

Speech Communication: Content Knowledge (0221)

Test at a Glance

Test Name	Speech Communication: Content Knowledge		
Test Code	0221		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	120		
Format	Multiple-choice questions		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Communication Fundamentals	13	11%
	II. Interpersonal Communication	16	13%
	III. Group Communication	16	13%
	IV. Public Speaking	21	18%
	V. Media and Their Influences	16	13%
	VI. Oral Interpretation and Performance Studies	13	11%
	VII. Forensics: Competitive Speech and Debate	13	11%
	VIII. Assessment and Evaluation Issues	12	10%

About This Test

The Speech Communication test is designed to measure the preparedness of examinees to teach speech communication in junior and senior high schools. The 120 multiple-choice questions cover a wide variety of subjects; some questions measure basic knowledge, and others call on the examinee's ability to apply principles to real-life situations.

The questions in the test require the examinee to demonstrate an understanding of the principles and concepts related to speech communication, including their development and application, the selection and use of appropriate instructional strategies, and ways of evaluating student learning.

Eight major content areas are included in the test: communication fundamentals; interpersonal communication; group communication; public speaking; media and their influences; oral interpretation and performance studies; forensics: competitive speech and debate; and assessment and evaluation issues.

Examinees typically have completed a bachelor's degree program in speech communication. Because there are many variations in such undergraduate programs, it is not expected that all of the material covered in the test will be familiar to every examinee. This test may contain some questions that will not count toward examinees' scores.

Topics Covered

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

I. Communication Fundamentals

- Verbal and nonverbal messages
- Effective listening behaviors
- Elements of communication and their definitions
- Communication process: perception, self-concept, self-disclosure
- The functions, development, and assessment of communication competence

II. Interpersonal Communication

- Interpersonal and intrapersonal elements of the communication process
- Relational communication competence
- Goals, skills, and outcomes of interpersonal communication
- Effect of gender and culture
- Emotional and relational messages
- Communication processes in different types of relationships: personal, family, romantic, business

III. Group Communication

- Discussion principles
- Problem solving and decision making
- Group roles and functions
- Conflict management and mediation
- Effect of culture on leadership
- Group communication processes

IV. Public Speaking

- Purposes, types, and forms
- Audience analysis
- Strategies for organizing content
- Style and use of language
- Effective delivery
- Listening, adapting to an audience, and feedback
- Choosing supporting materials and ethics of using supporting materials
- Components of delivery: voice and diction, pronunciation, movement
- Criticism and evaluation of speeches; rhetorical criticism; assessing student speeches
- Effect of culture on public speaking
- Argument in public speaking settings

V. Media and Their Influences

- Critical analysis and evaluation of media forms
- Influence on audiences: programming, commercials, political process
- Production techniques; communication technologies
- Environmental influences that affect the media industry
- Types of media: television, radio, Internet
- Media response to race, gender, and class issues

VI. Oral Interpretation and Performance Studies

- Literary principles and aesthetics
- Characteristics of analysis: text and context, interpretation process
- Principles of acting and performance techniques: voice, use of manuscripts, development of characters
- Dramatic theory and criticism: forms, styles, structures
- Readers' theater, storytelling, folklore, oral history, and creative dramatics

VII. Forensics: Competitive Speech and Debate

- Individual events: public address, interpretation, extemporaneous speaking, oratory
- Writing and/or performing individual events
- Effective program management: tournament and team management, coaching philosophy, school relations
- Argumentation and debate: Lincoln-Douglas debate, persuasion, policy

VIII. Assessment and Evaluation Issues

- Teacher responsibility: ethics, promptness of feedback, objective assessment of performance
- Assessment techniques for oral performance: classroom behaviors, written and oral critiques, rubrics
- Test construction and alternate forms of communication assessment
- Curriculum development: implementation, appropriate assignments, textbook selection

Sample Test Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. The questions are followed by answers and explanations.

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

1. Which of the following statements about the effects of the perception of space on behavior is accurate?
 - (A) People usually accept uninvited entry into their personal space but not into their social space.
 - (B) Seating arrangements have little effect on who is likely to dominate a conversation.
 - (C) People who are cooperating are more likely to sit at opposite ends of the table.
 - (D) Interpersonal distances are the same from culture to culture.
 - (E) People often react to the messages expressed by their physical environments.
2. All of the following are descriptive of listening behavior EXCEPT:
 - (A) Careful listening can lead to anticipation of a speaker's actions.
 - (B) People learn to listen selectively and can even shut out what is undesirable.
 - (C) Listening comprises at least one-half of all communication.
 - (D) The ability to be a good listener comes naturally, and no training is necessary.
 - (E) Being an effective communicator means that one must listen to oneself.
3. When a group is faced with a problem requiring immediate action, the most effective leadership style is
 - (A) authoritarian
 - (B) democratic
 - (C) laissez-faire
 - (D) charismatic
 - (E) permissive
4. Having identified a problem area, the teacher assigns members of a group specific roles in the group and then requires that the group reach an agreement through discussion but without resorting to voting or bargaining. This exercise helps the students gain practical experience in which of the following?
 - I. Role playing
 - II. Problem solving
 - III. Leadership skills
 - IV. Consensus
 - (A) II only
 - (B) I and III only
 - (C) II and IV only
 - (D) I, II, and IV
 - (E) I, III, and IV
5. A startling introductory statement is most useful in establishing contact with which kind of group?
 - (A) Hostile
 - (B) Apathetic
 - (C) Attentive
 - (D) Homogeneous
 - (E) Political

6. According to diffusion theory, opinion leaders are
- (A) very successful with followers whose backgrounds differ from their own
 - (B) very likely to make themselves available to the mass media
 - (C) less socially active and more introverted than their followers
 - (D) uniformly disregarded by other agents of change
 - (E) unlikely to be influential until they have built a strong group of followers
7. Which of the following most accurately describes the research on the relationship between viewing violence on television and engaging in violent behavior?
- (A) It has demonstrated fairly conclusively that there is no substantive relationship between the two activities.
 - (B) It suggests that there is a substantial relationship, in that television viewing patterns predict about 75 percent of violent behavior.
 - (C) It demonstrates the various ways that violent behavior is manifested in our society.
 - (D) It shows a significant relationship between the two but explains no more than a moderate amount of violent behavior.
 - (E) It concludes that there is a substantial relationship for children but not for adults.
8. It is a generally accepted first principle of oral interpretation that the reader must be true to
- (A) himself or herself
 - (B) the author
 - (C) the method
 - (D) the audience
 - (E) his or her training
9. In debate, a prima facie case is one that
- (A) minimally meets the negative side's burden of proof
 - (B) is presented in the second affirmative rebuttal
 - (C) is necessary only when a proposition of fact is being argued
 - (D) is necessary only when a proposition of value is being argued
 - (E) minimally meets the affirmative side's unattached burden of proof
10. In teaching the constitutional concept of freedom of speech, a speech communication teacher would find which of the following situations a useful example?
- I. A historian doing research on the political goals of the nineteenth-century abolitionist movement
 - II. A school board discussing hiring a Marxist teacher
 - III. A college considering canceling a speech by a civil rights leader because of campus unrest
- (A) I only
 - (B) II only
 - (C) I and II only
 - (D) II and III only
 - (E) I, II, and III
11. A speech that relates the events leading up to the Boston Tea Party would be classified as what type of speech?
- (A) Expository
 - (B) Persuasive
 - (C) Ceremonial
 - (D) Adaptive
 - (E) Analytical

12. A debate in which the affirmative constructive is six minutes long and the negative constructive is seven minutes long is following which of the following formats?
- (A) Standard
 - (B) Lincoln-Douglas
 - (C) Oxford
 - (D) Cross-examination
 - (E) Mock trial
13. When authorities claim that communication competence is situational, they mean that
- (A) the physical situation is the dominant factor in determining appropriateness
 - (B) speakers' communication competence varies from situation to situation
 - (C) most speakers who excel at public speaking excel in interpersonal situations as well
 - (D) all speakers react the same in similar situations
 - (E) all situations require the same response
14. "Excessive consumption of caffeine can lead to high blood pressure; therefore, you should reduce your consumption of cola beverages, coffee, and chocolate."
- The argument above illustrates which of the following?
- (A) Deductive reasoning
 - (B) An ad hominem argument
 - (C) Adaptive inductive reasoning
 - (D) Analogical reasoning
 - (E) Abductive reasoning
15. In oral interpretation, a slow tempo to suggest a serious idea may be created with
- (A) a pitch change
 - (B) greater vocal resonance
 - (C) sustained vowel or certain other sounds such as "m" or "ng"
 - (D) an increase in the frequency of words spoken during a specified time
 - (E) a change of tone
16. Within the communication process, the area that causes the most breakdowns is
- (A) interference
 - (B) feedback
 - (C) situation
 - (D) channel
 - (E) message
17. An informative speech that explains the history of genetics would most likely follow which of the following methods of organization?
- (A) Comparison-contrast
 - (B) Cause-effect
 - (C) Chronological
 - (D) Problem-solution
 - (E) Spatial
18. A director of forensics should address which of the following goals?
- I. Recruiting students
 - II. Communicating with parents
 - III. Communicating program goals with administrators and the community
 - IV. Teaching debate and individual event skills
- (A) I only
 - (B) I and IV only
 - (C) II and III only
 - (D) I, II, and III only
 - (E) I, II, III, and IV
19. Which of the following is most important in planning and developing curriculum?
- (A) The instructor should follow the school's textbook.
 - (B) The instructor should follow standards adopted by the district and state.
 - (C) The instructor should follow the textbook used by his or her university.
 - (D) The instructor should allow the students to choose what curriculum is covered.
 - (E) The instructor should cover topics that he or she likes the most.

Answers

1. The best answer is E. Research shows that environment is an important factor affecting both judgment making and communication. Research also shows that personal space (1½–4 feet) is more important to people than social space (4–12 feet); that seating arrangements have a pronounced effect on communication; that people who are working together will probably sit side by side; and that interpersonal distances vary considerably across cultures.
2. The correct answer is D. Authorities agree that effective listening is not a natural ability but requires study and practice. Research indicates that effective listening can certainly give information about a speaker's intentions and actions; that listeners often avoid listening to communication they find dull or difficult; and that communicators spend the majority of their communication time listening.
3. The best answer is A. In situations requiring immediate action, such as one involving stress because of an impending deadline, an authoritarian style is most often considered appropriate and is in fact frequently welcomed by group members.
4. The correct answer is D. The group members are asked to play roles and to solve a problem, and they should thus gain practical experience in those activities. The members are also instructed to reach a consensus (unanimous agreement through discussion). Although there are some aspects of leadership behavior that could be practiced, leadership skills would not be stressed in this type of democratic exercise.
5. The best answer is B. Research shows that a startling opening statement is very likely to be effective in catching the attention of an audience that has little or no interest in the speaker or the topic. An apathetic audience is more likely to be affected by such an opening than are any of the other kinds of audiences listed.
6. The best answer is B. An opinion leader spreads information to others who rely on him or her as a source. Such an individual is likely to maintain close contact with the mass media as a means of both obtaining information and disseminating it. Opinion leaders tend to have backgrounds that resemble, rather than differ from, those of their followers. If social activity is involved, the leaders will be more active than their followers; opinion leaders are usually respected by their peers.

7. The best answer is D. Although a connection has been established between violence on television and violent behavior, in both children and adults, the evidence is far from conclusive and accounts for only a small amount of real-life violence.
8. The correct answer is B. The primary aim of the oral interpreter should be to act as a medium for the ideas, images, and emotions of a literary text. The interpreter must care about the author's material and must want to share it with others.
9. The correct answer is E. The first requirement that the affirmative must meet, whether debating fact or value, is that of "burden of proof": the affirmative must prove something in order to win a judge's decision. The minimal proof is a case that will persuade "a reasonable and prudent person" that the affirmative resolution deserves acceptance. This minimal case is called a prima facie case, one that is convincing at first glance.
10. The best answer is D. Both II and III would serve as examples of situations in which the constitutional freedom of speech of a person or group would be directly affected. Example I would not be relevant in this way because the historian's research is a private matter rather than an issue of free speech.
11. The correct answer is A. Speech or writing that conveys information or offers an explanation is termed "expository." The type of speech described here would by nature be expository.
12. The correct answer is B. In the standard accepted format for Lincoln-Douglas debates, the affirmative constructive is six minutes long and the negative constructive is seven minutes long. This is not true of any of the other debate formats listed.
13. The correct answer is B. The notion of "situational competence" implies that speakers might have different levels of comfort and competence in different communication situations. Research indicates that some people are more effective when communicating in one situation (e.g., giving a speech to a group) but may be less effective in others (e.g., interpersonal communication in a business setting). Thus, speakers who excel in one area may not necessarily be effective in a different type of communication, because different situations may require different responses and different approaches.

14. The correct answer is A. Deductive reasoning is defined as the process of reasoning from general principles to specific instances. In this case, the argument moves from the general idea that consumption of caffeine leads to high blood pressure to the conclusion that, in order to help avoid high blood pressure, it is important to reduce caffeine intake.

15. The correct answer is C. The only choice here that would lead to a slower tempo involves sustaining the sounds (vowel sounds and certain consonants, like “m” or “ng,” are the best possibilities when speakers are looking for places to sustain sounds). Pitch and resonance can be altered at any tempo, and both fewer pauses and greater frequency of words would increase, rather than decrease, the tempo of the interpretation.

16. The correct answer is A. Even though communication breakdowns can occur at any point in the communication process, only interference is a problem in and of itself.

17. The correct answer is C. Chronological order organizes the speech in the order in which things occurred and would suit a speech charting the history of genetics. Comparison-contrast would need two separate areas to compare and contrast; cause-effect would be appropriate only if the purpose of the speech were to cover the reasons why the study of genetics occurred; problem-solution would be suited to a persuasive speech, and spatial refers to organization based on direction order.

18. The correct answer is E. Effective directors of forensics programs emphasize all of the aspects listed.

19. The correct answer is B. Instructors should follow district and state standards for their discipline when planning and developing curriculum.



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