

The Praxis® Study Companion

# Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

5011



# 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 Series*® 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 33).

### **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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# 1. Learn About Your Test

*Learn about the specific test you will be taking*

## Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (5011)

Test at a Glance			
<b>Test Name</b>	Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment		
<b>Test Code</b>	5011		
<b>Time</b>	2 hours		
<b>Number of Questions</b>	110		
<b>Format</b>	Selected-response questions		
<b>Test Delivery</b>	Computer delivered		
	<b>Content Categories</b>	<b>Approximate Number of Questions</b>	<b>Approximate Percentage of Examination</b>
	I. Reading and Language Arts Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	38	35%
	II. Mathematics Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	22	20%
	III. Science Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	11	10%
	IV. Social Studies Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	11	10%
	V. Arts and Physical Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	11	10%
	VI. General Information about Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	17	15%

### About This Test

The Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment test is designed for prospective teachers of students in the elementary grades. Examinees typically have completed a bachelor's degree program in elementary/middle school education or have prepared themselves through some alternative certification program.

The test questions cover the breadth of material a new teacher needs to know. The questions assess knowledge of both principles and processes. Some of the questions assess basic understanding of curriculum planning, instructional design, and assessment of student learning; many pose particular problems that teachers routinely face in the classroom; and many are based on authentic examples of student work. Some of the questions concern general issues, but the majority are set in the context of the subject matters most commonly taught in elementary school: reading and language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, and physical education.

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

## Overview of the Test

**Curriculum** topics examine the organization, materials, and resources of each content area and the implications for using them:

- Components of curricula and how they are organized
- Integration of concepts within each content area and across content areas and the pedagogical implications of that integration
- Types of curricular materials, media, and resources, such as basal readers and trade books in reading, maps and globes in social studies, measurement equipment in math, equipment and displays in science, and technologies, including computer software and videotapes

**Instruction** topics examine content-specific teaching and learning principles and their application for appropriate and effective instruction:

- Methods to identify, assess, activate, and build on the prior knowledge, experiences, and skills that a given group of students brings to learning in each content area
- Methods for preparing, evaluating, and justifying instructional activities in each content area and across content areas for a given group of students
- Selection of teaching and learning strategies—such as demonstration, cooperative learning, guided oral and silent work, use of journals, graphic organizers, and the inquiry method—that help individual students and groups of students to see and understand varied topics and concepts
- Methods for adjusting instruction to meet students' needs, including corrective and developmental instruction, reteaching, follow-up, and enrichment instruction
- Strategies for motivating and encouraging student success
- Theoretical and empirical bases of various methods of instruction

**Assessment** topics examine content-specific and general assessment and evaluation procedures and the implications for using these procedures appropriately and effectively:

- Traditional and standardized testing methodologies—such as standardized tests, basal reader tests, and screening tests—that are appropriate for use in each content area and in general instruction
- Informal, classroom-based, and nontraditional assessment strategies—such as observation, oral reports, running records, informal reading inventories, portfolios, and performance samples—that are appropriate for use in each content area and in general instruction
- Interpretation of data obtained from various assessment strategies in each content area and in general instruction
- Anticipation and identification of common points of confusion in the content areas, such as errors, patterns of error, inaccuracies, misconceptions, and buggy algorithms

## Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each content category—reading and language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and physical education, as well as general information—are provided on the following pages. However, the list is not exhaustive.

- I. Reading and Language Arts Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment** contains approximately 35 percent of the test, or 38 questions. Within the reading and language arts content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the development, delivery, and evaluation of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

### A. Curriculum

#### 1. Reading

- a. *Phonemic awareness*: Blending, segmenting, rhyming, oral language development
- b. *Phonics*: Alphabetic principle, orthography (spelling patterns), morphology (structural analysis), syllabication, onset and rime
- c. *Fluency*: Automaticity, prosody, rate, accuracy, sight words
- d. *Vocabulary*: Structural analysis, concept vocabulary, content vocabulary, expressive/receptive vocabulary, semantics, sight words, word-learning strategies
- e. *Comprehension*: Schema (textual connections), literal versus inferential understanding, prereading, during reading, postreading, previewing, questioning, summarizing
- f. *Features of children's fiction and nonfiction books*: Character, theme, setting, index, glossary, pictures/photographs

#### 2. Writing

- a. *Types of writing* (e.g., narrative, persuasive, descriptive, journaling); *traits of writing* (e.g., tone, purpose, audience); *types of text* (e.g., narrative, expository, persuasive); *structure of text* (e.g., story grammar, comparison, cause/effect); *progression of writing expectations* (e.g., words to phrases to transitions); *stages of writing development* (e.g., language experience approach, developmental spelling, handwriting)

### 3. Speaking, listening, and viewing

- a. *Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing and the interrelatedness of the strands*

### B. Instruction

#### 1. Reading

- a. *Phonemic awareness*: Elkonin (phoneme) boxes, letter sounds, segmentation of words in sentences
- b. *Phonics*: Word families, word wall, morning message, word building (making words), explicit, systematic instruction
- c. *Fluency*: Read-alouds, repeated readings, choral and echo reading, readability levels, sight words
- d. *Vocabulary*: Word wall, graphic organizers, context clues
- e. *Comprehension*: Graphic organizers, story structure, text elements, genre, think-alouds, predict and confirm, literature circles and book clubs, grand conversation

#### 2. Writing

- a. *Process writing* (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing); *writing conventions* (e.g., spelling, grammar, mechanics); *writing instruction* (e.g., guided, interactive, and shared writing); *technology* (e.g., how to analyze sources via writing software)

### 3. Speaking, listening, and viewing

- a. *Theories of language acquisition* (constructivist, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and English-language acquisition); *use of technology*

### C. Assessment

#### 1. Reading

- a. *Phonemic awareness*: Phonemic segmentation, phonemic deletion and substitution
- b. *Phonics*: Spelling tests, nonsense-word fluency, running records, informal reading inventories
- c. *Fluency*: Oral reading fluency, leveled phrases such as in Dolch Basic and Fry Instant word lists, running records, miscue analysis, sight words
- d. *Vocabulary*: Word-use fluency, informal writing and speaking samples, word sorts
- e. *Comprehension*: Retellings, summarizations, informal reading inventories

**2. Writing**

*a. Benchmark writing, portfolios, analyzing students' writing, rubrics*

**3. Speaking, listening, and viewing**

*a. Student presentations, rubrics*

**II. Mathematics Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment** contains approximately 20 percent of the test, or 22 questions. Within the mathematics content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of number operations, prealgebra and algebra, geometry and measurement, and probability, statistics, and data analysis concepts.

**A. Curriculum**

**1. Number Operations:** Number sense; model building and forecasting; prenumber and number concepts; base-10 numeration system; arithmetic operations (e.g., addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals; number theory; number terminology; number properties; rational numbers

**2. Prealgebra and Algebra:** Patterns, expressions, equations, formulas, variables, xy-coordinate system, additive and multiplicative inverses, equalities and inequalities, quantitative and qualitative change, mathematical relations, representations

**3. Geometry and Measurement:** Geometric figures and relationships, geometric relationships, symmetry, dimension, motion geometry, coordinate geometry, informal geometry, nonmetric and metric units of measurements, metric and standard units, nonstandard units, length, area, volume, weight, angles, time, temperature, distance, rates

**4. Probability, Statistics, and Data Analysis:** Counting; organizing, representing, and interpreting data; intuitive concepts of chance; mean, median, and mode; average; range; spread

**B. Instruction**

**1. Teaching methods:** Guided discovery, laboratory approach, problem solving, exposition and direct instruction, games, situations and recreations, investigations

**2. Problem solving:** Investigating and understanding content, formulating problems from everyday situations, verifying and interpreting results, identifying and solving problems that are developmentally appropriate

**3. Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology in mathematics instruction such as spinners, number cubes, balls in a jar, software, the Internet, handheld calculators, and spreadsheets

**4. Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Personal, social, and emotional development of students; language and communication; developmentally appropriate instruction; various methods to adjust instruction: what is appropriate and why; effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, and extensions

**5. Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students such as special education students, second-language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in mathematics

**C. Assessment**

**1. Analysis of student work to guide mathematics instruction:** What students can do correctly; concepts students are conceptualizing or developing; student misconceptions and errors; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring student work and understanding

**2. Evaluation of mathematics instructional effectiveness and student progress**

*a. Informal and/or authentic mathematics assessment:* Teacher observation and questioning; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, and student work;

organizing data, problem solving; comparing and contrasting; model building; planning, forecasting, and decision making

b. *Formal mathematics assessments:* Unit or chapter tests and teacher-made tests

**III. Science Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment** contains approximately 10 percent of the test, or 11 questions. Within the science content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of life science, Earth and space science, physical science, and health concepts.

#### A. Curriculum

- 1. Life Science:** Characteristics of organisms, life cycles of organisms, organisms and environments
- 2. Earth and Space Science:** Interrelationships in Earth systems and space systems; Earth patterns, cycles, and change; geology; hydrology; meteorology; oceanography; soil science
- 3. Physical Science:** Physical and chemical changes; temperature and heat; sound; light; electricity and magnetism; force, motion, and energy; matter; astronomy
- 4. Health:** Healthy living, growth, nutrition, safety and well-being, communicable diseases, substance abuse, common diseases

#### B. Instruction

- 1. Science concepts and processes:** Understanding unifying concepts and processes in science—that is, provide connections between traditional scientific disciplines, systems, subsystems, models, and conservation; personal and social perspective of science; history and nature of science
- 2. Scientific inquiry:** Constructing ideas and explanations; asking questions and using appropriate questioning techniques; developing testable questions and hypotheses; planning, conducting, and observing simple investigation; constructing explanations and communicating results; solving problems
- 3. Scientific data:** Choosing the appropriate tools of science to gather data; organizing and using data to construct reasonable explanations; explaining and communicating investigations, data, evidence, and results; organizing and analyzing data in the form of

databases, spreadsheets, and graphics programs

**4. Model building and forecasting:** Use of plans and computer simulations

**5. Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology in science in the form of graphic organizers, displays, rulers, balances, thermometers, textbooks, trade books, software, the Internet, graphing calculators, videomicroscopes, film, and computer simulations; justifications for use of materials, equipment, texts, and technology

**6. Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, extensions; language and communication; developmentally appropriate instruction

**7. Teaching methods:** Guided discovery, laboratory approach, problem solving, exposition and direct instruction, games, situations and recreations, investigations

**8. Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students such as special education students, second-language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in science: what is appropriate and why

#### C. Assessment

**1. Analysis of student work to guide science instruction:** What students can do correctly; concepts students are conceptualizing or developing; misconceptions and errors students may be having difficulty with; how students are progressing; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring

**2. Evaluation of science instructional effectiveness and student progress**

a. *Informal and/or authentic science assessment:* Teacher observation and questioning; journals and/or logs; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, and student work; comparing and contrasting

b. *Formal science assessments:* Unit or chapter tests and teacher-made tests

**IV. Social Studies Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment** contains approximately 10 percent of the test, or 11 questions. Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences to promote civic responsibilities. Within social studies, this section covers the teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of geography; history; government, civics, and economics; anthropology and sociology; and historical analysis and interpretation.

#### A. Curriculum

- 1. Geography:** Uses of geography; locations, places, and human movement; environment and society; places and regions; human and physical systems; states, regions, United States, and the world
- 2. History:** Society, democracy, chronological thinking, relationships between past and present, U.S. history from founding to 20th century, 20th century developments and transformations in the U.S., and classical civilizations: Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China
- 3. Government, Civics, and Economics:** Market economy; economic decision-making as consumers, employers, and workers; global marketplace; politics; local, state, and federal government; constitution of the United States; citizenship; industrialization; government's role in economics and impact of economics on government
- 4. Anthropology and Sociology:** Impact of conditions and events; how people of different cultural backgrounds interact with their environment; self, family, neighborhoods, and communities; interactions between different communities; connections between causes and effects of events; communication; transportation; technology; social organization and human behavior in society
- 5. Historical analysis and interpretation:** Causes of events; compare and contrast events; hypothesize how past influenced present

#### B. Instruction

- 1. Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Various methods to adjust social studies instruction to meet students' needs: what is appropriate and why; effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, and extensions; multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary; separate subjects; integration

strategies such as reading and writing across the curriculum

- 2. Teaching methods:** Activating learning, projects, guided discovery, problem solving, exposition and direct instruction, games, situations and recreations, investigations
- 3. Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students such as special education students, second-language-acquisition learners, bilingual learners, and gifted students; tailoring of instruction to meet students' instructional needs in social studies
- 4. Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology in social studies, such as physical, topographic, political, and weather maps; globes, aerial imagery, satellite images, graphs, tables, diagrams, graphic organizers, pictures, real-word resources, and trade books, including multicultural tests and narrative tests as well as information from various sources, software, and the Internet

#### C. Assessment

- 1. Analysis of student work to guide social studies instruction:** What students can do correctly; concepts students are conceptualizing or developing; student misconceptions or errors; how students are progressing; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring student work and understanding
- 2. Evaluation of instructional effectiveness and student progress**
  - a. Informal and/or authentic assessment in social studies:* Teacher observation and questioning; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, oral reports, and student work; comparing and contrasting; organizing data; problem solving; critical thinking; model building; planning, forecasting, and decision making
  - b. Formal assessments in social studies:* Unit or chapter tests and teacher-made tests

**V. Arts and Physical Education Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment** contains approximately 10 percent of the test, or 11 questions. Within the arts (music and art) and physical education content area, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of arts (art and music), and physical education.

**A. Curriculum**

- 1. Art:** Design, technique, balance, visual communication and production, art history, judgments and criticism, aesthetics, originality, flexibility, fluency, imagination
- 2. Music:** Melody, timbre, making and listening to music, music notation
- 3. Physical Education:** Exercise, physical fitness, game and sport skills, safety, locomotor patterns, body management, social discipline, healthy lifestyles

**B. Instruction**

- 1. Instructional methods, strategies, modifications, and adjustments:** Various methods to adjust instruction to meet students' needs: what is appropriate and why; effective implementation, organization, and planning; reteaching, enrichment, and extensions; instructing and demonstrating; providing feedback; questioning and problem solving
- 2. Diverse student needs:** Working with diverse students (e.g., special education students, second-language-acquisition leaders, bilingual learners, and gifted students); tailoring instruction to meet students' instructional needs in the arts and physical education; meeting the physical, social, and emotional development of students (e.g., muscle control, perspective, maturity, and expectation levels)
- 3. Materials, equipment, texts, and technology:** Use of manipulatives and developmentally appropriate materials, equipment, texts, and technology, including art materials, musical instruments, physical education equipment, information from various sources, multicultural tests and narrative tests, software, and the Internet

**C. Assessment**

**1. Analysis of student work to guide**

**instruction:** What students can do correctly; concepts students are conceptualizing or developing; misconceptions and errors students may be having difficulty with; how students are progressing; appropriate methods of reteaching, remediation, acceleration, and enrichment; appropriate methods of scoring

**2. Evaluation of instructional effectiveness and student progress:**

Functions of classroom assessment, authentic and traditional assessments, effective assessment practices, measurement

- a. Informal and/or authentic assessments:* Teacher observation and questioning; interviews and conferences; group and peer assessment; self-assessment; performance-based samples such as portfolios, project learning, and student work; comparing and contrasting
- b. Formal assessments:* Unit or chapter tests and teacher-made tests

**VI. General Information about Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment** contains approximately 15 percent of the test, or 17 questions. Within general information, this section covers teaching strategies and activities that aid in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

#### A. Curriculum

- 1. Standards:** State and national standards, defined as the general purposes of elementary students' learning
- 2. Curriculum Planning:** Developmentally appropriate curriculum planning in terms of students' maturity levels, expectation levels, selection of materials, learner objectives, and maximization of learning; integrate concepts across and within the content areas
- 3. Standards, Objectives, and Sequencing:** Standards, sequencing, material selection, and learner objectives—that is, translation of curricular standards into classroom instruction, development of age- and grade-appropriate learner objectives, and unit planning and appropriate sequencing, building of students' knowledge and skills from unit to unit and from year to year

#### B. Instruction

- 1. Instructional strategies and learning theories:** Knowledge of learning theories and instructional strategies by activating prior knowledge, constructing knowledge and constructivism, coaching, behavioral approaches, modeling, behaviorism and cognitive views of learning, informal reasoning, demonstration, cooperative learning, inquiry method and discovery learning, and learning cycle; metacognition; problem-solving abilities; higher-order thinking skills
- 2. Instructional approaches to classroom management:** Developmentally appropriate instruction; procedural skills; model-based classroom management; efficient instruction; small-group and whole-group instruction; cooperative learning; flexible skill groups; learner responsibility; creation of an atmosphere that encourages questions, conjectures, problem solving, and experimentation
- 3. Student motivation strategies:** Participation, inclusion, organization, fairness, expectations, procedures, modeling, role playing, feedback and follow-ups

**4. Differentiation and intervention:** Learner motivation; modify the learning environment, adopt materials, and adjust instructional methods to meet specific student needs; diversity, equity

#### C. Assessment

- 1. Standardized assessments:** Use of standardized tests, use of results, scoring, and score reporting
- 2. Basic principles of assessment and purposes of assessment**
- 3. Evaluation of instructional effectiveness and student progress:** Functions of classroom assessment, authentic and traditional assessments, effective assessment practices, measurement
- 4. Professionalism:** Reflective teaching, collaboration, partnerships with colleagues and community, interactions with parents

## 2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

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

The *Praxis Series* 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 options.

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

- **Clicking more than one oval** to select answers from a list of options.
- **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 options and drag your answers to the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting options from a drop-down menu.** You may be asked to choose answers by selecting options 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.

For tests that have constructed-response questions, more detailed information can be found in "Understanding Constructed-Response Questions" on page 15.

## 3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

*Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers*

### Sample Test Questions

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

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

#### I. Reading and Language Arts

**Questions 1–2 are based on the following scenario.**

A small group of second-grade students is reading a story together orally. One of the children has difficulty reading the word “sparkled.” To make sure that all the students understand the word, the teacher asks the student to read the rest of the paragraph aloud. Then, when the student has finished reading, the teacher asks the group how the character in the story felt as she spoke and what her eyes did to show her excitement.

- The teacher is helping her students use which of the following word attack strategies?
  - Phonic clues
  - Context clues
  - Configuration clues
  - Morphemic clues
- Which of the following is one of the limitations of the word attack strategy described in the scenario above?
  - The strategy can be used only in the reading of narrative texts or stories.
  - The strategy can be used only when a text is written at the reader’s instructional reading level.
  - The text might not contain sufficient information to supply the definition being sought.
  - The pronunciation of consonant blends is not always constant from word to word.

- “Making words” is an activity in which children are individually given some letters that they use to make words. Below is a list of some letters:

s n p h a e s i p

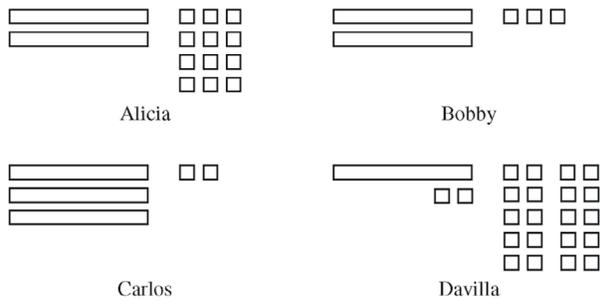
Children begin making two-letter words (e.g., “as”) and continue by making three-letter (e.g., “sip”), four-letter (e.g., “pine”), and longer words until the final big word is made. The final word always includes all the letters they were given to make the smaller words.

Which of the following students correctly built a big word using all of the letters shown?

- Student A, who created a-p-p-r-e-h-e-n-s-i-o-n, or “apprehension”
  - Student B, who created h-a-p-p-i-n-e-s-s, or “happiness”
  - Student C, who created p-h-o-t-o-s-y-n-t-h-e-s-i-s, or “photosynthesis”
  - Student D, who created s-y-n-o-n-y-m-m-o-u-s, or “synonymmous”
- A student consistently reads such sentences as “They are my friends” as “They be my friends.” The miscue is most likely an example of
    - an error in semantics
    - the use of a dialect
    - a graphophonic weakness
    - a contextual anomaly

5. A social studies teacher recognized that students were having difficulty understanding a chapter in their textbook. The teacher led a dialogue that modeled generating questions, summarizing, predicting, and clarifying. Then the students took turns assuming the teacher's role. The teacher was most likely using which of the following methods?
- (A) Think-alouds
  - (B) Reciprocal teaching
  - (C) Cooperative learning groups
  - (D) Question-answer relationships
6. A fifth-grade teacher is having students read the humorous book *The Noonday Friends*, written by Mary Stolz and set in New York's Greenwich Village. A new student, who lived in a rural community for his entire life prior to moving to the new school, is having difficulty understanding the story, although he has read many books of comparable difficulty. Which of the following is the most probable explanation for the student's difficulty in comprehension?
- (A) The student's reading achievement level is significantly below that of the rest of the class.
  - (B) The student's background experiences do not include knowledge of the topic discussed in the story.
  - (C) The student's former reading instruction focused exclusively on the development of word attack skills.
  - (D) The student's oral language abilities are significantly above the student's reading achievement level.
7. A second-grade student, Terry, wrote the following sentence: "Manuel is the tallest of the two boys." Terry's teacher wants to provide her with specific positive feedback about the sentence grammar. Which of the following statements provides Terry with specific positive feedback about the sentence?
- (A) "Terry, what a nice sentence!"
  - (B) "Terry, this sentence is almost identical to your friend's sentence. It is important to turn in original work."
  - (C) "Terry, the subject and verb in your sentence need to agree. Remember, in a sentence every verb must have a subject."
  - (D) "Terry, the word tallest is used to compare more than two things. Can you think of another way to write the sentence and show me the revision?"
8. A third-grade teacher uses student-centered reading activities for groups of four to six students. Each group reads a different book that is based on student interest. Each member of a group is assigned a specific role, and students independently read an assigned chapter of the book. After the independent reading, the groups meet and group discussion of the book is guided by the specific role each group member was assigned. Which of the following identifies the reading skill best reinforced by this instructional method?
- (A) Phonemic awareness
  - (B) Phonics
  - (C) Fluency
  - (D) Comprehension

**II. Mathematics**



9. The illustrations above show how four students—Alicia, Bobby, Carlos, and Davilla—used base 10 blocks to represent the number 32. Which of the students used the blocks to represent the number 32 in a way that does not indicate an understanding of the underlying concepts of the base 10 numeration system?

- (A) Alicia
- (B) Bobby
- (C) Carlos
- (D) Davilla

$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{4}{16} \\ - \frac{1}{8} \\ \hline \frac{3}{8} \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{r} \frac{5}{9} \\ - \frac{1}{2} \\ \hline \frac{4}{7} \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{r} \frac{7}{16} \\ - \frac{1}{5} \\ \hline \frac{6}{11} \end{array}$$

10. The examples above are representative of a student's work. If the error pattern indicated in these examples continues, the student's answer to the problem  $\frac{9}{11}$  minus  $\frac{1}{7}$  will most likely be

- (A)  $\frac{9}{18}$
- (B)  $\frac{8}{7}$
- (C)  $\frac{8}{4}$
- (D)  $\frac{10}{4}$

11. A teacher gives students the following mathematics problem.

Riding on a school bus are 20 students in first grade, 10 in second grade, 9 in third grade, and 7 in fourth grade. Approximately what percent of the students on the bus are in first grade?

Which of the following student responses best answers the question?

- (A) Student A: 26%
  - (B) Student B: 43%
  - (C) Student C: 46%
  - (D) Student D: 73%
12. A fifth-grade teacher has provided each student with centimeter grid paper and scissors to explore how some two-dimensional shapes can be folded into three-dimensional figures. Which of the following concepts are the students exploring?
- (A) Rotations
  - (B) Reflections
  - (C) Nets
  - (D) Tessellations

**III. Science**

13. Information concerning which of the following would need to be taught prior to teaching the cause of the midnight sun phenomenon in polar regions?
- (A) Seasonal changes in the distance between Earth and the Sun
  - (B) Seasonal changes in sunspot activity
  - (C) The tilt of Earth's axis
  - (D) Time zones
14. After conducting an experiment to test a hypothesis they proposed, two students concluded that the hypothesis was incorrect. Assuming their data are correct, which of the following would be the LEAST appropriate response for their teacher to make to them?
- (A) An encouraging remark, because they have discovered evidence that casts doubt on a plausible hypothesis
  - (B) A recommendation that they reformulate their hypothesis with the new data in mind
  - (C) A suggestion that they repeat the experiment to check their results
  - (D) An explanation of what they did wrong

**IV. Social Studies**

15. A social studies class has studied the system of checks and balances within which the three branches of government operate. The teacher then asks students to find in the Constitution examples of ways the executive branch can limit the power of the legislative branch. Which is the highest level of thinking within Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives that this assignment is likely to require students to use?
- (A) Analysis
  - (B) Synthesis
  - (C) Application
  - (D) Knowledge
16. A fourth-grade teacher is planning a unit on the history of the state in which the students live. Although they have not studied it at school, the students have some knowledge of the state's history because many of them have lived there all their lives. Prior to beginning the unit, the teacher wishes to activate the students' prior knowledge of state history and also to learn the extent of that knowledge. Which of the following activities would likely meet these two goals most effectively?
- (A) Having students brainstorm as a group about what they know concerning the state's history
  - (B) Having each student make a list of important events in the state's history
  - (C) Having each student pick an event in the state's history and write an essay about why it was important
  - (D) Having students interview older people in the community about what life was like long ago in the state

**V. Arts and Physical Education**

17. In a first-grade class, it is developmentally appropriate to expect the students to be able to draw which of the following?
- (A) A room in two-point perspective
  - (B) A person or familiar object in an identifiable form
  - (C) An accurate reproduction of a favorite cartoon character
  - (D) A still-life setup of teardrop-shaped dishes and exotic fruit
18. Prior to learning about meter in music class, elementary students should be able to demonstrate their understanding of
- (A) weak and strong beats
  - (B) syncopation
  - (C) subdivision of the beat
  - (D) tempo markings
19. For which of the following locomotor skills does each foot have two tasks to complete before the weight is transferred to the other foot?
- (A) Galloping
  - (B) Running
  - (C) Walking
  - (D) Skipping

**VI. General Information**

20. An 8-year-old tries to ice skate by moving her legs in the same way she has when roller-skating. Which of the following of Piaget's concepts of development does this behavior exemplify?
- (A) Accommodation
  - (B) Assimilation
  - (C) Reversibility
  - (D) Egocentrism
21. In which of the following theories is the influence of rewards most likely to be emphasized in an explanation of behavioral change?
- (A) Information-processing theory
  - (B) Operant conditioning theory
  - (C) Classical conditioning theory
  - (D) Cognitive development theory
22. Which of the following events would result in a bias that may affect the validity of the standardized test scores for a test that presents multiple-choice questions and uses a gridded answer sheet?
- (A) Three students use a geometric pattern to fill out their answer sheets.
  - (B) A teacher gives the entire class an extra ten minutes to complete the test because three students with learning disabilities need more time.
  - (C) A teacher selects a test that has questions that match the skills and concepts taught in that classroom.
  - (D) Students taking the test took a different form of the same test the previous year.

## Answers to Sample Questions

### Reading and Language Arts

- (B) is the correct answer. By focusing on the meaning of an unfamiliar word as it relates to the rest of the paragraph, the teacher is highlighting the use of context clues.
- (C) is the correct answer. Context does not always make clear the meaning of a specific unfamiliar word. Examples of this situation are technical terms or words for which specialized or obscure meanings are intended.
- (B) is the correct answer. Student B used all of the letters to build a big word. Student A used all of the letters except the second letter, s, and added the extra letters e, o, n, and r. Student C did not use the letters p and a and added the extra letters h, n, o, s, t, and y. Student D did not use the letters a, e, h, i, p, p, and added the extra letters m, m, n, o, o, u, y, y, and n.
- (B) is the correct answer. Use of the verb form “be” instead of the verb form “are” is a regular syntactic structure in certain dialects.
- (B) is the correct answer. Reciprocal teaching is an approach to instruction that features interactive dialogue between teachers and students. Initially, the teacher does the modeling of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring strategies and then gradually turns over the responsibilities to the student. The students take turns being the teacher and leading small-group discussions of the text.
- (B) is the correct answer. Readers use their background knowledge to help them comprehend the information in a text. In the process of comprehending, readers relate the new information presented by the author to old information stored in their minds. It is highly probable that this fifth-grade student had little or no prior knowledge about the topic and therefore had difficulty in constructing meaning.
- (D) is the correct answer. In (D), the teacher provides the student with specific feedback, “tallest is used to compare more than two things.” Based on the feedback, the teacher then provides the student with a next step by asking her to think of another way to write the sentence. In (A), the statement is positive but does not provide specific feedback about the work. In (B), the statement is a comment about the work but not the content of the work. In (C), the feedback is neither specific nor accurate about the student’s work.

8. (D) is the correct answer. The instructional method described allows readers’ comprehension of text to deepen and expand as ideas are explained by the reader or to the reader. For example, readers are able to remember the plot, make predictions, and make connections to their own life.

### Mathematics

- (B) is the correct answer. Bobby has not shown a correct representation of the number 32. He used two tens blocks and three ones blocks, which is a correct representation of the number 23. Alicia, Carlos, and Davilla have shown different but equivalent representations of 32, indicating they each have some understanding of the base 10 numeration system and of the application of base 10 blocks.
  - (C) is the correct answer. The student’s error pattern is to subtract both the numerator and the denominator.
  - (B) is the correct answer. Percent refers to how many out of one hundred or, in decimal form, how many hundredths. To find a percent, divide the group (20) by the total (46), and round the decimal to the hundredths place (0.43). This is 43 hundredths, or  $43/100$ , or 43%. Student B answered the question correctly. Student A subtracted the number of first graders (20) from the total number of students (46) on the bus. Student C added together all of the students on the bus. Student D subtracted the total number of students on the bus (46) from 100.
  - (C) is the correct answer. A net (C) is a closed plane figure that can be folded into a closed three-dimensional figure. A rotation (A) refers to a figure turning around a point. A reflection (B) refers to a transformation in which a figure is flipped over a line. In a tessellation (D), a figure or pattern of figures is repeated to cover a flat surface.
- ### Science
- (C) is the correct answer. The midnight sun phenomenon can occur in Earth’s polar regions because as Earth orbits the Sun, its axis is tilted. Therefore, at solstice, when the polar region is tilted toward the Sun, the Sun does not set.
  - (D) is the best answer. Merely providing an explanation would display a lack of understanding about how science works and would serve to punish students for doing good science.

**Social Studies**

15. (A) is the correct answer. The assignment involves analyzing evidence and, possibly, recognizing assumptions — tasks classified at the analysis level of Bloom’s taxonomy.

16. (A) is the best answer. While choices (A), (B), and (C) all allow some assessment and activation of prior knowledge, far more knowledge will be activated if students can hear one another’s ideas in a brainstorming session. (D) does not necessarily require the students to consider prior knowledge they have about the state.

**Arts and Physical Education**

17. (B) is the correct answer. Children ages 5 to 8 years old should be able to draw a person or familiar object in an identifiable form. (A), (C), and (D) are developmentally appropriate for children older than age 8.

18. (A) is the correct answer. Meter—the grouping of beats into repeated sets of two, three, or more beats—depends on the differentiation between weak and strong beats, and therefore, students must understand such differentiation before learning about meter. Syncopation, a momentary contradiction of the prevailing meter, can be understood only after students grasp the concept of meter. Subdivision of the beat and tempo markings are not directly related to meter and thus are not essential to understand before learning about meter.

19. (D) is the correct answer. In skipping (D), each foot both “walks” and “hops” before the other foot takes over. In galloping (A), each foot performs a single task, but one foot “walks” while the other foot “leaps.” In running (B) and walking (C), each foot performs a single task before the other foot takes over.

**General**

20. (B) is the correct answer. This item assesses a basic understanding of child development. Assimilation involves incorporation of new ideas and concepts into old ideas.

21. (B) is the best answer. This is a basic definition in educational psychology. Operant conditioning involves the use of reinforcements or rewards to shape appropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior is ignored—that is, not rewarded by attention.

22. (B) is the correct answer. Tests cannot be considered valid if the established time limitation used for the standardization is violated.

## 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. A helpful resource is the [Strategies for Success video](#), which includes tips for preparing and studying, along with tips for reducing test anxiety.

### 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 in "1. Learn About Your Test" 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 in "9. Understand Your Scores" on page 36.

### 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 29 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 29, 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 17.
- **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 “Topics Covered” 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 the Topics Covered section.
- 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:** Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading  
**Praxis Test Code(s):** 5712  
**Test Date:** 9/15/14

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>Core Academic Skills for Educators:</b>						
Main Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of main idea or primary purpose of reading selection	3	Middle school English text book	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/14	7/15/14
Supporting Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of supporting ideas and specific details in reading selection	3	Middle school English text book	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/14	7/17/14
Organization	Identify how reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect and compare/contrast	3	Middle and high school English text book	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/14	7/21/14
Organization	Identify key transition words/phrases in reading selection and how used	4	Middle and high school English text book	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/14	7/26/14
Vocabulary in Context	Identify meanings of words as used in context of reading selection	3	Middle and high school English text book, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/14	7/27/14

(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
<b>Craft, Structure, and Language Skills</b>						
Evaluation	Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to arguments in reading selection	5	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Determine role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in author's discussion/argument	5	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Determine if information presented is fact or opinion	4	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Identify relationship among ideas presented in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
<b>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</b>						
Inferential Reasoning	Determine logical assumptions on which argument or conclusion is based	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/8/14	8/8/14
Inferential Reasoning	Determine author's attitude toward materials discussed in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/15/14	8/17/14
Generalization	Recognize or predict ideas/situations that are extensions of, or similar to, what has been presented in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/22/14	8/24/14
Generalization	Draw conclusions from materials presented in reading selection	4	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/24/14	8/24/14
Generalization	Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations	3	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/27/14	8/27/14

## My Study Plan

### Use this worksheet to:

- 1. Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in the Learn about Your Test and Topics Covered sections.
- 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:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Praxis 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. 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 Series* 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.

## 7. Check on Testing Accommodations

*See if you qualify for accommodations that may make it easier 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/accommodations/plne](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register/accommodations/plne).

### 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).

## 8. 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 a pen or pencil to use on the scratch paper you are given
- 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!

## 9. 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 Series* 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 test or other tests in *The Praxis Series* over 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 Series 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 II* tests for professional licensing.

## Do all states require these tests?

The *Praxis Series* 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 Series* tests?

Your state chose *The Praxis Series* 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 Series* test development process. First, ETS asked them which 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 (2003, Princeton, NJ) 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 (1999, Washington, DC).

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:

[www.ets.org/praxis/testprep](http://www.ets.org/praxis/testprep)

To purchase official test prep made by the creators  
of the *Praxis* tests, visit the ETS Store:

[www.ets.org/praxis/store](http://www.ets.org/praxis/store)

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