by talking about his story out loud before it is written.

Sample Response That Received a Score of 2:

The students are capable of writing complete sentences, use of punctuation marks, sequence, recall, and cause and effect. The teacher could assist these students by teaching subject-verb agreement or writing complete sentences. There should also be instruction on spelling of words and paragraph structure. During daily writing practice, the teacher should assist students in the formation of letters. As this task has been achieved, he/she should then move on to one syllable words and use pictures to incorporate with learning. Following the identification and comprehension of one syllable words, the teacher should then create sentences. The Rebus Story is a creative way of teaching sentence structure and story writing.

In expression of thoughts or feelings, the teacher should read stories or show pictures which express emotions. For example, stories that relate happiness, sadness, fear, or anger would help children to improve expression.



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