

Reading Across the Curriculum: Elementary (0201)

Test at a Glance

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| Test Name | Reading Across the Curriculum: Elementary | | |
| Test Code | 0201 | | |
| Time | 2 hours | | |
| Number of Questions | 60 multiple-choice questions (Part A) and 3 short essays or constructed-response questions (Part B) that ask examinees to apply their knowledge about assessing reading; using materials and instructional strategies in a supportive environment to meet all students' needs; and understanding the development of reading as a complex process of constructing meaning. | | |
| Multiple Choice (Approximately 50% of total score) | Content Categories | Approximate Number of Questions | Approximate Percentage of Examination |
| | | I. Theory of Reading as a Process; Language Acquisition and Early Literacy 12 II. Reading Materials and Instruction; Reading Environment 18 III. Reading Comprehension 12 IV. Assessment of Reading 8 V. Vocabulary, Spelling, and Word Study 10 | 20% 30% 20% 13% 17% |
| Constructed-response (Approximately 50% of total score) | Content Categories for Constructed-response Questions | Number of Questions | Percentage of Examination |
| | | VI. Assessment and Evaluation Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of Student Work and Behavior 1 33 1/3% Reading Materials, Instruction, and Environment 1 33 1/3% Reading Comprehension 1 33 1/3% | 33 1/3% 33 1/3% 33 1/3% |

About This Test

The Reading Across the Curriculum: Elementary test is designed for persons completing teacher training programs with at least two or three courses in reading who are planning to teach at the elementary level or persons who are currently teaching and have the option of taking this test in lieu of state-mandated course work. The 60 multiple-choice questions and the three constructed-response questions assess knowledge of the content and skills necessary to be an effective teacher of reading as well as the ability to apply knowledge of content and skills in the teaching of reading to all students. The multiple-choice questions and the constructed-response questions each constitute about one-half of the total test. The test questions involve the selection and application of ideas and practices to reading instruction from the earliest stages of language acquisition through the development of literacy skills across the curriculum. The content is based on categories and competencies developed by the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee of the International Reading Association.

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

Topics Covered

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

I. Theory of Reading as a Process and Language Acquisition and Early Literacy

- Demonstrate an understanding of the major theories of language development, cognition, and learning, including acquisition of language, social interaction, use of language for communication, relationship between oral and written language, activation of prior knowledge, construction of schemata, use of text structure, use of cueing systems, and development of reader response
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between and among reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and thinking for all learners
- Recognize and support cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity and recognize linguistic differences as they are related to socio-cultural environment
- Recognize the effects of emotional, social, physical, cultural, environmental, and intellectual factors on language acquisition, language development, and reading
- Demonstrate an understanding that all languages have rules for grammar and are used for communication through semantics, syntax, and phonological components
- Demonstrate an understanding of ways adults support and facilitate language acquisition
- Recognize and demonstrate understanding of the factors that influence early literacy and language acquisition

II. Reading Materials and Instruction and Reading Environment

- Identify and use texts, trade books, and other print and non-print materials to foster appreciation of reading for students who are at various levels and from various cultures
- Identify strategies appropriate for a variety of printed materials and identify texts that are appropriate for a specific reading purpose
- Identify strategies for recognizing and evaluating students' attitudes and needs, and suggest books/materials in a variety of genres at appropriate difficulty levels to meet those needs
- Identify techniques for providing opportunities for creative and personal responses to reading

- Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of approaches to teaching reading and of methods to organize instruction effectively
- Identify strategies for exposing students to a variety of genres and help them understand the characteristics of each genre
- Identify various purposes for reading
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to use a variety of non-print sources, how to use study aids, and how to interpret graphics
- Identify strategies to purposefully integrate the language arts in all content areas, including the use of technology
- Identify components of a balanced literacy program (word study, reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and listening) and sensitivity to a developmental continuum
- Identify the influences of family and peers as well as ethnic, socioeconomic, regional, and cultural factors as they relate to reading development
- Identify ways to include parents as partners in the literacy development of their children
- Identify techniques for creating a literate environment in which students can connect purposes of reading to their personal lives
- Identify ways to increase learners' motivation to read independently for information and pleasure
- Identify ways to use flexible grouping to accommodate students' needs
- Identify ways to use the connection between reading and writing to foster and enhance communication skills in all students

III. Reading Comprehension

- Demonstrate an understanding of instructional techniques such as modeling, scaffolding, and appropriate questioning strategies to enhance students' understanding of text
- Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate and effective uses of oral and silent reading
- Identify strategies for using context to define words and strategies to learn and extend word meanings
- Demonstrate an understanding of techniques for teaching understanding and learning skills such as Directed Reading/Thinking Activities (DR-TA); What We Know, What We Want to Know, and What We Learned (KWL); Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review (SQ3R); graphic organizers; test-taking strategies; varying reading rate
- Identify techniques that enable students to connect prior knowledge with new information
- Identify techniques that teach students to self-regulate and monitor comprehension
- Identify techniques to develop comprehension skills in the content areas
- Demonstrate an understanding of ways to develop fluency in students' reading and its link to comprehension

IV. Assessment of Reading

- Identify appropriate strategies to assess students' awareness of letter-sound correspondences, of vocabulary, and of reading comprehension
- Understand formal and informal assessments such as criterion- and norm-referenced standardized tests, running records, anecdotal records, work samples, Informal Reading Inventories (IRI's), portfolios, and self-assessment
- Analyze and interpret assessment information for the purpose of informing reading instruction, advising parents and students, and making referrals to other professionals
- Recognize and identify various types of reading difficulties, such as the inability to decode or comprehend, and implement appropriate instructional techniques

V. Vocabulary, Spelling, and Word Study

- Demonstrate an understanding of strategies and skills (phonemic awareness, print concepts, conceptual vocabulary, experience with print, and stories) contributing to the development of reading
- Demonstrate an understanding of word study strategies, as well as the effective use of phonics (graphophonic cues), context (syntactic and semantic cues), and sight words (instant recognition)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the use of phonics, along with other awareness and cues in text, e.g., phonemes, morphemes, endings, prefixes, suffixes, to analyze and decode words that are not recognized instantly
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role that spelling plays in enhancing and informing instruction
- Demonstrate strategies for teaching vocabulary (roots, affixes, context, word origins) and helping students use these strategies to enhance their reading comprehension

Constructed-Response

This part of the test contains three constructed-response questions. In each edition of the test, one question will deal with a topic in each of the following content areas: Analysis of Student Work and Behavior; Reading Materials, Instruction, and Environment; and Reading Comprehension. Each question emphasizes a particular area and, because of the nature of reading, includes elements of other areas.

VI. Problem-Solving Exercises

A. Analysis of Student Work and Behavior

This question assesses one or more of the following competencies:

- Recognize and identify various types of reading difficulties, such as the inability to decode or comprehend, and implement appropriate instructional techniques
- Identify appropriate formal and informal assessments
- Analyze and interpret assessment information for the purpose of informing reading instruction, advising parents and students, and making referrals to other professionals

B. Reading Materials, Instruction, and Environment

This question assesses one or more of the following competencies:

- Identify ways to use flexible grouping to accommodate students' needs
- Identify and use texts, trade books, and other print and non-print materials to foster appreciation of reading for students who are at various levels and from various cultures
- Identify strategies appropriate for a variety of printed materials and identify texts that are appropriate for a specific purpose
- Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of approaches to teaching reading and of methods to organize instruction effectively
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to use a variety of non-print sources, how to use study aids, and how to interpret graphics
- Identify strategies to purposefully integrate the language arts in all content areas, including the use of technology
- Demonstrate an understanding of strategies and skills contributing to the development of reading
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role that spelling plays in enhancing and informing instruction
- Identify strategies for teaching vocabulary

C. Reading Comprehension

This question assesses one or more of the following competencies:

- Identify ways to use the connection between reading and writing to foster and enhance communication skills in students
- Demonstrate an understanding of instructional techniques to enhance students' understanding of text
- Identify strategies for using context to define words and strategies to learn and extend word meanings
- Demonstrate an understanding of techniques for teaching study skills
- Identify techniques that teach students how to connect prior knowledge with new information
- Identify techniques that teach students how to self-regulate and monitor comprehension
- Identify techniques to help students develop comprehension skills in the content areas
- Demonstrate an understanding of reading as a complex process of constructing meaning
- Demonstrate an understanding of word study strategies

Sample Test Questions

This section presents sample multiple-choice questions that illustrate the types of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the sample questions.

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four choices (A, B, C, and D). Choose the best response from the choices for each question. Pay careful attention to test questions which use phrases such as “LEAST likely” or “all of the following EXCEPT.”

1. A student consistently reads sentences such as “They are my friends” as “They be my friends.” The miscue is most likely an example of
 - (A) an error in semantics
 - (B) the use of a dialect
 - (C) a graphophonic weakness
 - (D) a contextual anomaly

2. Which of the following is the most accurate statement about the language acquisition process of young children?
 - (A) The child understands full sentences at a relatively late stage in language development.
 - (B) The child exhibits random, highly variable errors in sentence construction.
 - (C) The child infers the underlying rules of language to which the child is exposed.
 - (D) The child requires planned early instructional intervention to master the language’s grammar.

3. Knowledge of a story’s grammar or basic plan is most likely to help a student to
 - (A) predict what element of the story will come next
 - (B) use the context of the story to recognize parts of speech
 - (C) understand the role of grammar in communicating meaning
 - (D) summarize a story in a single grammatically correct expression

4. Of the following, which is LEAST likely to foster a student’s interest in reading?
 - (A) Parental support shown by their involvement in the reading program
 - (B) The availability of a variety of printed texts in various genres for independent reading
 - (C) Assignments that engage students in literal level thinking exclusively
 - (D) Availability of media components in addition to printed materials

5. Which of the following recognizes the affective aspects of reading instruction?
 - (A) Validation of the results of an approach to reading instruction
 - (B) Concern with students’ attitudes, interests, and values
 - (C) Development of students’ auditory and visual discrimination
 - (D) Use of standardized tests to quantify students’ reading progress

6. Syntactic cues can be a useful strategy to identify an unfamiliar word in context because these cues
 - (A) rely exclusively on letter-sound correspondences
 - (B) encourage the use of spelling patterns to recognize the word
 - (C) use the structure of the language to provide meaning
 - (D) depend upon syllabication rules to pronounce the word

7. A second-grade student from a rural community in the Midwest moves to an urban community in the Northeast. In the new classroom, the teacher observes that the student can accurately decode the words in a story about making a living in a city but has difficulty understanding the story. Which of the following is the most probable explanation for the student's difficulty in comprehension?
- (A) The student's reading achievement level is significantly below that of the class.
 - (B) The student's background of experiences does not include knowledge of the topic discussed in the story.
 - (C) The student's former reading instruction focused exclusively on the development of word attack skills.
 - (D) The student's oral language abilities are significantly above the student's reading achievement level.
8. A social studies teacher recognized that students were having difficulty understanding a chapter in their textbook. The teacher led a dialogue that modeled generating questions, summarizing, predicting, and clarifying. Then the students took turns assuming the teacher's role. The teacher was most likely using which of the following methods?
- (A) Reciprocal teaching
 - (B) Think-alouds
 - (C) QARs
 - (D) Cooperative learning groups
9. According to research, effective vocabulary instruction integrates new information with the familiar. Students are most likely to achieve that integration by
- (A) using a dictionary
 - (B) developing a semantic map
 - (C) analyzing word structure
 - (D) memorizing words
10. A teacher is leading a Directed Reading-Thinking Activity while using a piece of informational text with the class. The teacher is most likely to ask the students which of the following questions initially?
- (A) What part of the text gave you a clue about the writer's purpose?
 - (B) What do you think the writer intended to say?
 - (C) How do you know what references the writer used?
 - (D) How might the information in the text be used?

Answers

1. The best answer is B. The use of the verb form “be” instead of the verb form “are” is a regular syntactic structure in certain dialects.
2. The best answer is C. According to psycholinguists and others who specialize in human growth and development, young children begin to acquire the ability to communicate through hypothesis testing. Children’s perception of adult speech helps them form hypotheses about how different ideas are expressed in the language they are acquiring, and then they test their hypotheses.
3. The best answer is A. A story’s grammar or basic plan is a set of rules that describes the organization of the story, including the typical sequence of elements within the story’s particular genre. Knowledge of sequence helps readers predict what follows each element they read.
4. The best answer is C. It does not encourage students to engage in critical thinking to develop their individual interests and abilities. Parental support and involvement, a wide variety of reading materials in both print and media, and setting aside classroom time for students to read materials of their own choosing are all ways to foster students’ interest in reading.
5. The best answer is B. Affective aspects of reading refer to students’ attitudes, interests, and values.
6. The best answer is C. Context cues fall into two categories—semantic, using the meaning constructed from the text, and syntactic—using the structure of the language and knowledge of how words go together.
7. The best answer is B. According to schema theory, readers use their background knowledge to help them comprehend the information in a text. In the process of comprehending, readers relate the new information presented by the author to old information stored in their minds. It is highly probable that the second-grade student had little or no prior knowledge about the topic and therefore had difficulty in constructing meaning.
8. The best answer is A. Reciprocal teaching is an approach to instruction that features interactive dialogue between teachers and students. Initially, the teacher does the modeling of four comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring strategies and then gradually turns over the responsibilities to the students. The students take turns being the teacher and leading small-group discussions of the text.
9. The best answer is B. A semantic map is a visual representation of ideas and the relationships among them. It usually has a key word or concept at the center, with other information radiating outward. It may be used before, during, and after reading to represent what students already know about a topic, to keep ongoing notes, to reorganize information, and to review and enhance information because of new information gained.
10. The best answer is B. A Directed Reading-Thinking Activity is a guided reading method in which the teacher divides the text into shorter segments and then leads the students in predicting; reading silently to confirm predictions; discussing to refine and clarify predictions; and then formulates the new predictions about the remainder of the text. The process is repeated until the reading of the text is completed.

About the Constructed-response Questions

The test contains three constructed-response questions that require the candidate to demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and theory about reading to specific classroom scenarios and samples of student work and behavior. The candidate must be specific and provide details from the material provided. The information cited should serve to recognize and identify students' strengths and weaknesses in reading, make appropriate recommendations to secure relevant information about students' literacy development, and design reading instruction identifying strategies and materials appropriate for specific students and texts. In addition, the candidate must demonstrate an understanding of classroom management during reading instruction and of reading as a complex process of constructing meaning. To be scored, the responses must be written in English.

GENERAL SCORING GUIDE for the Constructed-Response Questions

3

- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of instructional, learning, and assessment strategies and issues involved in teaching reading skills to students
- Responds appropriately to all parts of the question

2

- Demonstrates a basic understanding of instructional, learning, and assessment strategies and issues involved in teaching reading skills to students
- Responds appropriately to most parts of the question

1

- Demonstrates a very limited understanding of instructional, learning, and assessment strategies and issues involved in teaching reading skills to students
- Responds appropriately to some parts of the question

0

- Totally incorrect response; does little more than rephrase the question

Directions: Read the passage below and then respond to all three tasks in the response book enclosed in this test book.

Reading Passage Selected for Use in a Social Studies Class

A new volcano had just been born half a mile from a town on the tiny island called Heimaey (pronounced HAY-may) off the coast of Iceland.

A few hours earlier, when Magnus went to bed, he had no idea that a gigantic plume of magma had risen from 8 miles beneath the earth to a spot just outside his town. Now the earth had split open in a mile-long gash, and a curtain of red-hot lava spurted 500 feet into the air.

Magnus, who was mayor of the town, acted quickly. By eight o'clock in the morning, boats had taken about 5,000 people from Heimaey to safety on the mainland. All the chickens went by boat, too. Sheep got special treatment—they were flown out.

About 300 people stayed behind, hoping they could do something to save their town. Hot ash that looked like fine black gravel fell in a dark blizzard that buried some of their homes. Lava flowed toward town, making a tinkling sound. Slowly, it covered and burned building after building in its path. Worst of all, lava crept toward the island's harbor. If it flowed much farther, it could close the mouth of the harbor, and hundreds of fishermen would have nowhere to bring their catch.

1. Below, under the headings "Reading Comprehension" and "Writing," you will find two phrases that appear in the reading passage. For the phrase under the "Reading Comprehension" heading, describe one instructional strategy that you could use to facilitate students' comprehension of this particular phrase. Then, while focusing on the sentence that appears under the heading "Writing," describe one instructional strategy that you could use to facilitate students' understanding of good writing.

Reading Comprehension:

“. . . split open in a mile-long gash, and a curtain of red-hot lava spurted . . .”

Writing:

“Hot ash that looked like fine black gravel fell in a dark blizzard that buried some of their homes.”

2. Explain how the instructional strategies that you selected in Task 1 would help students develop their capacities within the areas of Reading Comprehension and Writing, respectively.
3. Applying your knowledge of reading as a complex process of constructing meaning, explain how your chosen teaching strategies would effectively integrate multiple areas of reading instruction.

SAMPLE RESPONSES FOR 0201

Sample Response that Earned a Score of 3

Task 1, Reading Comprehension: You could get a little gross and compare the gash in the earth to a gash in the knee. Start out by getting a feeling for what the students think the statement to mean and then ask them to put “gash” and “spurt” in another context. You could use the body comparison or maybe give an orange and a plastic knife to demonstrate this particular phrase.

Task 1, Writing: Write the sentence on the board and have the students illustrate it. Talk about how good writing lets you easily make pictures in your mind about what’s going on.

Task 2, Reading Comprehension: Allows students to see that they can connect things they read with things they are already familiar with to gain a better understanding of the text. Background knowledge can aid comprehension.

Task 2, Writing: Helps the student realize that they need to be descriptive in their writing. They are familiar with what they’re writing about because it’s their story. They need to make sure the reader of their work can have a good understanding of the story just from their writing since the reader doesn’t have the same insight.

Task 3, Reading Comprehension: The instructional strategy I used draws on students’ background knowledge, their ability to make mental images, and their comprehension skills. These are needed many times to make sense of a passage they are reading and even when the students are writing their own work.

Task 3, Writing: This strategy allows students to use mental pictures, activate prior knowledge, and critically think about another person’s writing. Students see the importance of clarity and creativity in writing a passage.

Sample Response that Earned a Score of 1

Students could practice writing metaphors after reading the phrase. It would reinforce their understanding of literal meaning and metaphoric meaning.

Have students write a variety of similes using the story as a prompt. Then have them rewrite the story using the similes they created.

They would understand literal and metaphoric meaning. They would be able to distinguish between both and then use them when they write.



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