

The Praxis® Study Companion

# English Language Arts: Content and Analysis

5039



# 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 50).

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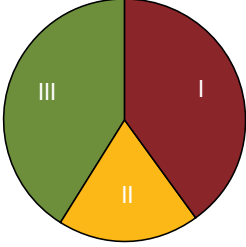
*The Praxis® Study Companion guides you through the steps to success*

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# 1. Learn About Your Test

*Learn about the specific test you will be taking*

## English Language Arts: Content and Analysis (5039)

Test at a Glance			
<b>Test Name</b>	English Language Arts: Content and Analysis		
<b>Test Code</b>	5039		
<b>Time</b>	3 hours: 150 minutes for the selected-response (SR) section and 30 minutes for the constructed-response (CR) section		
<b>Number of Questions</b>	130 SR and 2 CR questions		
<b>Format</b>	The SR section, which accounts for 75% of the total test score, consists of single-selection, selected-response questions with four answer choices. It also includes some of the following question types: multiple-selection multiple choice, order/match, audio stimulus, table/grid, select in passage, and video stimulus.		
<b>Test Delivery</b>	Computer delivered		
	<b>Content Categories</b>	<b>Approximate Number of Questions</b>	<b>Approximate Percentage of Test</b>
	I. Reading	48 SR and 1 CR*	40%
	II. Language Use and Vocabulary	33 SR	19%
	III. Writing, Speaking, and Listening	49 SR and 1 CR*	41%
* On your score report, points earned on the CR questions are reported separately from points earned on the SR questions.			

### About This Test

The English Language Arts: Content and Analysis test measures whether prospective secondary school English Language Arts teachers have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice. Aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts, the test measures examinees' skills and knowledge of concepts relevant to three categories: reading, including the study of literature (i.e., stories, drama, and poetry) and informational texts (i.e., literary nonfiction, such as essays, biographies, and speeches); use of the English language, including conventions of standard English and vocabulary development; and writing, speaking, and listening. The 130 selected-response questions address all of these categories. The two constructed-response (CR) questions, or short essays, also address the first and third categories: reading and writing, speaking, and listening. The first CR question asks examinees to analyze the central idea and key literary elements of a poetry or prose excerpt from United States, British, or World literature of any period. The second CR question asks examinees to read an excerpt from a literary essay and analyze the central idea and important rhetorical features used to construct an argument.

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

## Test Specifications

Test specifications describe the knowledge and skills measured by the test. Study topics to help you prepare to answer test questions can be found on page 38.

### I. Reading

#### A. Literature

*\* Any knowledge statements marked with an asterisk may be measured in the constructed-response (CR) question for this category.*

1. Knows major works and authors of United States, British, World (including non-Western), and Young Adult literature
  - a. identify the authors and titles of major works of fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction
2. Knows the historical, cultural, and literary contexts of major works and authors of United States, British, and World literature
  - a. identify the historical or literary context of major works of fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction
3. Understands the defining characteristics of primary literary genres
  - a. identify typical characteristics of a genre
  - b. apply correct terminology for a genre (e.g., stanza versus paragraph)
4. Knows the defining characteristics of major forms within each primary literary genre (e.g., poetry: ballad, haiku)
  - a. identify characteristics of major forms within each genre through distinctions in structure and content (e.g., sonnets versus ballads, satire versus realism)
5. \*Understands how textual evidence supports interpretations of a literary text
  - a. comprehend the literal and figurative meanings of a text
  - b. draw inferences from a text
  - c. determine the textual evidence that supports an analysis of a literary text
6. \*Understands how authors develop themes in a variety of genres
  - a. identify the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a given text
  - b. analyze how a theme or central idea is developed throughout one or more works
7. \*Understands how literary elements (e.g., characterization, setting, tone) contribute to the meaning of a text
  - a. analyze the impact of differences in the points of view of characters and/or narrators
  - b. analyze the structure of a plot
  - c. analyze how different elements contribute to mood, tone, and conflict
  - d. analyze how particular lines of dialogue or story events impact meaning
  - e. analyze the text for character development
8. \*Understands how figurative language contributes to the effect of a text
  - a. identify examples of various types of figurative language (e.g., extended metaphor, imagery, hyperbole)
  - b. interpret figurative language in context and analyze its role in the text
9. \*Understands how poetic devices and structure contribute to the effect of a poem
  - a. analyze how poetic devices (e.g., rhyme scheme, rhythm, figurative language) contribute to meaning in a poem
  - b. analyze how structure (e.g., stanza, free verse, concrete poem) contributes to meaning in a poem
10. Understands how reading strategies (e.g., making predictions, making connections, summarizing) support comprehension
  - a. identify literacy skills to support active reading (e.g., text-to-self connection, prediction, summarizing)
  - b. evaluate a summary of a passage
  - c. evaluate the strength of a prediction based on textual evidence
11. Knows commonly used research-based strategies for reading instruction (e.g., activating prior knowledge, modeling metacognitive practices, active reading)
  - a. recognize commonly used research-based strategies for teaching reading (e.g., activating prior knowledge, modeling metacognitive practices)

- b. evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies to support a particular reading task
  - c. interpret research and apply it to particular reading instruction challenges
12. Is familiar with various literary theories (e.g., reader-response, feminist criticism) for interpreting and critiquing literary texts
- a. recognize ways literary theories are used to interpret and critique texts

**B. Informational Texts and Rhetoric**

- 1. \*Understands how textual evidence supports interpretations of an informational text
  - a. comprehend literal and figurative meanings of an informational text
  - b. draw inferences from an informational text
  - c. determine the textual evidence that supports an analysis of an informational text
- 2. \*Understands how a variety of organizational patterns and text structures can be used to develop a central idea in informational texts
  - a. identify the central idea of an informational text
  - b. analyze how an author develops or refines a central idea in an informational text
  - c. identify the organizational pattern of an informational text (e.g., problem-solution, cause-effect, sequence order)
  - d. analyze how ideas are connected and distinguished from one another in an informational text
  - e. identify how text features (e.g., index, glossary, headings, footnotes, visuals) contribute to the central idea of an informational text
- 3. \*Understands how word choice contributes to the effect of an informational text
  - a. distinguish between connotation and denotation in an informational text
  - b. identify how technical language is used in an informational text
  - c. distinguish between what the text says explicitly and what may be inferred from the text
- 4. Understands rhetorical strategies that authors use to convey purpose and perspective in informational texts
  - a. determine an author's point of view or purpose in an informational text
  - b. analyze how an author uses rhetoric to

support point of view and/or purpose in an informational text

- c. recognize rhetorical strategies (e.g., satire, irony, understatement, hyperbole)
5. Understands methods that authors use to appeal to a specific audience
- a. identify methods of appeal or persuasion (e.g., expert opinion, generalization, testimonial)
  - b. evaluate the effectiveness of an author's methods of appeal
  - c. understand how technical or non-technical language is used to appeal to a targeted audience
6. \*Understands how authors develop and support a written argument
- a. evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text
  - b. determine an author's purpose and evaluate an author's reasoning
  - c. evaluate whether evidence is relevant, factual, and/or sufficient
  - d. identify false statements and fallacious reasoning (e.g., slippery slope, red herring, strawman, post hoc ergo propter hoc)
7. Knows how to interpret media and non-print texts and how they influence an audience
- a. evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats
  - b. determine persuasive techniques used in different media

**C. Constructed-response Reading Question**

- 1. Interpret literature



## II. Language Use and Vocabulary

1. Understands the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics
  - a. explain the function of the different parts of speech
  - b. identify errors in standard English grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics (e.g., inconsistent verb tense, non-parallel structure, sentence fragment, run-on)
  - c. justify grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics choices (e.g., colon versus semicolon, its versus it's, saw versus seen, etc.)
  - d. identify different components of sentences (e.g., clauses, phrases)
  - e. identify different structures of sentences (e.g., simple, complex, compound)
2. Understands the use of affixes, context, and syntax to determine word meaning
  - a. apply knowledge of affixes to determine word meaning
  - b. use context clues to determine word meaning
  - c. apply knowledge of syntax to determine word meaning
  - d. analyze nuances of word meaning and figures of speech
3. Understands the use of print and digital reference materials to support and enhance language usage
  - a. determine the most appropriate print or digital reference material (spell checker, style manual, dictionary, glossary) for a particular language usage task
4. Is familiar with variations in dialect and diction across regions, cultural groups, and time periods
  - a. identify variation in dialect and diction across regions, cultural groups, and time periods
  - b. understand the concept of dialect and its appropriateness depending on purpose and audience
5. Knows commonly used research-based approaches for supporting language acquisition and vocabulary development for diverse learners
  - a. recognize examples of commonly used research-based strategies for language acquisition or vocabulary development
  - b. evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies

to support language acquisition or vocabulary development

- c. interpret research and apply it to particular instructional challenges related to language acquisition or vocabulary development

## III. Writing, Speaking, and Listening

*\*\* Any knowledge statements marked with a double asterisk may be measured in the constructed-response (CR) question for this category.*

1. **\*\***Understands the distinct characteristics of various modes of writing (e.g., informative, argumentative)
  - a. distinguish between common modes of writing (e.g., argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative)
  - b. identify examples of common types within modes of writing (e.g., journal, letter, essay, speech, blog)
  - c. determine which mode is the most appropriate for an author's purpose and audience
2. **\*\***Understands how awareness of task, purpose, and audience contributes to effective writing
  - a. identify how the task, purpose, or intended audience affects a piece of writing
  - b. choose the most appropriate type of writing for a task, purpose, and audience
  - c. evaluate the effectiveness of a piece of writing for a specific task, purpose, and audience
3. **\*\***Understands the characteristics of clear and coherent writing (e.g., supporting details, organization, conventions)
  - a. identify details that develop a main idea
  - b. organize a text clearly and coherently
  - c. use varied and effective transitions throughout a text
  - d. justify stylistic choices within a clear and coherent piece of writing
  - e. introduce, develop, and conclude a text effectively
4. Understands effective and ethical research practices, including evaluating the credibility of multiple print and digital sources, gathering relevant information, and citing sources accurately
  - a. identify relevant information during research on a given topic



- b. evaluate the credibility of a print or digital source
  - c. identify effective research practices (e.g., formulating a question, narrowing or broadening a topic, choosing effective sources)
  - d. identify the components of a citation
  - e. cite source material appropriately
  - f. integrate information from source material to maintain the flow of ideas
5. Understands components of effective speech and presentation delivery
- a. identify characteristics of effective delivery of a speech or presentation (e.g., eye contact, visual aids, tone)
  - b. evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different media to present ideas
  - c. determine whether information is presented clearly, concisely, and logically
6. Knows approaches for instructing students on the effective use of digital media to support and enhance communication
- a. identify techniques for instructing students to choose and use technological tools (e.g., presentation software, blogs, wikis) for effective communication
  - b. evaluate the effectiveness of specific technology-based strategies to achieve enhanced understanding of communication goals
7. Understands commonly used research-based approaches to teaching components of writing
- a. recognize commonly used research-based strategies (e.g., writing workshop, modeling) for teaching components of the writing process
  - b. identify research-based strategies for teaching particular writing tasks
  - c. interpret research and apply it to particular writing instruction challenges
8. Understands purposes and methods of assessing reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- a. recognize a variety of research-based approaches to and purposes of formative and summative assessment of reading, writing, speaking, and listening (e.g., use of rubrics, conferencing techniques, providing useful feedback)
  - b. evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of research-based approaches to and purposes of formative and summative assessment of reading, writing, speaking, and listening (e.g., use of rubrics, conferencing techniques, providing useful feedback)
9. Understands the components of effective oral communication in a variety of settings (e.g., one-on-one, in groups)
- a. identify a variety of techniques (e.g., selecting age-appropriate topics, facilitating appropriate discussion behavior, ensuring accountability) to ensure productive participation and active listening in collaborative discussions
  - b. evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies for students initiating and participating effectively in discussions
10. Knows that students bring various perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds to reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and how to incorporate that awareness into classroom instruction
- a. use knowledge of students' individual and group identities to plan instruction responsive to their needs
  - b. know strategies for creating a safe environment for reading, writing, speaking, and listening to take place

**A. Constructed-response Writing, Speaking, and Listening Question**

1. Evaluate rhetorical features

## 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.

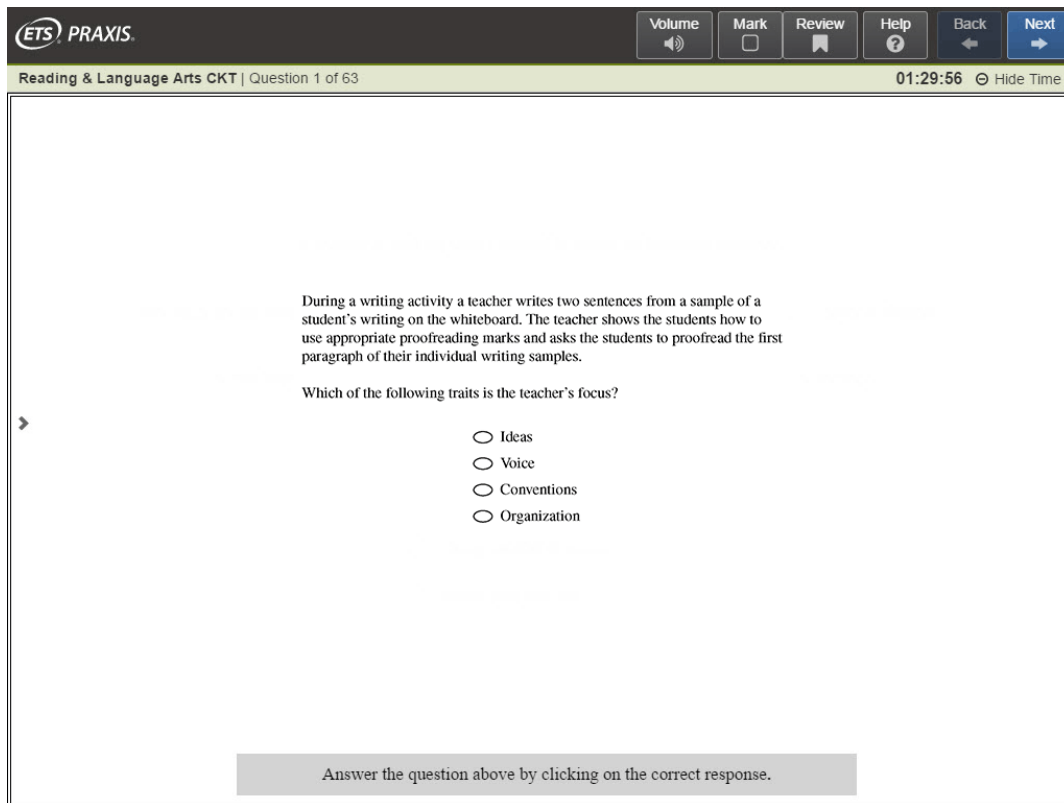
**QUICK TIP:** You may find that it helps to take notes on scratch paper so that you don't miss any details. Then you'll be sure to have all the information you need to answer the question.

## 3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

*Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers*

### Sample Test Questions

This test is available via computer delivery. To illustrate what the computer-delivered test looks like, the following sample question shows an actual screen used in a computer-delivered test. For the purposes of this guide, sample questions are provided as they would appear in a paper-delivered test.



The screenshot displays a computer-delivered test interface. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the ETS PRAXIS logo on the left and several control buttons: Volume, Mark, Review, Help, Back, and Next. Below this bar, a light green header shows "Reading & Language Arts CKT | Question 1 of 63" on the left and a timer "01:29:56" with a "Hide Time" option on the right. The main content area is a large white rectangle containing the following text:

During a writing activity a teacher writes two sentences from a sample of a student's writing on the whiteboard. The teacher shows the students how to use appropriate proofreading marks and asks the students to proofread the first paragraph of their individual writing samples.

Which of the following traits is the teacher's focus?

- Ideas
- Voice
- Conventions
- Organization

At the bottom of the content area, a gray box contains the instruction: "Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response."

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. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

**Directions:** Each of the questions or statements below is followed by suggested answers or completions, except for question 12, which asks you to place marks in table columns, and question 17, which asks you to select one or more answers. In each case, select the answer(s) that is best.

- The book announced an insane world of dehumanization through terror in which the individual was systematically obliterated by an all-powerful elite. Its key phrases—Big Brother, doublethink, Newspeak, the Ministry of Peace (devoted to war), the Ministry of Truth (devoted to lies), the Ministry of Love (devoted to torture)—burned their way at once into the modern consciousness.

The passage above discusses

- E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*
- Thomas Pynchon's *V*.
- George Orwell's *1984*
- Flannery O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away*

**Questions 2–3** are based on the following excerpt from Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

This was all the account I got from Mrs. Fairfax of her employer and mine. There are people who seem to have no notion of sketching a character, or observing and describing salient points, either in persons or things: the good lady evidently belonged to this class; my queries puzzled, but did not draw her out. Mr. Rochester was Mr. Rochester in her eyes, a gentleman, a landed proprietor—nothing more: she inquired and searched no further, and evidently wondered at my wish to gain a more definite notion of his identity.

- The passage suggests that the speaker would describe the “account” mentioned in the first sentence as
  - enlightening
  - mystifying
  - deficient
  - erroneous
- Mrs. Fairfax differs from the speaker in that Mrs. Fairfax
  - has more interest in the complexities of people's personalities
  - judges people by their social station in life
  - is more willing to take people at face value
  - has a more positive opinion of Mr. Rochester



**Questions 4–6** are based on the following excerpt from Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

The people all saw her come because it was sundown. The sun was gone, but he had left his footprints in the sky. It was the time for sitting on porches beside the road. It was the time to hear things and talk. These sitters had been tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long. Mules and other brutes had occupied their skins. But now, the sun and the bossman were gone, so the skins felt powerful and human. They became lords of sounds and lesser things. They passed nations through their mouths. They sat in judgment.

4. The description of the sun in the second sentence contains which of the following literary devices?
  - (A) Foreshadowing
  - (B) Irony
  - (C) Flashback
  - (D) Personification
  
5. Which of the following is the best way of describing the last three sentences of the passage (“They became . . . in judgment”)?
  - (A) They emphasize the weariness the sitters feel after a long day’s work.
  - (B) They are used to paint a picture of the way in which the sitters wish they spent their evenings.
  - (C) They are a vivid way of describing the ease and authority the sitters feel during the evening.
  - (D) They highlight the contrast between the feelings of the sitters and the feelings of the bossman.
  
6. Zora Neale Hurston is associated with which of the following literary movements?
  - (A) New England Puritanism
  - (B) Transcendentalism
  - (C) Naturalism
  - (D) Harlem Renaissance
  
7. Grammar may be taught in two main ways—by experience with discourse that entails the varieties of word forms and sentence construction, or by analyzing dummy sentences and diagramming parts. Plentiful discursive experience is what really teaches grammar, for it exercises judgment and provides language intake, whereas formal grammar study has been proved irrelevant. Politics more than pedagogy retards the changing of the curriculum to fit this truth.
 

The author of the passage above argues that

  - (A) using language in a wide variety of situations improves grammar
  - (B) good judgment can be improved by studying the rules of formal grammar
  - (C) analyzing and diagramming provide exercise in logical thinking
  - (D) formal study of grammar improves writing ability
  
8. Science fiction: readers claim to either love it or loathe it; either they avoid it like poison or they devour favorite works and authors like chocolate addicts gulping down fudge truffles.
 

The author of the passage compares certain readers with “chocolate addicts” primarily in order to

  - (A) suggest that science fiction is not a serious literary genre
  - (B) indicate the depth of certain readers’ feelings about science fiction
  - (C) explain why some readers consider science fiction to be dangerous
  - (D) contrast the characteristics of science fiction with those of other literary genres

9. From the very beginning, I wrote to explain my own life to myself, and I invited any readers who chose to make the journey with me to join me on the high wire. I would work without a net and without the noise of the crowd to disturb me. The view from on high is dizzying, instructive. I do not record the world exactly as it comes to me but transform it by making it pass through a prism of fabulous stories I have collected on the way. I gather stories the way a lepidopterist hoards his chloroformed specimens of rare moths, or Costa Rican beetles. Stories are like vessels I use to interpret the world to myself.

-----Pat Conroy

Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage?

- (A) The author provides several explanations for taking a certain course of action.
- (B) The author uses analogies to explain his experience of a particular action.
- (C) The author makes a comparison between his own experiences and that of others in his profession.
- (D) The author chronicles the various phases of his work in a particular discipline.
10. Which of the following questions can a student ask to best determine whether an author is using the persuasive technique of pathos in a passage?
- (A) Does the author use tone and style to convey authority on the subject to the audience?
- (B) Does the author use credible and reliable sources to convince the audience of the argument?
- (C) Does the author use facts and sound reasoning to substantiate claims made to the audience?
- (D) Does the author use personal connections and stories to appeal to the audience's emotions?

11. Which of the following text features should a student examine first when determining the main idea of a passage in an informational text?
- (A) Table of contents
- (B) Italicized words
- (C) Headings
- (D) Captions
12. A teacher is using the following advertisement during a lesson on methods of persuasion.



The advertisement primarily uses which of the following persuasive techniques to appeal to the audience?

- (A) Card stacking
- (B) Testimonial
- (C) Bandwagon
- (D) Glittering generalities
13. Which of the following is the best description of traditional phonics instruction?
- (A) Students study lists of high-frequency words in order to increase reading speed and comprehension.
- (B) Students are taught individual letter sounds first, followed by letter combination sounds and the rules of putting these combinations together to make words.
- (C) Students are immersed in written language and encouraged to decode entire words using context clues.
- (D) Students analyze patterns of organization and syntax as a way of learning to recognize common structures.

14. Every day was a happy day, and every night was peaceful.

The sentence above can best be classified as

- (A) simple
- (B) compound
- (C) complex
- (D) compound-complex

15. Place a mark in the column next to each sentence that most accurately names the type of error contained in the sentence.

For each sentence, select one error.

Sentence	Split Infinitive	Subject-Verb Disagreement	Faulty Parallelism	Adjective/Adverb Confusion
Mark decided to hastily clean the house before his parents returned from their trip.				
To be on time, Sharon quick got ready and drove to school.				
Joaquin enjoyed skating, sledding, and also to go skiing in the cold weather.				
Although she enjoyed weekends, Fridays was Tanya's favorite day of the week.				

16. Whenever the mood strikes her, Angela takes a short walk around the block.

In the sentence above, the underlined portion can best be described as

- (A) an adjective clause
- (B) a relative clause
- (C) a subordinate clause
- (D) an independent clause

17. A student comes across the unfamiliar words “intercontinental,” “interglacial,” “interface,” and “intercept” in his reading. The student can use his knowledge of affixes to understand that all of the words share which meaning?

- (A) between; among
- (B) not; opposite of
- (C) earth; environment
- (D) under; too little

18. At the border of two countries there is a port where fishermen work. The fishermen do not speak the same language, so they communicate using one that has been invented by them for the purpose of trade. This language does not have any fixed rules of grammar.

The scenario above most accurately describes which of the following types of language?

- (A) A dialect
  - (B) A creole
  - (C) A pidgin
  - (D) A regionalism
19. Anna feels that she is confusing “who” and “whom” in her narrative. She wants to correct her error. Which of the following reference materials will best help Anna accomplish such a task?
- (A) A dictionary
  - (B) A thesaurus
  - (C) A glossary
  - (D) A grammar guide

20. Which of the following strategies are most appropriate for helping students comprehend new vocabulary in nonfiction texts?

Select all that apply

- (A) Writing sentences on the board for the students to copy
  - (B) Studying examples of texts that use the new vocabulary in context
  - (C) Activating the students’ prior knowledge to develop a framework for the new vocabulary
  - (D) Providing frequent opportunities for the students to use their new vocabulary words
  - (E) Having the students look up definitions in the dictionary and write them several times
21. A student is conducting a research project and has learned of a website that may have useful information. The domain extension for the site is .org. Which of the following assumptions about the website is correct?
- (A) All of the information on the site is current.
  - (B) The site has been evaluated for bias.
  - (C) The site might belong to a nonprofit agency.
  - (D) The author of the site is well respected in his or her field.

**Questions 19–21** refer to the following paragraphs.

- I. On a dark, secluded street stood three abandoned houses. The first had broken shutters and shattered windows. Next to it stood a dilapidated structure badly in need of paint. Adjacent, amid debris, stood a shack with graffiti scrawled across the door.
  - II. Weeks before they decided on their destination, the seniors had already begun a massive fundraising project to help finance their class trip. When they were offered the choice between Rome and London, an overwhelming majority chose Rome. Then preparations began in earnest. In the months that followed, the students' enthusiasm escalated until the day the plane finally took off, carrying them toward an experience they would remember forever.
  - III. Selecting a new car requires each buyer to weigh a number of factors. First to be considered is the car's appearance. Next, and even more critical, are the car's performance and safety ratings. Most significant to any prospective buyer, however, is the car's price.
22. Which of the following best describes the organization of paragraph I ?
    - (A) Chronological order
    - (B) Spatial order
    - (C) Cause and effect
    - (D) Order of importance
  23. Which of the following best describes the organization of paragraph II ?
    - (A) Chronological order
    - (B) Spatial order
    - (C) Cause and effect
    - (D) Order of importance
  24. Which of the following best describes the organization of paragraph III ?
    - (A) Chronological order
    - (B) Spatial order
    - (C) Cause and effect
    - (D) Order of importance
  25. In a holistic evaluation of student essays, evaluations are made on the basis of the
    - (A) number and variety of errors made by each student
    - (B) average sentence length and the complexity demonstrated in each essay
    - (C) ability of each student to communicate in a variety of discourse modes
    - (D) overall quality of each student's essay in relation to the topic
  26. In preparation for a writing unit on short stories, a teacher presents students with several examples of short stories and works with them to identify defining characteristics of the genre. Which of the following best describes this instructional strategy?
    - (A) Conferencing
    - (B) Discipline-based inquiry
    - (C) Self-Regulated Strategy Development
    - (D) Introduction-Body-Conclusion strategy
  27. To best encourage student engagement in the classroom, a teacher should select texts based on which of the following?
    - (A) The instructional objectives
    - (B) The culture of the local community
    - (C) The instructional reading level of the class
    - (D) Topics that are interesting for the students
  28. A student is standing in front of the class delivering a presentation. Some students in the back of the room note that they are having trouble hearing what the presenter is saying. Which of the following suggestions to the presenter would best address this problem?
    - (A) Engage your audience by making eye contact with people in the back of the room
    - (B) Entertain your audience with exaggerated body language
    - (C) Emphasize your main points by reading them directly from a paper
    - (D) Project your voice by relaxing the rib cage and maintaining good posture

29. Which of the following activities would help a teacher collect data and plan a unit of study that addresses the individual needs of the students?
- (A) Concentric circles
  - (B) K-W-L chart
  - (C) Book pass
  - (D) Reciprocal teaching

30. Students are reading the following passage from the National Park Service's Web site.

Ten miles long and nearly 500 feet deep (152.4 meters), Lake McDonald, the largest lake in the park, is a direct result of glacial carving. High peaks surrounding the lake all show evidence of the power of glaciers to carve even the hardest of rock. The powerful glaciers that carved the broad U-shaped valley that Lake McDonald sits in also carved smaller hanging valleys with wonderful waterfalls that are accessible by numerous hiking trails.

Which of the following best identifies the intended audience of the passage?

- (A) Scientists researching glacier development
  - (B) Teachers interested in creating virtual park field trips
  - (C) Academics studying the historical context of national parks
  - (D) Families interested in visiting Lake McDonald
31. Which of the following is an example of persuasive speech?
- (A) A campaign manager's introduction of a mayoral candidate
  - (B) A professor's lecture on the structure of the heart
  - (C) A company president's yearly sales report
  - (D) A tour guide's discussion of an art museum installation

32. I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975. I remember the precise moment, crouching behind a crumbling mud wall, peeking into the alley near the frozen creek. That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past, I've learned, about how you can bury it. Because the past claws its way out. Looking back now, I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years.

The excerpt is an example of which of the following types of writing?

- (A) Informative
- (B) Persuasive
- (C) Descriptive
- (D) Narrative

## Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (C). The passage describes the themes and key phrases of Orwell's *1984*. (A), (B), and (D) are incorrect because the passage does not discuss the plot of the novels *A Passage to India*, *V.*, or *The Violent Bear It Away*.

2. The correct answer is (C). The speaker indicates that Mrs. Fairfax is one of those people who has "no notion of sketching a character, or observing and describing salient points, either in persons or things." Thus it can be inferred that Mrs. Fairfax's description of Mr. Rochester seemed deficient to the speaker. (A) is incorrect because Mrs. Fairfax's description left the speaker with a desire to "gain a more definite notion of his identity." (B) and (D) are incorrect because the passage does not indicate that Mrs. Fairfax gave puzzling or inaccurate information about Mr. Rochester.

3. The correct answer is (C). Mrs. Fairfax sees that Mr. Rochester is "a gentleman, a landed proprietor" and she is content knowing only these external facts about Mr. Rochester. The speaker suggests that she, in contrast, would like to know more about Mr. Rochester's identity. (A) is incorrect because it is true of the speaker rather than of Mrs. Fairfax. (B) and (D) are incorrect because no indication is given of either character's judgment or opinion of Mr. Rochester.

4. The correct answer is (D). Personification involves endowing abstractions, ideas, and inanimate objects with human characteristics or sensibilities. In the second sentence, the sun is described as having the human ability to leave footprints. (A) is incorrect because foreshadowing involves giving advanced hints of what will follow in the story. (B) is incorrect because irony involves using words so their intended meanings are different from their actual meanings. (C) is incorrect because flashback involves interrupting chronological order to recall past events. None of these literary devices is used in the description of the sun.

5. The correct answer is (C). The sentences describe the way the sitters feel during the evening. After a long day of work and being "tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long," the sitters have reclaimed their autonomy. The words "lords" and "nations" and the phrase "sat in judgment" vividly describe the sitters' sense of power during the evening. (A) is incorrect because the sentences discuss the sitters' sense of power, not weariness. (B) is incorrect because the sentences describe actual, not wished-for, events. (D) is incorrect because the sentences focus only on the sitters and are not concerned with the bossman.

6. The correct answer is (D). Zora Neale Hurston is one of the authors associated with the Harlem Renaissance, an African-American cultural movement that took place in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. (A), (B), and (C) are incorrect because Hurston did not write during the Puritan, Transcendental, or Naturalist movements.

7. The correct answer is (A). The author maintains that "plentiful discursive experience" is the most effective teacher of grammar. In this context, "discursive" experience means experience with discourse—that is, speech or texts that communicate ideas for some purpose and not merely as an exercise. The author argues that students learn the rules of grammar as part of the process of learning to understand the meaning of diverse texts. (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because these are all aspects of formal grammar study, which the author states "has been proved irrelevant."

8. The correct answer is (B). The author makes a comparison between science fiction readers and people who love chocolate so much they could be called addicts to stress that those who like science fiction cannot get enough of it. (A) is incorrect because the author does not discuss the seriousness of the genre. (C) is incorrect because the author uses the metaphor to show love, not danger. (D) is incorrect because the author provides no contrast with other genres in the passage.

9. The correct answer is (B). In the excerpt, Conroy discusses his experience as a writer. He compares it both to being a trapeze artist in a high wire act and to being a lepidopterist collecting bugs. Thus, he uses analogies to explain his experience. (A) is incorrect because the author provides only one explanation for why he writes: to explain his life to himself. (C) and (D) are incorrect because the author neither discusses other writers nor various phases of his life as a writer.

10. The correct answer is (D). Pathos is an appeal to the emotions of the audience, and incorporating personal connections and stories is one technique for eliciting an emotional response from readers. (A) and (B) are incorrect because they describe the use of ethos. (C) is incorrect because it describes the use of logos.

11. The correct answer is (C). Headings in an informational text typically present the major idea of each section of the text. (A) is incorrect because chapter titles in the table of contents will not be the best place to identify main topics. (B) is incorrect because italicized words identify key terms, not main ideas. (D) is incorrect because captions just explain what is in a picture.



12. The correct answer is (C). The poster encourages people to join in the group and work together. (A) is incorrect because the poster does not emphasize one side of an argument and repress another. (B) is incorrect because the poster does not use a celebrity making a claim. (D) is incorrect because the poster does not use emotionally appealing words.

13. The correct answer is (B), which is a typical definition of traditional phonics instruction. (C) is a very general description of whole-language instruction, and (A) and (D) represent potential strategies for increasing reading comprehension.

14. The correct answer is (B). A compound sentence contains at least two independent clauses, which are often joined by a comma and a conjunction. (A) is incorrect because a simple sentence contains only one independent clause. (C) is incorrect because a complex sentence contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. (D) is incorrect because a compound-complex sentence contains two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

15. The first sentence contains a split infinitive. In English, an infinitive is the most basic form of the verb and is usually preceded by the preposition “to.” A split infinitive occurs when an adverb is placed between “to” and the verb. In the example sentence, the adverb “hastily” is placed between “to” and “clean” to indicate that the cleaning was done hastily. The second sentence contains an error in adjective/adverb usage: the word “quick” is being used as an adverb although it is actually an adjective; it should be replaced by the adverb “quickly.” The third sentence contains an error in parallelism. The three verbs in the sentence should be in the same form (i.e., “skating, sledding, and skiing”). The fourth sentence contains an error in subject-verb agreement. Since “Fridays” is plural, the verb form should also be plural. Therefore, “was” should be “were.”

16. The correct answer is (C). A subordinate clause cannot stand alone and begins with a subordinating conjunction. (A) is incorrect because an adjective clause is a dependent clause that acts as an adjective. (B) is incorrect because a relative clause would have to have a relative pronoun, such as “who” or “which.” (D) is incorrect because an independent clause can stand alone and function as a sentence.

17. The correct answer is (A). The affix *inter-* means between or among. All of the words share this common prefix. (B), (C), and (D) are not correct because *inter-* does not mean “not; opposite of,” “earth; environment,” or “under; too little.”

18. The correct answer is (C). A pidgin is a simplified language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups that do not have a language in common. (A) is incorrect because a dialect refers to a variation of a language that is characteristic of a particular group of the language’s speakers. (B) is incorrect because a creole is a stable natural language developed (with grammatical rules) from the mixing of parent languages. (D) is incorrect because a regionalism is a word or phrase used by a population in a particular region.

19. The correct answer is (D). A grammar guide helps with the proper construction of sentences and proper use of words. (A) is incorrect because a dictionary provides the meaning of words. (B) is incorrect because a thesaurus helps avoid repetition of words when writing by listing suitable synonyms for those words. (C) is incorrect because a glossary is a list of words and definitions related to a specific subject.

20. The correct answers are (B), (C), and (D). Activating prior knowledge, examining new vocabulary in context, and providing opportunities for students to practice using new vocabulary words are all effective means of teaching vocabulary. (A) and (E) are incorrect because research on vocabulary development has shown that simply looking up words in the dictionary and memorizing definitions is not effective for new word acquisition, mostly because word meaning is so dependent on context.

21. The correct answer is (C). The *.org* extension means that the site may belong to a nonprofit organization, though the student would have to confirm it through further investigation. (A) is incorrect because to determine how current the site’s information is, the student would have to find the date when it was last updated, which is often available at the bottom of the page or in the About section. (B) is incorrect because a *.org* site may be supporting a specific cause or belief system; it cannot be assumed that the site has been evaluated for bias. (D) is incorrect because this information could not be determined by the domain extension. The student would have to research the site’s author to gain this knowledge.

22. The correct answer is (B). Paragraph I describes three houses standing in a row and relates them to one another according to where in that row each is situated. The words “next to” and “adjacent” are words typically used in descriptions of spatial relationships. (A) is incorrect because the paragraph does not detail events or issues in time order. (C) is incorrect because the paragraph contains no mention of cause and effect. (D) is incorrect because there is no reference to the importance of items.

23. The correct answer is (A). Paragraph II describes a series of events that take place over the course of several months. Words and phrases such as “weeks before,” “when,” “then,” and “in the months that followed” relate events sequentially. (B) is incorrect because the paragraph does not use detailed descriptions of location or relation to space. (C) is incorrect because the paragraph contains no mention of cause and effect. (D) is incorrect because there is no reference to the importance of items.

24. The correct answer is (D). The organization of paragraph III reflects an order of increasing importance. The features of the car are arranged from the one that should least affect the prospective buyer’s decision (appearance) to the one that should most influence the buyer’s decision (price). Words such as “more” and “most” help establish the comparative importance of each feature. (A) is incorrect because the paragraph does not detail events or issues in time order. (B) is incorrect because the paragraph does not use detailed descriptions of location or relation to space. (C) is incorrect because the paragraph contains no mention of cause and effect.

25. The correct answer is (D). Holistic evaluation is based on the premise that the overall impact of an essay depends on the integration of different elements of writing, such as organization, development, sentence structure, word choice, and mechanics. Holistic evaluators assign a single score to a student essay based on the total effect to which these elements contribute. Holistic evaluation does not rely on a count of errors, as described by (A), nor does it focus exclusively on one or two specific writing skills, as do the methods of evaluation suggested by (B) and (C).

26. The correct answer is (B). Discipline-based inquiry is the practice of learning about a writing form by dissecting it and investigating its parts. It involves analyzing, questioning, and forming conclusions from examples of the writing mode. (A) is incorrect because conferencing is the process of discussing a piece of writing, assessing its strengths and weaknesses, and setting goals based on the evaluation of the writing piece. (C) is incorrect because Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is an instructional method that includes building background knowledge, discussing and modeling a strategy, memorizing the strategy, and supporting the practice of the strategy until students can use it independently. (D) is incorrect because the Introduction-Body-Conclusion strategy (IBC) is an organizational method of ensuring that students have sufficient supporting details in their essays and paragraphs.

27. The correct answer is (D). Learners should be at the center of instruction, and they are more likely to be engaged if they are reading about topics in which they are interested. (A) is incorrect because while curriculum objectives are important, they should not overshadow student learning and needs. (B) is incorrect because the focus should be based on the needs of the classroom community, not the community outside the classroom. (C) is incorrect because although selecting texts that are on or below level may make reading easier, it does not ensure engagement or comprehension.

28. The correct answer is (D). Proper posture is important for voice projection; poor posture anywhere in the body can lead to excess tension and lack of flexibility in the muscles that assist breathing and speaking. (A) is incorrect because although eye contact is important for engaging an audience, audience engagement is not the problem described here. (B) is incorrect because exaggerated body language may distract the audience, and nonverbal cues are unrelated to voice projection. (C) is incorrect because looking down at a paper and reading directly from it may hinder voice projection.

29. The correct answer is (B). The K-W-L chart can be used to document what students know, what they want to know, and what they learned. This would be an effective means of collecting data on students' prior knowledge in order to effectively plan instruction that meets curricular objectives. (A) is incorrect because although concentric circles are an effective way to encourage one-on-one communication between students, they would not help the teacher plan responsive instruction. (C) is incorrect because a book pass is an instructional method for introducing students to a variety of works in a short period of time in order to encourage interest. (D) is incorrect because reciprocal teaching occurs when a dialogue takes place between the students and the teacher, and participants take turns assuming the role of the teacher.

30. The correct answer is (D). The information about the lake's formation provides potential visitors with an overview of the history of the park's landscape, and the details about the park's "wonderful waterfalls" and "numerous hiking trails" serve to generate interest in the activities available for visitors to the park. (A), (B), and (C) are incorrect because the passage is not written in a style appropriate for academic or scientific uses.

31. The correct answer is (A). Political speeches are designed to persuade the listeners that the speaker has solutions to social problems. (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because these are all forms of informative speech.

32. The correct answer is (D). The excerpt tells a story and contains elements of narrative writing such as setting, theme, and a narrator. (A), (B), and (C) are incorrect because the excerpt's purpose is to tell a story, not to inform, persuade, or describe.

## Sample Constructed-Response Questions

This section presents sample questions and constructed-response samples along with the standards used in scoring the essays. 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:

### General Scoring Guide for Textual Analysis Constructed-Response Questions

#### Score of 3

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the content

- Analyzes the specified elements in the selection accurately and with some depth
- Shows a sound understanding of the selection
- Supports points with appropriate examples from the selection and explains how the examples support those points
- Is coherent and demonstrates control of language, including diction and syntax
- Demonstrates facility with the conventions of standard written English

#### Score of 2

The response demonstrates a basic or general understanding of the content

- Analyzes the specified elements in the selection with overall accuracy but may overlook or misinterpret some elements
- Demonstrates understanding of the selection but may contain some misreadings
- Supports points with appropriate examples from the selection but may fail to explain how the examples support those points
- Is coherent and demonstrates control of language, including diction and syntax
- Displays control of the conventions of standard written English but may have some flaws

#### Score of 1

The response demonstrates a weak understanding of the content and is flawed in one or more of the following ways:

- Incorrectly identifies elements in the selection or provides a superficial analysis of those elements
- Demonstrates an insufficient or inaccurate understanding of the selection
- Fails to support points with appropriate examples from the selection
- Lacks coherence or has serious problems with the control of language, including diction and syntax
- Contains serious and persistent writing errors

#### Score of 0

The response demonstrates no understanding of the content and is seriously flawed in one or more of the following ways:

- Doesn't identify elements in the selection or doesn't provide any analysis of those elements
- Demonstrates a completely inaccurate understanding of the selection
- Is incoherent, or contains writing errors so egregious that comprehension is impeded

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

## Question 1

### Analysis: Interpreting Literature

**Read carefully the following passage from Rebecca Harding Davis' story *Life in the Iron-Mills*. Then, using at least two examples from the passage, describe how Davis uses the image of smoke to develop the mood and setting.**

The idiosyncrasy of this town is smoke. It rolls sullenly in slow folds from the great chimneys of the iron-foundries, and settles down in black, slimy pools on the muddy streets. Smoke on the wharves, smoke on the dingy boats, on the yellow river—clinging in a coating of greasy soot to the house-front, the two faded poplars, the faces of the passers-by. The long train of mules, dragging masses of pig-iron through the narrow street, have a foul vapor hanging to their reeking sides. Here, inside, is a little broken figure of an angel pointing upward from the mantel-shelf; but even its wings are covered with smoke, clotted and black. Smoke everywhere! A dirty canary chirps desolately in a cage beside me. Its dream of green fields and sunshine is a very old dream—almost worn out, I think.

Rebecca Harding Davis, *Life in the Iron-Mills* (1861)

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

*Davis uses the image of smoke to create a bleak setting and mood in different ways in this paragraph. First, the setting of the town is full of smoke: "It rolls sullenly in slow folds from the great chimneys of the iron-foundries, and settles down in black, slimy pools on the muddy streets." These lines create an image of a town that is dark and dirty. The image of smoke makes the town sound like it is not safe for the people that live there. The mood of the passage, like the smoke-filled setting, is bleak and dreary. The town sounds like a depressing place to live.*

*Second, even the angel that should be white and pure has been stained by the smoke: "The wings are covered with smoke, clotted and black." The smoke-covered angel gives an image of a town that is tainted, that has no good in it anymore for its people.*

*Third, the smoke is not only on inanimate objects but also on living objects, the "long train of mules" and the "dirty canary." As the canary "chirps desolately" in its cage "Its dream of green fields and sunshine" becomes a "very old dream." From the author's last words, the feeling given is that the people's dreams of living in a clean, unpolluted world are slim. The dream is "almost worn out" because the smoke has overtaken the town.*

### Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

This successful response thoroughly analyzes with some depth how Davis uses the image of smoke to create setting and mood. The response provides several examples from the passage to support its claims of how the smoke affects the town. It mentions how the smoke "rolls sullenly in slow folds" and connects this image of a smoky town to a "bleak and dreary" mood. The response also mentions the angel "that should be white and pure" but that has been stained by smoke. The response connects the angel to the idea that the town is tainted and has no good in it for its people. Lastly the response discusses how the smoke affects living beings in the town. The canary's dream is linked to the people's dream of living "in a clean, unpolluted world." Thus the response demonstrates a thorough understanding of how the image of the smoke is linked to the setting and mood of the passage. The response is coherent and demonstrates both control of language and facility with the conventions of standard written English.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

*Davis uses the image of smoke to develop the setting and mood through the descriptive imagery of smoke, and also in her choice of words and sentence structure. Davis describes the smoke as “Smoke on the wharves, smoke on the dingy boats, on the yellow river—clinging in a coating of greasy soot to the house-front, the two faded poplars, the faces of the passers-by.” Smoke hovers over the town and it also makes “black, slimy pools on the muddy streets.” Davis’ sentences are full of descriptive words. The “long train of mules” is depicting the way smoke seems to go on forever with no end in sight. Davis’ excellent word choices gives the picture of a town covered in thick smoke while most of the town is repressed because of the smoke and iron-mills holding them there. The setting and mood are wonderfully developed through the combination of word choice and sentence structure.*

### Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

This response offers only a general understanding of how Davis uses the image of smoke to develop mood and setting. While the response provides examples of Davis’ descriptions of how the smoke from the iron-mills affects the town, it fails to address how those images affect the mood of the passage. The response instead focuses on how word choice and sentence structure help to paint a vivid picture of the smoke (e.g., “The ‘long train of mules’ is depicting the way smoke seems to go on forever with no end in sight”). However, there is very little discussion of the mood created by the use of these descriptive elements. There is a reference to how the people of the town are “repressed because of the smoke and iron-mills holding them there” but this reference isn’t fully developed. The response fails to mention important images in the passage that are used to develop mood, such as the angel and the bird in the cage. The response is coherent and demonstrates control of language, and while there is some awkward phrasing, it also displays control of standard written English.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

*The main thing is when the town is said to be covered in smoke “the idiosyncrasy of this town is smoke.” This informs readers that the life of the town is smoke. The other thing is how everything is covered by the smoke, even a little bird in a cage. The image of smoke is repeated many times in the passage. It is used well to describe the setting of this town.*

### Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

While this response demonstrates control of language and is generally free from error, it provides only a weak and flawed analysis of how Davis uses the image of smoke to develop mood and setting. The response indicates that Davis repeats many times how the town is covered in smoke but fails to address how this repetition affects the mood and setting. The response also makes general statements and fails to support them with details from the passage, such as “This informs readers that the life of the town is smoke.” Overall the response demonstrates an insufficient understanding of how Davis develops setting and mood.



## Question 2

### Analysis: Evaluating Rhetorical Features

**Read carefully the following excerpt from an essay by George Orwell. Then, in your own words, identify the main idea in the passage and explain how the method of development and the style (for example, word choice, figurative language, and tone) clarify and support the main idea. Be sure to refer to specific examples from the excerpt in your discussion.**

In our time it is broadly true that political writing is bad writing. Where it is not true, it will generally be found that the writer is some kind of rebel, expressing his private opinions and not a “party line.” Orthodoxy, of whatever color, seems to demand a lifeless, imitative style. The political dialects to be found in pamphlets, leading articles, manifestos, White Papers, and the speeches of undersecretaries do, of course, vary from party to party, but they are all alike in that one almost never finds in them a fresh, vivid, home-made turn of speech. When one watches some tired hack on the platform mechanically repeating the familiar phrases—*bestial atrocities, iron heel, bloodstained tyranny, free peoples of the world, stand shoulder to shoulder*—one often has a curious feeling that one is not watching a live human being but some kind of dummy; a feeling which suddenly becomes stronger at moments when the light catches the speaker’s spectacles and turns them into blank discs which seem to have no eyes behind them.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

*Orwell is saying that political writing is derivative and soulless. He brings the reader to this idea chiefly through the words he uses, such as: lifeless, imitative, tired, mechanical, familiar, dummy, and blank. All these words conjure up images of anything but lively writing. Orwell also writes in an accusatory tone, beginning this passage by saying that political writing is bad writing. The tone helps to cement the idea that political writing is deficient because it is judgmental. He taps into the experience of the readers by mentioning phrases that are used by political pundits continuously. Orwell also reminds the reader that this experience is not unique to any particular political group because it exists in every party. He also mentions that only passionate rebels produce good political writing because they are speaking from private opinion, not regurgitating party rhetoric. Overall, Orwell uses these writing strategies to paint most political literature as having no life in it because it is usually the mechanical parroting of speech points torn directly from the hive mind of the party and their deeply entrenched canon.*

### Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

The response received a score of 3 because it provides a thoughtful and thorough analysis of Orwell’s method of development. The response begins by correctly identifying the main idea. It then goes on to mention Orwell’s word choice and how these words do not evoke “lively writing” for the reader. It also indicates that Orwell’s tone is “accusatory” and that this tone helps “cement the idea that political writing is deficient.” Additionally the response indicates that Orwell uses examples that will be familiar to readers to help persuade them of his point of view. It ends by alluding to the image of the dummy—“mechanical parroting of speech points torn directly from the hive mind of the party.” Overall the response does a very good job of discussing Orwell’s word choice, tone, and use of figurative language to develop his main idea.



### Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

*The main idea of the passage is that political writing of the time is “bad” writing. Orwell backs up this opening statement with specific examples of political writing such as pamphlets, leading articles and manifestos. Orwell points out that the politicians leading on writers contribute to this orthodox imitative style. Orwell points out the lack of “fresh, homespun” speeches contribute to this bad political writing. There are variances between parties, but one sees the same thing over and over. Orwell concludes that this reading of someone else’s work makes the politician seem less human and this contributes to the dehumanizing world.*

### Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

The response received a score of 2 because it identifies the main idea—“that political writing of the time is ‘bad’ writing”—but overlooks some elements since it does not explore with any depth how Orwell uses tone, word choice, and figurative language to present that idea. The response does provide examples from the selection but does not adequately connect them to Orwell’s method of development. Rather the examples serve to convey a summary rather than an analysis of the selection. For example, the response does not connect Orwell’s choice of words to his negative, critical tone.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

*The main idea of this passage is that the political writing is boring and does not stem from the person but from the “party.” His tone is not bossy and his word choice conveys his idea in a positive way. For example in line 3 he uses “some kind of rebel.” That choice of words doesn’t turn anyone off from reading this essay. Another example is found in line 9 when he says “some kind of dummy.”*

### Comments on Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

This response lacks any analysis of Orwell’s method of presenting his main idea in the selection. Although the response does offer a fairly accurate restatement of the main idea of the selection, it does not go on to explore how this idea is developed. The response offers examples but does not connect them to any of Orwell’s points. There is no attempt made to explain how Orwell uses word choice, tone, and figurative language to develop his idea that most political writing is bad.

## 4. Determine Your Strategy for Success

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

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

### 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/centers\\_dates](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates).
- Work backward from that date to figure out how much time you will need for review.
- Set a realistic schedule—and stick to it.

### 5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

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

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

Scoring information can be found on page 53.

### 7) Develop a study plan.

A study plan provides a road map to prepare for the *Praxis* tests. It can help you understand what skills and knowledge are covered on the test and where to focus your attention. Use the study plan template on page 36 to organize your efforts.

And most important—get started!

## Would a Study Group Work for You?

### Using this guide as part of a study group

People who have a lot of studying to do sometimes find it helpful to form a study group with others who are working toward the same goal. Study groups give members opportunities to ask questions and get detailed answers. In a group, some members usually have a better understanding of certain topics, while others in the group may be better at other topics. As members take turns explaining concepts to one another, everyone builds self-confidence.

If the group encounters a question that none of the members can answer well, the group can go to a teacher or other expert and get answers efficiently. Because study groups schedule regular meetings, members study in a more disciplined fashion. They also gain emotional support. The group should be large enough so that multiple people can contribute different kinds of knowledge, but small enough so that it stays focused. Often, three to six members is a good size.

Here are some ways to use this guide as part of a study group:

- **Plan the group's study program.** Parts of the study plan template, beginning on page 36 can help to structure your group's study program. By filling out the first five columns and sharing the worksheets, everyone will learn more about your group's mix of abilities and about the resources, such as textbooks, that members can share with the group. In the sixth column ("Dates I will study the content"), you can create an overall schedule for your group's study program.
- **Plan individual group sessions.** At the end of each session, the group should decide what specific topics will be covered at the next meeting and who will present each topic. Use the topic headings and subheadings in the Test at a Glance table on page 5 to select topics, and then select practice questions, beginning on page 14.
- **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 text book	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 text book	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 text book	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 text book	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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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 text book, 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)





## 6. Study Topics

*Explore in detail the content that this test covers*

### Introduction

The English Language Arts: Content and Analysis 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

### I. Reading

This part of the test emphasizes comprehension, interpretation, and analysis of literary and informational works. Some specific factual knowledge is required, but for most questions, no previous experience with the supplied passages is required (although it is assumed that you have read widely and perceptively in poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction from American, British, World, and Young Adult literature). You will need to draw not only on your ability to analyze the elements of a literary passage and to respond to nuances of meaning, tone, imagery, and style, but also on your ability to interpret metaphors, recognize rhetorical and stylistic devices, perceive relationships between parts and wholes, and grasp a speaker's or author's attitude. You will need knowledge of the means by which literary effects are achieved and familiarity with the basic terminology used to discuss literary and informational texts, including how different literary theorists may interpret works. You will also need knowledge of strategies for teaching reading and supporting comprehension in the classroom. Note: Items marked with an asterisk (\*) may be measured in the constructed-response (CR) item for this category

#### A. Reading Literature

1. Knows major works and authors of United States, British, World, and Young Adult literature
  - a. Identify the authors and titles of major works of fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction.
  - b. The following authors are representative of those you may be asked to identify.
    - Maya Angelou
    - Jane Austen
    - Ray Bradbury
    - Willa Cather
    - Stephen Crane
    - Emily Dickinson
    - Ralph Waldo Emerson
    - F. Scott Fitzgerald
    - Anne Frank
    - Robert Frost
    - Zora Neale Hurston
    - John Keats
    - Harper Lee
    - C.S. Lewis
2. Knows the historical, cultural, and literary contexts of major works and authors of United States, British, and World literature
  - a. Identify the historical or literary context of major works of fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction.
  - b. Literary contexts covered on the test include, but are not limited to:
    - Harlem Renaissance (Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen)
    - British Romantics (John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron)
    - Metaphysical poets (John Donne, Andrew Marvell, George Herbert)
    - Transcendentalism (Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau)
  - c. Historical periods covered on the test include, but are not limited to:
    - Old English period
    - Middle English period
    - British Renaissance
    - British Neoclassical period
    - British Romantic period
    - American Colonial period
    - American Renaissance
    - British Victorian period
    - American naturalistic period
    - British and/or American modernist period
    - British and/or American postmodernist period
3. Understands the defining characteristics of primary literary genres
  - a. Identify typical characteristics of a genre
  - b. Apply correct terminology for a genre (e.g., stanza vs. paragraph)
  - c. Literary genres covered on the test include, but are not limited to:
    - Stories
    - Dramas
    - Poetry
    - Literary nonfiction

4. Knows the defining characteristics of major forms within each primary literary genre (e.g., poetry: ballad, haiku)
  - a. Identify characteristics of major forms within each genre through distinctions in structure and content (e.g., sonnets vs. ballads, satire vs. realism)
  - b. Literary subgenres covered on the test include, but are not limited to:
    - ballads
    - biography
    - drama
    - essay
    - fable
    - fairy tale
    - folk tale
    - haiku
    - historical fiction
    - legend
    - mystery
    - myth
    - realism
    - satire
    - science fiction
    - sonnets
5. Understands how textual evidence supports interpretations of a literary text \*
  - a. Comprehend the literal and figurative meanings of a text
  - b. Draw inferences from a text
  - c. Determine the textual evidence that supports an analysis of a literary text
6. Understands how authors develop themes in a variety of genres \*
  - a. Identify the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a given text
  - b. Analyze how a theme or central idea is developed throughout one or more works
  - c. Recognize universal themes from myths, traditional stories, or religious works and how they are rendered or alluded to in literary works
7. Understands how literary elements (e.g., characterization, setting, tone) and figurative language contribute to the meaning of a text\*
  - a. Analyze the impact of differences in the points of view of characters and/or narrators
  - b. Analyze the structure of a plot
  - c. Analyze how different elements contribute to mood, tone, and conflict
- d. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or story events impact meaning
- e. Analyze the text for character development
- f. Identify examples of various types of figurative language (e.g., extended metaphor, imagery, hyperbole)
- g. Interpret figurative language in context and analyze its role in the text
- h. The following list is *representative* of the types of literary elements and figurative language that may appear on the test.
  - alliteration
  - allusion
  - analogy
  - characterization (through a character's words, thoughts, actions, etc.)
  - cliché
  - dialect or slang
  - diction
  - foreshadowing
  - hyperbole
  - imagery
  - irony
  - metaphor
  - mood
  - personification
  - point of view (e.g., first-person, third-person objective, third-person omniscient)
  - setting (established through description of scenes, colors, smells, etc.)
  - simile
  - style
  - symbolism
  - tone
  - voice
8. Understands how poetic devices and structure contribute to the effect of a poem\*
  - a. Analyze how poetic devices (e.g., rhyme scheme, rhythm, figurative language) contribute to the meaning of a poem
  - b. Analyze how structure (e.g., stanza, free verse, concrete poem) contributes to meaning in a poem

9. Understands how reading strategies (e.g., making predictions, making connections, summarizing) support comprehension
  - a. Identify literacy skills to support active reading (e.g., text-to-self connection, prediction, summarizing)
  - b. Evaluate a summary of a passage
  - c. Evaluate the strength of a prediction based on textual evidence
10. Knows commonly used research-based strategies for reading instruction
  - a. Recognize commonly used research-based strategies for teaching reading (e.g., activating prior knowledge, modeling metacognitive practices)
  - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies to support a particular reading task
  - c. Interpret research and apply it to particular reading instruction challenges
11. Is familiar with various literary theories (e.g., reader-response, feminist criticism) for interpreting and critiquing literary texts
  - a. Recognize ways literary theories are used to interpret and critique texts

**Discussion areas: Reading Literature**

- What novels, poems, and essays might be taught in a Secondary English Language Arts classroom?
- What are some instructional strategies for increasing students' ability to use context cues?
- What are the purposes of skimming, scanning, note-taking, using graphic organizers, semantic feature analysis, and pre-reading activities?
- How do modeling, questioning, scaffolding, activating prior knowledge, and building metacognition impact student learning?
- How might a particular critic analyze a work?
- How would that analysis differ from critics from other schools of thought?

**Sample passage and annotations for Reading Literature**

Read the following fiction selection from Ellen Glasgow's short story "The Professional Instinct." Describe in your own words the characteristics of Dr. Estbridge. How does the author build this characterization? Why does the author compare Dr. Estbridge's career with a tree? What happens in terms of the narrative in the two sentences beginning with "Long ago...?"

As he unfolded his napkin and broke his toast with the precise touch of fingers that think, Doctor John Estbridge concluded that holidays were becoming unbearable. Christmas again, he reflected gloomily, and Christmas in New York, with a heavy snowstorm that meant weeks of dirt and slush and back-breaking epidemics of influenza and pneumonia! Beyond the curtains of rose-colored damask the storm locked the boughs of an ailanthus tree which grew midway out of the high-fenced backyard. Long ago, in the days of his youth and mania for reform, Estbridge remembered that he had once tried to convert the backyard into an Italian garden. For a brief season box had survived, if it had not actually flourished there, and a cypress tree, sent by an ex-patient from Northern Italy, had lived through a single summer and had died with the first frost of winter. That was nearly twenty years ago, for Estbridge had relinquished his garden with the other dreams of his youth, and today the brawny ailanthus stood there as a symbol of the prosperous failure of his career.

Here is the same paragraph with annotations that relate to the questions asked on the previous page.

This use of personification vividly depicts the doctor's manual dexterity.

As he unfolded his napkin and broke his toast with the precise touch of fingers that think, Doctor John Estbridge concluded that holidays were becoming unbearable.

Christmas again, he reflected gloomily, and Christmas in New York, with a heavy snowstorm that meant weeks of dirt and slush and back-breaking epidemics of influenza and pneumonia! Beyond the curtains of rose-colored damask the storm locked the boughs of an ailanthus tree which grew midway out of the high-fenced backyard. Long ago, in the days of his youth and mania for reform, Estbridge remembered that he had once tried to convert the backyard into an Italian garden. For a brief season box had survived, if it had not actually flourished there, and a cypress tree, sent by an ex-patient from Northern Italy, had lived through a single summer and had died with the first frost of winter.

The narrative turns to the past, and a significant memory further characterizes Estbridge.

That was nearly twenty years ago, for Estbridge had relinquished his garden with the other dreams of his youth, and today the brawny ailanthus stood there as a symbol of the prosperous failure of his career.

A major theme of the story, that Estbridge is materially successful but has not led the life he truly wanted to live, is captured in the oxymoron "prosperous failure."

In these sentences, Estbridge is not described directly. Instead characterization is built through the description of his attitudes toward the holiday and the storm.

The ailanthus tree gripped in the snow becomes a symbol of Estbridge's career—apparently substantial ("brawny") but nothing like the fulfilling, romantic garden of his dreams.



**B. Informational Text and Rhetoric**

1. Understands how textual evidence supports interpretations of an informational text \*
  - a. Comprehend literal and figurative meanings of an informational text
  - b. Draw inferences from an informational text
  - c. Determine the textual evidence that supports an analysis of an informational text
2. Understands how a variety of organizational patterns and text structures can be used to develop a central idea in informational texts \*
  - a. Identify the central idea of an informational text
  - b. Analyze how an author develops or refines a central idea in an informational text
  - c. Identify the organizational pattern of an informational text (e.g., problem-solution, cause-effect, sequence order)
  - d. Analyze how ideas are connected and distinguished from one another in an informational text
  - e. Identify how text features (e.g., index, glossary, headings, footnotes, visuals) contribute to the central idea of an informational text
3. Understands how word choice contributes to the effect of an informational text \*
  - a. Distinguish between connotation and denotation in an informational text
  - b. Identify how technical language is used in an informational text
  - c. Distinguish between what the text says explicitly and what may be inferred from the text
4. Understands rhetorical strategies that authors use to convey purpose and perspective in informational texts
  - a. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in an informational text
  - b. Analyze how an author uses rhetoric to support point of view and/or purpose in an informational text
  - c. Recognize rhetorical strategies (e.g., satire, irony, understatement, hyperbole)
5. Understands methods that authors use to appeal to a specific audience
  - a. Identify methods of appeal or persuasion (e.g., expert opinion, generalization, testimonial)
    - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's methods of appeal
  - c. Understand how technical or non technical language is used to appeal to a targeted audience
6. Understands how authors develop and support a written argument \*
  - a. Evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text
  - b. Determine an author's purpose and evaluate an author's reasoning
  - c. Evaluate whether evidence is relevant, factual, and/or sufficient
  - d. Identify false statements and fallacious reasoning (e.g., slippery slope, red herring, strawman, post hoc ergo propter hoc)
7. Knows how to interpret media and non-print texts and how they influence an audience
  - a. Evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats
  - b. Determine persuasive techniques used in different media

**Discussion areas: Informational Text and Rhetoric**

- How is organization linked to an essay's purpose? For example, how could a problem-solution text structure be used in an argumentative essay?
- Select essays from books or journals and identify the author's purpose.
- Think about the methods the author uses to achieve that purpose.
- Select editorials and opinion pieces and identify the author's argument.
- Analyze the text to determine what evidence the author used to support the argument, and whether or not the methods of appeal are valid or sufficient.
- Think about how information can be presented in different forms, for example photographs, videos, memoirs, essays, and factual accounts of the same event. How should the approach to these sources differ, and do these sources serve different purposes?

## II. Language Use and Vocabulary

This section of the test focuses on knowledge of concepts relevant to reading comprehension at the level of the word and sentence. Some specific factual knowledge is required, particularly the terms for the elements of grammar such as the parts of speech, syntax, and sentence types. In addition, you will need to draw upon your skills at determining word meaning through the use of affixes, syntax, and context clues. You must have an understanding of the appropriate reference materials for supporting particular language usage tasks and a familiarity with the English dialect and diction associated with particular regions, cultural groups, and time periods. You will also need to be familiar with research-based approaches for supporting language skills for diverse learners.

1. Understands the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics
  - a. Explain the function of the different parts of speech
  - b. Identify errors in standard English grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics (e.g., inconsistent verb tense, non-parallel structure, sentence fragments, run-ons)
  - c. Justify grammar, usage, syntax, and mechanics choices (e.g., colon vs. semicolon, its vs. it's, saw vs. seen, etc.)
  - d. Identify different components of sentences (i.e., clauses, phrases)
  - e. Identify different structures of sentences (i.e., simple, complex, compound)
2. Understands the use of affixes, context, and syntax to determine word meaning
  - a. Apply knowledge of affixes to determine word meaning
  - b. Use context clues to determine word meaning
  - c. Apply knowledge of syntax to determine word meaning
  - d. Analyze nuances of word meaning and figures of speech
3. Understands the use of print and digital reference materials to support and enhance language usage
  - a. Determine the most appropriate print or digital reference material (spell checker, style manual, dictionary, glossary) for a particular language usage task
4. Is familiar with variations in dialect and diction across regions, cultural groups, and time periods
  - a. Identify variation in dialect and diction across regions, cultural groups, and time periods
  - b. Understand the concept of dialect and its appropriateness depending upon purpose and audience
5. Knows commonly used research-based approaches for supporting language acquisition and vocabulary development for diverse learners
  - a. Recognize examples of commonly used research-based strategies for language acquisition or vocabulary development
  - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies to support language acquisition or vocabulary development
  - c. Interpret research and apply it to particular instructional challenges related to language acquisition or vocabulary development

### Discussion areas: Language Use and Vocabulary

- What are the most common errors that student writers make in grammar and sentence structure?
- How do punctuation and word order impact meaning in a sentence?
- How do variations in language impact communication?
- How are dialect and diction used in literature and in oral communication?
- What are the phases of language development, and how can a teacher use knowledge of language development to create a safe learning environment?

### III. Writing, Speaking, and Listening

These questions focus on knowledge of effective writing and speaking practices for multiple purposes and audiences. You will need some factual knowledge about common types of writing, common methods of appeal and persuasion, and effective and ethical research practices. You will need to draw upon your ability to evaluate the clarity and coherence of writing and the strength of an argument. You will also need to understand approaches for teaching and assessing various components of writing, speaking, and listening; using digital media in the classroom; and incorporating student needs into instruction.

**Note:** Items marked with an asterisk (\*) may be measured in the constructed-response (CR) item for this category.

1. Understands the distinct characteristics of various modes of writing (e.g., informative, argumentative) \*
  - a. Distinguish between common modes of writing (e.g., argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative)
  - b. Identify examples of common types within modes of writing (e.g., journal, letter, essay, speech, blog)
  - c. Determine which mode is the most appropriate for an author's purpose and audience
2. Understands how awareness of task, purpose, and audience contribute to effective writing \*
  - a. Identify how the task, purpose, or intended audience affects a piece of writing
  - b. Choose the most appropriate type of writing for a task, purpose, and audience
  - c. Evaluate the effectiveness of a piece of writing for a specific task, purpose, and audience
3. Understands the characteristics of clear and coherent writing (e.g., supporting details, organization, conventions) \*
  - a. Identify details that develop a main idea
  - b. Organize a text clearly and coherently
  - c. Use varied and effective transitions throughout a text
  - d. Justify stylistic choices within a clear and coherent piece of writing
  - e. Introduce, develop, and conclude a text effectively
- f. Some organizational patterns on the test include, but are not limited to:
  - compare and contrast
  - chronological order
  - spatial sequence
  - cause and effect
  - problem and solution
4. Understands effective and ethical research practices, including evaluating the credibility of multiple print and digital sources, gathering relevant information, and citing sources accurately
  - a. Identify relevant information during research on a given topic
  - b. Evaluate the credibility of a print or digital source
  - c. Identify effective research practices (e.g., formulating a question, narrowing or broadening a topic, choosing effective sources)
  - d. Identify the components of a citation
  - e. Cite source material appropriately
  - f. Integrate information from source material to maintain the flow of ideas
5. Understands components of effective speech and presentation delivery
  - a. Identify characteristics of effective delivery of a speech or presentation (e.g., eye contact, visual aids, tone)
  - b. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different media to present ideas
  - c. Determine whether information is presented clearly, concisely, and logically
6. Knows approaches for instructing students on the effective use of digital media to support and enhance communication
  - a. Identify techniques for instructing students to choose and use technological tools (e.g., presentation software, blogs, wikis) for effective communication
  - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of specific technology-based strategies to achieve enhanced understanding of communication goals

7. Understands commonly used research-based approaches to teaching components of writing
  - a. Recognize commonly used research-based strategies (e.g., writing workshop, modeling) for teaching components of the writing process
  - b. Identify research-based strategies for teaching particular writing tasks
  - c. Interpret research and apply it to particular writing instruction challenges
  - d. Writing instruction strategies on the test include, but are not limited to:
    - collaborative writing
    - process writing
    - writing workshop
8. Understands purposes and methods of assessing reading, writing, speaking, and listening
  - a. Recognize a variety of research-based approaches to and purposes of formative and summative assessment of reading, writing, speaking, and listening (e.g., use of rubrics, conferencing techniques, providing useful feedback)
  - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of research-based approaches to and purposes of formative and summative assessment of reading, writing, speaking, and listening (e.g., use of rubrics, conferencing techniques, providing useful feedback)
  - c. Assessment tools and response strategies on the test include, but are not limited to:
    - holistic scoring
    - peer review
    - scoring rubrics
    - portfolios
    - conferencing
    - self-assessments
    - formative assessments
    - summative assessments
9. Understands the components of effective oral communication in a variety of settings (e.g., one-on-one, in groups)
  - a. Identify a variety of techniques (e.g., selecting age-appropriate topics, facilitating appropriate discussion behavior, ensuring accountability) to ensure productive participation and active listening in collaborative discussions
    - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies for students initiating and participating effectively in discussions
    - c. Discussion strategies on the test include, but are not limited to:
      - Socratic seminar
      - think-pair-share
      - small group
      - whole class
10. Knows that students bring various perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds to reading, writing, listening, and speaking and how to incorporate that awareness into classroom instruction
  - a. Use knowledge of students' individual and group identities to plan instruction responsive to their needs
  - b. Know strategies for creating a safe environment for reading, writing, speaking, and listening to take place

**Discussion areas: Writing, Speaking, and Listening**

- What are some techniques commonly used in argumentative writing but not in informative/explanatory writing?
- How does the purpose or intended audience for a piece of writing shape its form? Its tone?
- How does an author's motives, credibility, and perspective impact source reliability?
- What technological tools could be used in a classroom to support effective discussions among students?
- How can assessments be used to guide instruction?

## 7. Review Smart Tips for Success

### *Follow test-taking tips developed by experts*

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

#### Should I guess?

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

#### Can I answer the questions in any order?

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

#### Are there trick questions on the test?

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

#### Are there answer patterns on the test?

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

#### Can I write on the scratch paper I am given?

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

### Smart Tips for Taking the Test

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

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

## 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 [http://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/bulletin\\_supplement\\_test\\_takers\\_with\\_disabilities\\_health\\_needs.pdf](http://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/bulletin_supplement_test_takers_with_disabilities_health_needs.pdf).

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



## 9. Do Your Best on Test Day

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

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

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

On the day of the test, you should:

- be well rested
- wear comfortable clothes and dress in layers
- eat before you take the test
- bring an acceptable and valid photo identification with you
- bring 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*

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* (PDF), found at [www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand](http://www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand)
- 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 *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/centers\\_dates](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates) for exact score reporting dates.

### Can I access my scores on the web?

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

The process is easy—simply log into My *Praxis* Account at [www.ets.org/praxis](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.).

Your teaching career is worth preparing for, so start today!  
Let the *Praxis*® *Study Companion* guide you.

To search for the *Praxis* test prep resources  
that meet your specific needs, visit:

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