

The Praxis® Study Companion

# Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education

5306



# Welcome to the *Praxis*® Study Companion

## Prepare to Show What You Know

You have been working to acquire the knowledge and skills you need for your teaching career. Now you are ready to demonstrate your abilities by taking a *Praxis*® test.

Using the *Praxis*® Study Companion is a smart way to prepare for the test so you can do your best on test day. This guide can help keep you on track and make the most efficient use of your study time.

The Study Companion contains practical information and helpful tools, including:

- An overview of the *Praxis* tests
- Specific information on the *Praxis* test you are taking
- A template study plan
- Study topics
- Practice questions and explanations of correct answers
- Test-taking tips and strategies
- Frequently asked questions
- Links to more detailed information

So where should you start? Begin by reviewing this guide in its entirety and note those sections that you need to revisit. Then you can create your own personalized study plan and schedule based on your individual needs and how much time you have before test day.

Keep in mind that study habits are individual. There are many different ways to successfully prepare for your test. Some people study better on their own, while others prefer a group dynamic. You may have more energy early in the day, but another test taker may concentrate better in the evening. So use this guide to develop the approach that works best for you.

Your teaching career begins with preparation. Good luck!

## Know What to Expect

### Which tests should I take?

Each state or agency that uses the *Praxis* tests sets its own requirements for which test or tests you must take for the teaching area you wish to pursue.

Before you register for a test, confirm your state or agency's testing requirements at [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states).

### How are the *Praxis* tests given?

*Praxis* tests are given on computer. Other formats are available for test takers approved for accommodations (see page 42).

### **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

## Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education (5306)

Test at a Glance			
<b>Test Name</b>	Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education		
<b>Test Code</b>	5306		
<b>Time</b>	2.5 hours		
<b>Number of Questions</b>	100 selected-response questions (Part A), 3 constructed-response questions (Part B)		
<b>Format</b>	Selected-response questions and constructed-response questions		
<b>Test Delivery</b>	Computer delivered		
	<b>Content Categories</b>	<b>Approximate Number of Questions</b>	<b>Approximate Percentage of Examination</b>
	<b>Part A: Selected-response questions</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80%</b>
	I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching	19	15%
	II. Oral Language and Oral Communication	19	15%
	III. Reading Development	43	35%
	IV. Writing and Research	19	15%
	<b>Part B: Constructed-response questions</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20%</b>
V. Analysis and Application			
A. Analysis of Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching	1	6 $\frac{2}{3}$ %	
B. Application of Reading Development Knowledge	1	6 $\frac{2}{3}$ %	
C. Analysis and Application of Writing and Research	1	6 $\frac{2}{3}$ %	
<b>Pacing and Special Tips</b>	In allocating time on this assessment, it is expected that approximately 105 minutes will be spent on Part A (the selected-response section) and approximately 45 minutes on Part B (about 15 minutes on each constructed-response section). Please note that Parts A and B are not independently timed.		

## About This Test

The Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education test is intended primarily for entry-level elementary and special education teachers who have completed training in a program to prepare them to teach in either of these areas. The purpose of the test is to determine that the entry-level elementary and special education teacher will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are important, necessary, and needed at time of entry to the profession to teach reading.

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

## Test Specifications

Test specifications in this chapter describe the knowledge and skills measured by the test. Study topics to help you prepare to answer test questions can be found on page 30.

### I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching

#### A. Understand the characteristics and uses of assessment and screening measures for evaluating students' language proficiency and reading skills

1. Demonstrate knowledge of formal assessments, informal assessments, and screening measures for evaluating students' oral and written language proficiency
2. Demonstrate knowledge of formal and informal assessments and screening measures for evaluating emergent readers' and beginning readers' knowledge and skills, including concepts of print, phonemic awareness, letter recognition, sound-symbol knowledge, single-word recognition, and decoding
3. Demonstrate knowledge of formal and informal assessments and screening measures for monitoring the ongoing development of students' reading skills and strategies, including word-attack skills, vocabulary, word recognition in context, reading fluency, and oral and silent reading comprehension

#### B. Understand the use of assessment data to plan reading instruction

1. Recognize how to use assessment data to diagnose the reading needs of, and tailor instruction for, individual students
2. Recognize how to use diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to accelerate the development of students' reading skills
3. Recognize how to use diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to address the needs of students with reading difficulties
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of flexible groupings in instruction to address students' changing reading needs

## II. Oral Language and Oral Communication

### A. Understand the development of oral language and oral communication skills

1. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote growth in students' use of oral language, to develop their listening and speaking skills, and to expand their listening and speaking vocabularies
2. Identify instructional strategies to build students' oral communication skills, to help students use oral language for different purposes, and to facilitate the use of oral language for critical thinking and creative expression
3. Identify instructional strategies to promote students' use of oral and nonverbal communication skills in various settings, including group activities and oral presentations
4. Recognize how to promote students' understanding of oral language structures
5. Demonstrate knowledge of effective methods for facilitating the learning of Standard American English by speakers of other languages and dialects
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the complex nature of language acquisition and the unique needs of students with language delays and disorders
7. Recognize how to create a learning environment that is respectful of, and responsive to, linguistic and cultural diversity.

### B. Understand the development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness

1. Demonstrate knowledge of phonological awareness and effective instructional strategies for promoting students' phonological association skills
2. Demonstrate knowledge of phonemic awareness and the role of phonemic awareness in reading development
3. Identify types of phonemic awareness skills
4. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional strategies to promote development of phonemic awareness skills by helping students hear, say, and manipulate phonemes in spoken words containing one or more syllables

## III. Reading Development

### A. Understand how to promote students' understanding of concepts of print and basic phonetic principles

1. Identify instructional strategies for helping students learn concepts of print and begin to match voice with print
2. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' automatic recognition of high-frequency sight words
3. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to help students recognize and name uppercase and lowercase letters
4. Apply knowledge of instructional strategies to promote students' understanding of basic phonetic principles by helping students grasp the alphabetic principle, match consonant sounds and short vowel sounds to appropriate letters, and identify beginning consonant sounds in single-syllable printed words
5. Recognize the connection between students' invented spellings and their understanding of phonetic principles

### B. Understand explicit, systematic phonics instruction

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic phonic elements
2. Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers blend consonant and vowel sounds to decode single-syllable words with regular spellings
3. Identify instructional strategies for helping beginning readers recognize common consonant-vowel patterns and apply knowledge of these patterns to read single-syllable words and decode unfamiliar words through analogy with known words containing familiar patterns
4. Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for developing and reinforcing students' skills in using phonics to decode multisyllabic words and read words containing consonant blends, consonant digraphs, vowel combinations, and r-controlled vowels

**C. Understand word-analysis skills and vocabulary development**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the way phonics, syntax, and semantics interact as the reader constructs meaning
2. Identify methods for improving students' reading proficiency by helping students apply word-analysis skills and word-attack strategies
3. Recognize how to help students read unfamiliar multisyllabic words, including compound words, by using syllabication and structural analysis to identify common spelling patterns and morphemes within the word
4. Recognize how to help students use context, including sentence structure as well as meaning clues, to help identify unfamiliar words and technical terms, determine the relevant meaning of a word with multiple meanings, and verify the relevant meaning and/or pronunciation of a homonym or homograph
5. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional strategies for building and extending vocabulary knowledge
6. Recognize ways to help students make effective use of a dictionary, thesaurus, glossary, or other word-reference materials to clarify understanding of a word's denotative and connotative meanings

**D. Understand the development of reading fluency and reading comprehension**

1. Recognize the importance of automatic word recognition and reading fluency
2. Identify instructional strategies for promoting development of students' reading fluency
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive, and psychological bases of the reading process and how they influence students' reading comprehension
4. Demonstrate knowledge of literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and evaluative comprehension
5. Recognize how to help students apply comprehension strategies before reading, during reading, and after reading
6. Recognize the role of independent reading in the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge
7. Identify ways to promote independent reading and family and community involvement in literacy activities

**E. Understand reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry**

1. Recognize how to select a wide variety of literature at appropriate reading levels to encourage independent and reflective reading and to promote students' comprehension and enjoyment of, and appreciation for, fiction and poetry
2. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to help students comprehend fiction by identifying basic story elements, retelling familiar stories, and making predictions based on information and pictures in the text
3. Demonstrate knowledge of different genres and types of literature and use this knowledge to improve students' comprehension
4. Identify instructional strategies to help students recognize different genres and types of literature
5. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to strengthen students' comprehension by developing their literary response and analysis skills

**F. Understand reading comprehension strategies for nonfiction**

1. Recognize how to select and use a variety of informational, descriptive, and persuasive materials at appropriate reading levels to promote students' comprehension of nonfiction, including content-area texts
2. Recognize how to use a variety of comprehension strategies to clarify understanding of a text
3. Identify instructional strategies to help students distinguish main ideas and supporting details in a nonfiction text and identify the author's purpose
4. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' comprehension by helping them identify logical organization and recognize structural patterns in nonfiction texts
5. Recognize how to help students locate and use evidence from a nonfiction text to support their predictions, opinions, and conclusions

#### IV. Writing and Research

##### A. Understand writing skills and processes

1. Recognize writing as a developmental process
2. Demonstrate knowledge of how to write in various forms and for various audiences and purposes
3. Identify strategies for promoting students' writing skills
4. Recognize recursive stages in the writing process and appropriate strategies for conferencing with students to provide feedback during all phases of writing
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics of effective composing
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of effective written expression
7. Recognize the interdependence of reading and writing development and the role of writing activities in promoting reading comprehension

##### B. Understand how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics

1. Recognize spelling as a developmental process
2. Demonstrate knowledge of systematic spelling instruction, including strategies for helping students recognize common orthographic patterns and strategies for helping students generalize spelling knowledge by transferring what they learn in spelling lessons to their own writing
3. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate instructional strategies for promoting students' knowledge and use of writing mechanics, including correct usage, punctuation, and capitalization

##### C. Understand writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research

1. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' research skills by helping the students apply effective reading techniques and writing techniques to locate, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of print and electronic sources
2. Recognize how to help students use text organizers to help locate and categorize information
3. Identify strategies for helping students make effective use of reference materials
4. Recognize how to promote students' skills in using technology, including electronic media, to conduct research and create final products of research
5. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to evaluate and select a variety of media resources

#### V. Analysis and Application

1. Apply knowledge of assessment and diagnostic teaching to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question
2. Apply knowledge of the elements of reading development to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question
3. Apply knowledge of the elements of writing and research to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question

## 2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

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

The *Praxis* assessments include a variety of question types: constructed response (for which you write a response of your own); selected response, for which you select one or more answers from a list of choices or make another kind of selection (e.g., by clicking on a sentence in a text or by clicking on part of a graphic); and numeric entry, for which you enter a numeric value in an answer field. You may be familiar with these question formats from taking other standardized tests. If not, familiarize yourself with them so you don't spend time during the test figuring out how to answer them.

### Understanding Computer-Delivered Questions

Questions on computer-delivered tests are interactive in the sense that you answer by selecting an option or entering text on the screen. If you see a format you are not familiar with, read the directions carefully. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

For most questions, you respond by clicking an oval to select a single answer from a list of answer choices.

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

- **Clicking more than one oval** to select answers from a list of answers.
- **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 answers and drag your answers to the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting answer choices from a drop-down menu.** You may be asked to choose answers by selecting answers 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 on page 20.

## 3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

*Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers*

### Sample Test Questions

This test is available via computer delivery. The following sample question provides a preview of an actual screen used in a computer-delivered test. For the purposes of this Study Companion, the sample questions are shown as they would appear in a paper-delivered test.

The screenshot displays the ETS Praxis test interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with buttons for Volume, Mark, Review, Help, Back, and Next. Below this, the text 'Reading & Language Arts CKT | Question 1 of 63' and a timer '01:29:56' are visible. The main content area contains the following text:

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

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

- Ideas
- Voice
- Conventions
- Organization

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

### Sample Selected-response 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.

- Which of the following terms is best described as connecting background knowledge with clues in the text to come up with an idea that is not explicitly stated by the author?
  - Visualizing
  - Inferring
  - Predicting
  - Summarizing
- A fifth-grade class is studying the American Revolution. The teacher wants students to understand the differences in perceptions between the colonists who believed their actions in the Boston Tea Party were legitimate protests against British taxation, and the British who thought the colonists were engaged in rebellion against their government.
 

Which of the following instructional strategies is most effective in helping students understand the differences in perceptions?

  - List examples of protests and rebellions during other historical time periods
  - Read an article to help students understand the causes of rebellions
  - Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the concepts of protest and rebellion
  - Read a fictional account of the Boston Tea Party
- A third-grade student wrote the following paragraph about her summer vacation.
 

*My vacation was exciting we did many interesting things. Like visit the zoo, an amusement park, and fishing. I had an amazing time. Because I got to see so many different places.*

Which of the following topics should her teacher work with her to improve during a writing conference?

  - Word choice
  - Sentence structure
  - Elaboration techniques
  - Organization
- A fourth-grade teacher wants his students to be able to evaluate literature by recording their thoughts and reactions about their reading. Which would be the most appropriate writing form in which to accomplish this goal?
  - Story map
  - Summary
  - Response journals
  - Guided questions
- Having just broken her truck, a girl attending preschool complained to her teacher, "I broke my truck, Mr. Frank." Which of the following best characterizes the girl's statement?
  - It is an oral miscue.
  - It is an example of telegraphic speech.
  - It exhibits an overgeneralization.
  - It demonstrates a semantic confusion.

6. A first-grade class sorts word cards into categories provided by the teacher. Below is a result of the sort.

CV	CVC	CVCE	CVVC
to	bat	make	sail
so	sat	like	bait
be	got	kite	mail

Which of the following skills does this activity best reinforce?

- (A) Spellings of rhyming words  
 (B) Knowledge of vowel patterns  
 (C) Beginning consonant sounds  
 (D) Knowledge of consonant digraphs
7. High-frequency words (e.g., “the,” “what,” “of”) are important for emergent readers to learn. Which of the following is the most effective way for students to learn the words?
- (A) Teaching students to read the words by learning sound-symbol decoding patterns that can be applied to the words  
 (B) Teaching students to read the words with repeated practice in the context of predictable text  
 (C) Teaching students to use flash cards to learn the words by sight  
 (D) Teaching students to use a tactile method of tracing the letters and writing the words
8. A second-grade teacher uses an assessment tool for coding, scoring, and analyzing a student’s oral reading behavior. Which of the following best describes the technique?
- (A) Shared reading  
 (B) Reader’s conference  
 (C) Process interview  
 (D) Running record
9. Mr. Thacker would like to assess his first graders’ phonemic awareness. Of the following, the best way to assess students’ phonemic awareness using the word “bat” is to
- (A) ask students to write the first letter in the word “bat”  
 (B) ask students to sound out the separate sounds in “bat”  
 (C) distribute note cards with the three letters B- A -T and ask students to create a word  
 (D) display the written word “bat” and ask students to sound it out
10. Which of the following words has three distinct phonemes?
- (A) Phony  
 (B) Muck  
 (C) She  
 (D) Bright
11. During the revision stage of the writing process which of the following activities would most likely occur?
- (A) Correcting spelling errors  
 (B) Brainstorming ideas in a cluster diagram  
 (C) Adding details  
 (D) Narrowing the topic
12. The best rationale for using flexible grouping during literacy instruction is that flexible grouping
- (A) tailors instruction to students’ strengths and weaknesses  
 (B) ensures opportunities for students to interact with peers  
 (C) develops students’ interpersonal skills  
 (D) provides time to progress through a set of materials

13. Which of the following pairs of words demonstrate that different letter combinations can represent the same speech sound?
- (A) Church . . . chorus
  - (B) Bow . . . bow
  - (C) Hot . . . cold
  - (D) Phone . . . laugh
14. Which of the following student activities is most closely related to the development of phonics skills?
- (A) Tracing and then naming lowercase letters
  - (B) Writing examples of words that are in the -at word family
  - (C) Counting the number of phonemes in a given word
  - (D) Pointing to where a sentence starts and ends
15. Which of the following assignments would best allow teachers to connect reading and writing as part of literacy centers?
- (A) Assign students to write definitions of spelling words
  - (B) Design a concept map and allocate time for students to complete it
  - (C) Require each student to read a passage and answer multiple-choice questions
  - (D) Allow students to listen to an audio book and write a review
16. Which of the following is the best rationale for introducing informational texts in the early grades?
- (A) Informational texts provide many opportunities to decode unfamiliar vocabulary or terms.
  - (B) Informational texts are usually easier for a beginning reader to read.
  - (C) Readers need to learn to use a variety of different strategies to understand informational texts.
  - (D) The major goal of reading to recall details needs to be established at an early age.
17. Which of the following is an instructional technique designed to help students improve the ability to summarize information by accessing prior knowledge, establishing a purpose for reading, and recognizing what is already known?
- (A) Know-Want to Know-Learned (K-W-L)
  - (B) Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA)
  - (C) Question-Answer Relationships (QAR)
  - (D) Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review (SQ3R)
18. Sarah is a second-grade student. Her teacher administered a running record at the beginning of the school year. Sarah was able to decode most of the words in the passage, but she read with many hesitations and did not read with appropriate intonation or phrasing. The results of the assessment indicate that Sarah is most likely to benefit from direct instruction in
- (A) syllabication rules
  - (B) comprehension
  - (C) fluency
  - (D) context clues
19. A first-grade student spells the word “bumped” as “BT.” The student can best be classified as being in which of the following stages of spelling development?
- (A) Precommunicative stage
  - (B) Semiphonetic stage
  - (C) Phonetic stage
  - (D) Transitional stage
20. Which of the following is an effective instructional strategy for helping kindergarten students develop an understanding of concepts of print?
- (A) Exposing students to a variety of rhyming texts
  - (B) Finger tapping to identify the number of phonemes in words
  - (C) Modeling how to track text during shared reading
  - (D) Using guided practice of visualization techniques

## Answers to Sample Questions

1. (B) is the correct answer. The reading strategy of inferring is defined as a reader connecting what he or she already knows with clues given in the text without being directly stated. (A) is not correct. Visualizing occurs when a reader uses the text to picture the events or details of a text. (C) is not correct because predicting involves guessing what will happen next in the text based on what has already been read. (D) is also not correct. Summarizing is retelling the important events that happened in the text.

2. (C) is the correct answer. A Venn diagram is a graphic organizer used to compare and contrast two or more things. The other choices do not focus on the differences in perceptions, which is the objective of the lesson.

3. (B) is the correct answer. The writing sample contains many sentence fragments and run-on sentences. (A) is not correct because the writer uses words such as “exciting,” “interesting,” and “amazing.” Word choice is not the topic that most needs improvement. (C) is not correct because there are no spelling errors in this paragraph. (D) is also not correct. The ideas in the paragraph are organized.

4. (C) is the correct answer. The characteristics described are that of response journals. The other choices do not allow for students to record their thoughts and reactions about their reading. A story map (A) is a graphic organizer that outlines elements of fiction (e.g., problem, solution, setting, characters). A summary (B) is a retelling of the important events of a story. Guided questions (D) are used to lead students toward a particular response and do not allow students to express their own thoughts about their reading.

5. (C) is the correct answer. Overgeneralization involves applying a particular rule of language in all instances. (A) is not correct. Oral miscues are oral reading errors that are used to understand children’s existing reading strategies and how to help students learn more effective strategies. (B) is not correct because telegraphic speech is a stage in oral language development when children use two-word phrases and place the subject before the verb. (D) is also not correct. In semantic confusion, children use words incorrectly.

6. (B) is the correct answer. The categories are common vowel patterns and sorting words into the categories reinforces students’ familiarity with these patterns in both their reading and writing. (A) is not correct. The words that are sorted are not rhyming words. (C) is not correct. The words are not sorted by beginning consonant sounds. (D) is also not correct. The words that are sorted do not contain any consonant digraphs.

7. (B) is the correct answer. High-frequency words can either be decodable or irregular. Irregular words have spellings that do not follow common phonics rules. Therefore, (A) is not going to help students read irregular high-frequency words. Beginning readers need practice learning to read these words. Since it is possible to read a word at sight but not know the meaning of the word, practicing reading the words in context is recommended. Choices (C) and (D) are not correct because the methods do not allow for students to use high-frequency words in a meaningful context.

8. (D) is the correct answer. A running record is described in the scenario. (A), (B), and (C) are not correct. Shared reading, a reader’s conference, and a process interview do not yield information about the types of miscues a student makes or the reading strategies a student applies while reading.

9. (B) is the correct answer. A student who possesses phonemic awareness can segment sounds in words and blend strings of isolated sounds together to form recognizable words. (A), (C), and (D) are not correct. The activities in these choices focus on connecting sounds to letters, which are phonics, not phonemic awareness skills.

10. (B) is the correct answer. The word “muck” has three distinct phonemes or sounds (m-, u-, k-). Phonemes are the smallest units making up spoken language. English consists of about 41-44 phonemes. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words. For example, the word stop has four phonemes (s-t-o-p), while shop has three phonemes (sh-o-p). Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to identify and manipulate these phonemes in spoken words. It is also the understanding that the sounds of spoken language work together to make words. (A) is not correct because “phony” has four distinct phonemes. (C) is not correct because “she” has two distinct phonemes. (D) is not correct because “bright” has four distinct phonemes.

11. (C) is the correct answer. Adding details happens during the revision stage of the writing process. The other choices are not correct because (A) happens during the editing stage and (B) and (D) happen during the prewriting stage.

12. (A) is the correct answer. When teachers use flexible grouping they are considering the always-changing strengths and weaknesses of students and grouping the students temporarily to best meet instructional needs. The other choices do not address the main purpose of using flexible grouping.

13. (D) is the correct answer. “ph” and “gh” fall into the category of consonant irregularities with consonant combinations that have a unique sound. Both the “ph” in “phone” and the “gh” in “laugh” represent the sound of /f/. (A), (B), and (C) have letter combinations that represent different speech sounds and, thus, are not correct answers.

14. (B) is the correct answer. Writing examples of words in the -at word family requires students to make use of their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and word patterns (phonics). (A) is not correct. Tracing and naming letters of the alphabet develops letter-recognition skills and letter-naming fluency, but not phonics skills. (C) is not correct because counting phonemes is related to phonemic awareness, not phonics. (D) is also not correct. Pointing to where a sentence begins and ends is related to concepts of print.

15. (D) is the correct answer. Listening to an audio book and writing a review for others to read connects reading and writing in a purposeful way. (A) is not correct because writing definitions of words does not address reading and writing skills. (B) is not correct. Completing a concept map does not involve reading for a real purpose or responding to reading in an authentic writing task. (C) is also not correct. Answering multiple-choice questions may check a student’s comprehension of a story, but does not connect writing to reading in any meaningful way.

16. (C) is the correct answer. Informational texts have unique organizational structures (e.g., cause and effect) and text features (e.g., headings, captions). Teaching students about these structures and patterns will help them learn how to use different strategies to understand the various types of informational texts. When introduced in the early grades, students will already have some strategies to comprehend content-area textbooks in the later grades.

17. (A) is the correct answer. The process of doing a K-W-L facilitates students stating what they already know about a topic (accessing prior knowledge) in addition to what students would like to know (purpose setting) and, finally, summarizing what new information was learned. (B), (C), and (D) do not address accessing students’ prior knowledge, establishing a purpose for reading, and summarizing what information was learned or confirmed.

18. (C) is the correct answer. Proficient readers have learned to read fluently. Speed is important because it’s hard for a reader to remember what he or she is reading if the reading is dysfluent. Prosody is important because when a reader reads with expression, the text is more easily understood. (A) and (D) are not correct because there are no indications in the behaviors described that teaching syllabication skills and use of context clues should be the primary focus of direct instruction for this student. (B) is not correct. Comprehension may be affected by the behaviors which are identified. However, the primary problem described in this scenario is fluency.

19. (B) is the correct answer. At the semiphonetic stage, students show a developing understanding of sound-symbol relationships. Spellings are often abbreviated and represent the initial and/or final sound. (A) is not correct. Students at the precommunicative stage of spelling use letters to write words, but the letters are strung together randomly and do not correspond to sounds. (C) is not correct. Phonetic spellers are able to perceive and represent all of the phonemes in a word, though the spellings may be unconventional; e.g., “ATE” for eighty. (D) is not correct. Students in the transitional spelling stage exhibit conventions of English orthography like correctly spelled inflectional endings, vowel digraph patterns, and vowels in every syllable.

20. (C) is the correct answer. Children are more likely to visually attend to print when engaged in shared reading with an adult who uses print referencing behavior. (A) is not correct. Rhyme awareness is a phonological awareness activity. (B) is not correct. Finger tapping is a phonemic awareness activity, not a print awareness activity. (D) is also not correct. Visualization is a strategy to improve and enhance comprehension of a text.

## Sample Constructed-Response Question

*This section presents a sample constructed-response question and sample responses along with the standards used in scoring the responses. When you read these sample responses, keep in mind that they will be less polished than if they would have been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented. The examinee does not know what questions he or she will be asked and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. The scores of these questions take these circumstances into account when scoring the responses. Scorers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide.*

### Reading for Virginia Educators General Scoring Guide

**Note:** The elements of reading and reading instruction assessed in constructed-response questions are those included in the RVE assessment domains.

#### Score of 3

**The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Clearly and specifically answers all parts of the question in a way that directly addresses the instructional situation described.
- Shows strong knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question; any errors of fact or terminology are minor and do not detract from the thorough understanding shown.
- Provides strong supporting evidence and rationales.

#### Score of 2

**The response demonstrates a general understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Adequately answers most or all parts of the question in a way that is appropriate for the instructional situation described.

- Shows general knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question; any errors do not detract from the general understanding shown.
- Provides adequate supporting evidence and rationales.

#### Score of 1

**The response demonstrates a weak or limited understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Answers some part (or parts) of the question at a basic level.
- Has one or more of the following weaknesses:
  - fails to answer most parts of the question and/or fails to address crucial aspects of the instructional situation described.
  - shows weak or limited knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question; the weakness may be indicated by errors or misconceptions.
  - any evidence or rationales provided are weak or limited.

#### Score of 0

**The response demonstrates no understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.**

A response in this category

- Fails to respond appropriately to any part of the question.
- Shows no knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question; or any information presented about reading and reading instruction is seriously in error.

**Note:** The mere presence of reading-specific words or phrases that might be used in an adequate response does not, by itself, indicate knowledge.

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

**Directions:** One constructed-response question follows.

CAREFULLY READ AND FOLLOW THE SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE QUESTION.

Read the scenario below and respond to the two tasks. The time allotted for this constructed response is approximately 15 minutes.

### Scenario

Mr. Sheppard is a fifth-grade language arts teacher. The students in his class possess a wide range of reading levels. Though most of his students can answer literal questions related to the reading of classroom materials, the majority are not able to make inferences from text or make connections between texts and their personal experiences.

Ms. Jenkins teaches social studies to the same group of students. She has mentioned to Mr. Sheppard that the students have difficulty comprehending the social studies textbook.

### Task

1. Describe one instructional strategy that Mr. Sheppard can use to help his students make inferences or connections between texts and their personal experience. Explain how the strategy will benefit the students' reading development.
2. Describe one instructional strategy that Ms. Jenkins can use to improve the students' comprehension of the social studies textbook. Explain how the strategy will improve students' ability to understand nonfiction text.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 3

*In order to help the students make inferences, Mr. Sheppard can introduce a two-column graphic organizer through modeling and scaffolding. Mr. Sheppard can begin by modeling how to use this strategy. While reading aloud from a familiar fifth-grade text Mr. Sheppard will think aloud, making inferences and explaining the part in the text or from his own background knowledge that helped him come to that conclusion.*

*Next Mr. Sheppard can invite the students to think aloud with him. Using a two-column graphic organizer drawn on chart paper, he can write the textual evidence and/or*

*personal experiences that led the students to make each inference.*

*Finally, Mr. Sheppard can have students work in pairs or small groups to try this strategy on a more independent level but still with support. Mr. Sheppard will give each group or pair a short passage and two-column graphic organizer. Students will read the passage and work together to make inferences. They will record their inferences in one column and the textual evidence in the second column. Mr. Sheppard will circulate around from group to group as students work to assess their ability to make appropriate inferences and to facilitate further discussion where needed. Once complete, groups will share one of their inferences and the background knowledge or textual evidence used to make the inference.*

*Using a two-column graphic organizer will benefit the students' reading development in several ways. Being able to make inferences and draw upon personal experience are two comprehension strategies that can be applied to any other text that the students read, hear, or view. The organizer will get the students into the habit of backing up claims by citing text. Soon they will no longer need the graphic organizer because they will have internalized the process, making them more independent and strategic readers. In addition, their inferences will become more accurate because they are going back to the text to support their inference.*

*There are several instructional strategies Ms. Jenkins can use to improve her students' ability to navigate the social studies textbook. One such strategy is the SQ3R method. This strategy involves students in previewing the topics covered in the text, calling up background knowledge about the topic, asking questions to set a purpose for reading, and then reading to answer those questions. Teaching students this strategy will allow them to apply it not only to the social studies textbook, but other content-area textbooks and nonfiction texts as well.*

### Commentary on Response that Received a Score of 3

This response received a score of 3 because both tasks were completely and thoroughly addressed. Two appropriate instructional strategies were described in detail. Evidence and rationales are provided. This response shows a strong understanding of reading concepts and instruction.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 2

*Mr. Sheppard can introduce a two-column graphic organizer. Mr. Sheppard can have students work in pairs or small groups to try this strategy on a more independent level but still with support. He will give each group or pair a short passage and two-column graphic organizer. Students will read the passage and work together to make inferences. They will record their inferences in one column and the textual evidence in the second column. A two-column graphic organizer is a helpful tool to improve students' comprehension.*

*There are several instructional strategies Ms. Jenkins can use to improve her students' ability to navigate the social studies textbook. One such strategy is the SQ3R method. This strategy involves students in previewing the topics covered in the text, calling up background knowledge about the topic, asking questions to set a purpose for reading, and then reading to answer those questions.*

*Teaching students this strategy will allow them to apply it not only to the social studies textbook, but other content-area textbooks and nonfiction texts as well.*

### Commentary on Response that Received a Score of 2

This response received a score of 2 because it answers most parts of the question at a general level. The response did not directly address a part of Task 1, which involves explaining how the strategy will benefit students' reading development. This response provides adequate evidence and rationales as well as a general understanding of reading concepts and instruction.

### Sample Response That Received a Score of 1

*Nonfiction is a difficult type of genre to comprehend. It has headings and vocabulary that is specific to different topics. Ms. Jenkins can teach her students the common text features found in nonfiction text. Being able to recognize and understand the purpose of headings, bold print, and captions will help students to better comprehend the information in the text. The students can use their knowledge of text features across all kinds of nonfiction texts, not just the social studies textbook.*

### Commentary on Response that Received a Score of 1

This response received a score of 1 because it answers only one part of the question at a basic level. This response does not address the first task. To earn a higher score, the response must address how Mr. Sheppard can help his students to make inferences and how this ability will benefit the students' reading development.

## 4. Determine Your Strategy for Success

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

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

### 1) Learn what the test covers.

You may have heard that there are several different versions of the same test. It's true. You may take one version of the test and your friend may take a different version a few months later. Each test has different questions covering the same subject area, but both versions of the test measure the same skills and content knowledge.

You'll find specific information on the test you're taking on page 5, which outlines the content categories that the test measures and what percentage of the test covers each topic. Visit [www.ets.org/praxis/testprep](http://www.ets.org/praxis/testprep) for information on other *Praxis* tests.

### 2) Assess how well you know the content.

Research shows that test takers tend to overestimate their preparedness—this is why some test takers assume they did well and then find out they did not pass.

The *Praxis* tests are demanding enough to require serious review of likely content, and the longer you've been away from the content, the more preparation you will most likely need. If it has been longer than a few months since you've studied your content area, make a concerted effort to prepare.

### 3) Collect study materials.

Gathering and organizing your materials for review are critical steps in preparing for the *Praxis* tests. Consider the following reference sources as you plan your study:

- Did you take a course in which the content area was covered? If yes, do you still have your books or your notes?
- Does your local library have a high school-level textbook in this area? Does your college library have a good introductory college-level textbook in this area?

Practice materials are available for purchase for many *Praxis* tests at [www.ets.org/praxis/testprep](http://www.ets.org/praxis/testprep). Test preparation materials include sample questions and answers with explanations.

### 4) Plan and organize your time.

You can begin to plan and organize your time while you are still collecting materials. Allow yourself plenty of review time to avoid cramming new material at the end. Here are a few tips:

- Choose a test date far enough in the future to leave you plenty of preparation time. Test dates can be found at [www.ets.org/praxis/register/dates\\_centers](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register/dates_centers).
- Work backward from that date to figure out how much time you will need for review.
- Set a realistic schedule—and stick to it.

### 5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

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

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

Scoring information can be found on page 45.

### 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 28 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 28, can help to structure your group's study program. By filling out the first five columns and sharing the worksheets, everyone will learn more about your group's mix of abilities and about the resources, such as textbooks, that members can share with the group. In the sixth column ("Dates I will study the content"), you can create an overall schedule for your group's study program.
- **Plan individual group sessions.** At the end of each session, the group should decide what specific topics will be covered at the next meeting and who will present each topic. Use the topic headings and subheadings in the Test at a Glance table on page 5 to select topics, and then select practice questions, beginning on page 14.
- **Prepare your presentation for the group.** When it's your turn to present, prepare something that is more than a lecture. Write two or three original questions to pose to the group. Practicing writing actual questions can help you better understand the topics covered on the test as well as the types of questions you will encounter on the test. It will also give other members of the group extra practice at answering questions.

- **Take a practice test together.** The idea of a practice test is to simulate an actual administration of the test, so scheduling a test session with the group will add to the realism and may also help boost everyone's confidence. Remember, complete the practice test using only the time that will be allotted for that test on your administration day.
- **Learn from the results of the practice test.** Review the results of the practice test, including the number of questions answered correctly in each content category. For tests that contain constructed-response questions, look at the Sample Test Questions section, which also contain sample responses to those questions and shows how they were scored. Then try to follow the same guidelines that the test scorers use.
- **Be as critical as you can.** You're not doing your study partner(s) any favors by letting them get away with an answer that does not cover all parts of the question adequately.
- **Be specific.** Write comments that are as detailed as the comments about the sample responses. Indicate where and how your study partner(s) are doing an inadequate job of answering the question. Writing notes in the margins of the answer sheet may also help.
- **Be supportive.** Include comments that point out what your study partner(s) got right.

Then plan one or more study sessions based on aspects of the questions on which group members performed poorly. For example, each group member might be responsible for rewriting one paragraph of a response in which someone else did an inadequate job.

Whether you decide to study alone or with a group, remember that the best way to prepare is to have an organized plan. The plan should set goals based on specific topics and skills that you need to learn, and it should commit you to a realistic set of deadlines for meeting those goals. Then you need to discipline yourself to stick with your plan and accomplish your goals on schedule.

## 5. Develop Your Study Plan

*Develop a personalized study plan and schedule*

Planning your study time is important because it will help ensure that you review all content areas covered on the test. Use the sample study plan below as a guide. It shows a plan for the *Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading* test. Following that is a study plan template that you can fill out to create your own plan. Use the "Learn about Your Test" and "Test Specifications" information beginning on page 5 to help complete it.

**Use this worksheet to:**

- 1. Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in chapter 1.
- 2. Determine Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each content area.
- 3. Identify Resources:** Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use for each content area.
- 4. Study:** Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

**Praxis Test Name (Test Code):** Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading (5712)

**Test Date:** 9/15/18

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
<b>Key Ideas and Details</b>						
Close reading	Draw inferences and implications from the directly stated content of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/18	7/15/18
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the main idea or primary purpose of a reading selection	3	Middle school English textbook	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/18	7/17/18
Determining Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of the supporting ideas and specific details in a reading selection	3	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/18	7/21/18
<b>Craft, Structure, and Language Skills</b>						
Interpreting tone	Determine the author's attitude toward material discussed in a reading selection	4	Middle and high school English textbook	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/18	7/26/18
Analysis of structure	Identify key transition words and phrases in a reading selection and how they are used	3	Middle and high school English textbook, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/18	7/27/18
Analysis of structure	Identify how a reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution, etc.	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/18	8/1/18
Author's purpose	Determine the role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in an author's discussion or argument	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/18	8/1/18

(continued on next page)

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Language in different contexts	Determine whether information presented in a reading selection is presented as fact or opinion	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/18	8/1/18
Contextual meaning	Identify the meanings of words as they are used in the context of a reading selection	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/18	8/1/18
Figurative Language	Understand figurative language and nuances in word meanings	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/8/18	8/8/18
Vocabulary range	Understand a range of words and phrases sufficient for reading at the college and career readiness level	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/15/18	8/17/18
<b>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</b>						
Diverse media and formats	Analyze content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/22/18	8/24/18
Evaluation of arguments	Identify the relationship among ideas presented in a reading selection	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/24/18	8/24/18
Evaluation of arguments	Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to the arguments in a reading selection	3	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/27/18	8/27/18
Evaluation of arguments	Determine the logical assumptions upon which an argument or conclusion is based	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/28/18	8/30/18
Evaluation of arguments	Draw conclusions from material presented in a reading selection	5	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/30/18	8/31/18
Comparison of texts	Recognize or predict ideas or situations that are extensions of or similar to what has been presented in a reading selection	4	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	9/3/18	9/4/18
Comparison of texts	Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations	2	High school textbook, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	9/5/18	9/6/18

## My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

1. **Define Content Areas:** List the most important content areas for your test as defined in chapter 1.
2. **Determine Strengths and Weaknesses:** Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each content area.
3. **Identify Resources:** Identify the books, courses, and other resources you plan to use for each content area.
4. **Study:** Create and commit to a schedule that provides for regular study periods.

Praxis Test Name (Test Code): \_\_\_\_\_

Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for this content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study this content	Date completed

(continued on next page)



## 6. Review Study Topics

*Detailed study topics with questions for discussion*

### Using the Study Topics That Follow

The Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education test is designed to measure the knowledge and skills necessary for a beginning teacher.

This chapter is intended to help you organize your preparation for the test and to give you a clear indication of the depth and breadth of the knowledge required for success on the test.

Virtually all accredited programs address the topics covered by the test; however, you are not expected to be an expert on all aspects of the topics that follow.

You are likely to find that the topics below are covered by most introductory textbooks. Consult materials and resources, including lecture and laboratory notes, from all your coursework. You should be able to match up specific topics and subtopics with what you have covered in your courses.

Try not to be overwhelmed by the volume and scope of content knowledge in this guide. Although a specific term may not seem familiar as you see it here, you might find you can understand it when applied to a real-life situation. Many of the items on the actual test will provide you with a context to apply to these topics or terms.

### Discussion Areas

Interspersed throughout the study topics are discussion areas, presented as open-ended questions or statements. These discussion areas are intended to help test your knowledge of fundamental concepts and your ability to apply those concepts to situations in the classroom or the real world. Most of the areas require you to combine several pieces of knowledge to formulate an integrated understanding and response. If you spend time on these areas, you will gain increased understanding and facility with the subject matter covered on the test. You may want to discuss these areas and your answers with a teacher or mentor.

Note that this study companion *does not provide answers for the discussion area questions*, but thinking about the answers to them will help improve your understanding of fundamental concepts and will probably help you answer a broad range of questions on the test.

## Study Topics

An overview of the areas covered on the test, along with their subareas, follows.

### I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching

#### A. Understand the characteristics and uses of assessment and screening measures for evaluating students' language proficiency and reading skills

1. Demonstrate knowledge of formal assessments, informal assessments, and screening measures for evaluating students' oral and written language proficiency
2. Demonstrate knowledge of formal and informal assessments and screening measures for evaluating emergent readers' and beginning readers' knowledge and skills, including concepts of print, phonemic awareness, letter recognition, sound-symbol knowledge, single-word recognition, and decoding
3. Demonstrate knowledge of formal and informal assessments and screening measures for monitoring the ongoing development of students' reading skills and strategies, including word-attack skills, vocabulary, word recognition in context, reading fluency, and oral and silent reading comprehension

#### B. Understand the use of assessment data to plan reading instruction

1. Recognize how to use assessment data to diagnose the reading needs of, and tailor instruction for, individual students
2. Recognize how to use diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to accelerate the development of students' reading skills
3. Recognize how to use diagnostic reading data to differentiate instruction to address the needs of students with reading difficulties
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of flexible groupings in instruction to address students' changing reading needs

### Discussion areas

- What is the primary purpose of each of the following in the area of reading: formal assessments (for example, norm referenced, criterion referenced), informal assessments (informal reading inventories), and screening measures?
- What are the differences between norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments?
- What types of information can be obtained from an informal reading inventory?
- What informal assessments best provide teachers with information about a student's oral and written language proficiency?
- What are the purposes of formal assessments? How do they help teachers evaluate a student's reading development and monitor a student's progress throughout the year?
- What assessments are used to evaluate phonemic awareness, concepts of print, comprehension, and fluency?
- What types of instructional decisions might a teacher make based on student assessment data?
- How and why should assessment data be used to inform instructional groupings?
- What is flexible grouping, and what are the benefits of implementing it in a classroom setting?
- How does analyzing data from reading diagnostic assessments help teachers differentiate instruction to support a student's needs and reading development?

## II. Oral Language and Oral Communication

### A. Understand the development of oral language and oral communication skills

1. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote growth in students' use of oral language, to develop their listening and speaking skills, and to expand their listening and speaking vocabularies
2. Identify instructional strategies to build students' oral communication skills, to help students use oral language for different purposes, and to facilitate the use of oral language for critical thinking and creative expression
3. Identify instructional strategies to promote students' use of oral and nonverbal communication skills in various settings, including group activities and oral presentations
4. Recognize how to promote students' understanding of oral language structures
5. Demonstrate knowledge of effective methods for facilitating the learning of Standard American English by speakers of other languages and dialects
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the complex nature of language acquisition and the unique needs of students with language delays and disorders
7. Recognize how to create a learning environment that is respectful of, and responsive to, linguistic and cultural diversity.

### B. Understand the development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness

1. Demonstrate knowledge of phonological awareness and effective instructional strategies for promoting students' phonological association skills
2. Demonstrate knowledge of phonemic awareness and the role of phonemic awareness in reading development
3. Identify types of phonemic awareness skills
4. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional strategies to promote development of phonemic awareness skills by helping students hear, say, and manipulate phonemes in spoken words containing one or more syllables

### Discussion areas

- What are the typical learning needs of English-language learners?
- What are examples of teaching methods that can address the needs of English-language learners?
- What are examples of teaching methods that can be used to promote student growth in each of the following areas: oral language skills, listening and speaking skills, and listening and speaking vocabularies?
- What types of oral communication strategies can teachers incorporate within their reading instruction to increase students' listening and speaking vocabularies?
- Describe three or more strategies teachers can use to facilitate the language acquisition process of English-language learners?
- How would you decide what types of strategies to implement for teaching students with a language delay or disorder?
- What is the relationship between phonological awareness and phonemic awareness?
- Why is phonemic awareness important for a child's early reading development?
- What is the most developmentally appropriate sequence for teaching phonemic awareness skills?
- Why is phonological awareness instruction essential to students' reading development? How long should a teacher spend each day teaching phonological awareness skills? Why?

### III. Reading Development

#### A. Understand how to promote students' understanding of concepts of print and basic phonetic principles

1. Identify instructional strategies for helping students learn concepts of print and begin to match voice with print
2. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' automatic recognition of high-frequency sight words
3. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to help students recognize and name uppercase and lowercase letters
4. Apply knowledge of instructional strategies to promote students' understanding of basic phonetic principles by helping students grasp the alphabetic principle, match consonant sounds and short vowel sounds to appropriate letters, and identify beginning consonant sounds in single-syllable printed words
5. Recognize the connection between students' invented spellings and their understanding of phonetic principles

#### B. Understand explicit, systematic phonics instruction

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic phonic elements
2. Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping beginning readers blend consonant and vowel sounds to decode single-syllable words with regular spellings
3. Identify instructional strategies for helping beginning readers recognize common consonant-vowel patterns and apply knowledge of these patterns to read single-syllable words and decode unfamiliar words through analogy with known words containing familiar patterns
4. Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for developing and reinforcing students' skills in using phonics to decode multisyllabic words and read words containing consonant blends, consonant digraphs, vowel combinations, and r-controlled vowels

#### C. Understand word-analysis skills and vocabulary development

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the way phonics, syntax, and semantics interact as the reader constructs meaning
2. Identify methods for improving students' reading proficiency by helping students apply word-analysis skills and word-attack strategies
3. Recognize how to help students read unfamiliar multisyllabic words, including compound words, by using syllabication and structural analysis to identify common spelling patterns and morphemes within the word
4. Recognize how to help students use context, including sentence structure as well as meaning clues, to help identify unfamiliar words and technical terms, determine the relevant meaning of a word with multiple meanings, and verify the relevant meaning and/or pronunciation of a homonym or homograph
5. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional strategies for building and extending vocabulary knowledge
6. Recognize ways to help students make effective use of a dictionary, thesaurus, glossary, or other word-reference materials to clarify understanding of a word's denotative and connotative meanings

#### D. Understand the development of reading fluency and reading comprehension

1. Recognize the importance of automatic word recognition and reading fluency
2. Identify instructional strategies for promoting development of students' reading fluency
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive, and psychological bases of the reading process and how they influence students' reading comprehension
4. Demonstrate knowledge of literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and evaluative comprehension
5. Recognize how to help students apply comprehension strategies before reading, during reading, and after reading
6. Recognize the role of independent reading in the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge
7. Identify ways to promote independent reading and family and community involvement in literacy activities

**E. Understand reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry**

1. Recognize how to select a wide variety of literature at appropriate reading levels to encourage independent and reflective reading and to promote students' comprehension and enjoyment of, and appreciation for, fiction and poetry
2. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to help students comprehend fiction by identifying basic story elements, retelling familiar stories, and making predictions based on information and pictures in the text
3. Demonstrate knowledge of different genres and types of literature and use this knowledge to improve students' comprehension
4. Identify instructional strategies to help students recognize different genres and types of literature
5. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to strengthen students' comprehension by developing their literary response and analysis skills

**F. Understand reading comprehension strategies for nonfiction**

1. Recognize how to select and use a variety of informational, descriptive, and persuasive materials at appropriate reading levels to promote students' comprehension of nonfiction, including content-area texts
2. Recognize how to use a variety of comprehension strategies to clarify understanding of a text
3. Identify instructional strategies to help students distinguish main ideas and supporting details in a nonfiction text and identify the author's purpose
4. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' comprehension by helping them identify logical organization and recognize structural patterns in nonfiction texts
5. Recognize how to help students locate and use evidence from a nonfiction text to support their predictions, opinions, and conclusions

**Discussion areas**

- What are concepts of print, and why are they important for a child's early reading development?
- What is automaticity, and why is it important for developing letter and word recognition?
- What are examples of evidence-based instructional strategies for promoting basic phonetic principles?
- What research-based strategies would you suggest to a teacher who is about to begin teaching the alphabetic principle to students in kindergarten? Explain your reasoning.
- Why should teachers encourage students to use invented spelling when writing?
- What are examples of consonant blends and consonant digraphs, and why should they be taught differently than other types of letter combinations?
- What are examples of vowel diphthongs, vowel digraphs, and other vowel pairs, and why is it important to teach students to sound these letters out as a unit rather than individual letters?
- Current research suggests that phonics instruction must be explicit and systematic. What steps must a teacher take to ensure that phonics instruction is explicit and systematic?
- What are the elements of explicit phonics instruction, and in which order should those components be instructed? Why?
- What types of strategies should a teacher employ with students who are experiencing difficulties decoding words when reading orally?
- How do phonics, syntax, and semantics help students construct meanings of words?
- What are examples of evidence-based teaching methods that can help students improve in using phonics, syntax, and semantics?
- When is it appropriate to encourage students to utilize reference materials?

- Why do researchers suggest that copying definitions from a dictionary is not an effective strategy for learning vocabulary?
- When is the most appropriate time to teach vocabulary needed for a reading lesson: before, during, or after the reading lesson?
- What types of strategies would be best to implement for a student who is unable to show mastery of the vocabulary words within a unit of study?
- What are the important characteristics of providing instruction in strategies for reading comprehension?
- What are examples of evidence-based instructional strategies that can benefit students before, during, and after reading?
- How can identification of a student's independent reading level be used to promote independent reading at school and at home?
- Describe the following types of comprehension: literal, inferential, and evaluative. Which of these types of comprehension skills is most important for a student to acquire? Explain.
- What are some comprehension strategies that teachers can incorporate before reading a story to the class, while reading the story, and after reading the story?
- Why is participation in independent reading important for students? How can families and communities get involved and support reading practices inside and outside of schools?
- What are different types of genres of fictional text? Why are genres important to teach to students?
- What are the basic story elements of narrative text, and what teaching methods can be used to help students recognize these elements?
- What are examples of evidence-based instructional strategies that help students understand fictional text?
- List and define the different literature genres that elementary students must understand.
- Poetry is often a difficult genre for students because poems can be difficult to comprehend. What strategies can a teacher incorporate within his or her reading instruction to help students understand poetry?
- Why should teachers utilize graphic organizers when teaching story elements?
- What are three characteristics of nonfiction text that make it more challenging for students than fictional narrative text?
- What text structures are commonly found in nonfiction text, and what teaching methods can be used to help students recognize the structural patterns?
- What is the importance of teaching author's purpose? What strategies can teachers use to help students recognize an author's purpose?
- What types of strategies can teachers implement to increase students' comprehension of nonfiction texts?
- What steps should a teacher follow when selecting a nonfiction passage for students to read to ensure that the passage is at the appropriate reading level for the students? Why is that important?
- Reading a textbook can be difficult for struggling readers. What strategies can a teacher model and scaffold to facilitate textbook reading for struggling readers?

#### IV. Writing and Research

##### A. Understand writing skills and processes

1. Recognize writing as a developmental process
2. Demonstrate knowledge of how to write in various forms and for various audiences and purposes
3. Identify strategies for promoting students' writing skills
4. Recognize recursive stages in the writing process and appropriate strategies for conferencing with students to provide feedback during all phases of writing
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics of effective composing
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of effective written expression
7. Recognize the interdependence of reading and writing development and the role of writing activities in promoting reading comprehension

##### B. Understand how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics

1. Recognize spelling as a developmental process
2. Demonstrate knowledge of systematic spelling instruction, including strategies for helping students recognize common orthographic patterns and strategies for helping students generalize spelling knowledge by transferring what they learn in spelling lessons to their own writing
3. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate instructional strategies for promoting students' knowledge and use of writing mechanics, including correct usage, punctuation, and capitalization

##### C. Understand writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research

1. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to promote students' research skills by helping the students apply effective reading techniques and writing techniques to locate, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of print and electronic sources
2. Recognize how to help students use text organizers to help locate and categorize information
3. Identify strategies for helping students make effective use of reference materials
4. Recognize how to promote students' skills in using technology, including electronic media, to conduct research and create final products of research
5. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to evaluate and select a variety of media resources

##### Discussion areas

- What is an example of an instructional strategy that can be used to help students in each of the stages of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing)?
- What are examples of teaching methods that can help students improve in areas of effective written expression (e.g., precise vocabulary, appropriate voice and tone, and variation in sentence length and structure)?
- What are the characteristics of effective composition? During which stage or stages of the writing process should students participate in conferences with teachers and peers to review their writing samples?
- What are the defining characteristics of student writing at each stage of spelling development?
- What strategies promote effective composition skills in students' writing?
- How can writing activities promote active reading comprehension?
- How are reading development and writing development interrelated?
- What strategies promote effective use of reference materials?

## V. Analysis and Application

1. Apply knowledge of assessment and diagnostic teaching to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question
2. Apply knowledge of the elements of reading development to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question
3. Apply knowledge of the elements of writing and research to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question

### Discussion areas

To illustrate the importance of understanding the question before you begin writing, let's start with a sample question:

### Directions

Read the scenario and then respond to all parts of the task on the lined pages provided. The suggested time to spend on this question is 15 minutes.

### Scenario

The early childhood teachers in a school have decided to implement interdisciplinary science units with a focus on reading. The district has implemented a policy that all schools must include a technology component that will support reading instruction.

### Task

Be sure to respond to both of the following:

- Briefly describe an instructional material the teachers would use within these units to support the reading focus. Explain the criteria used to evaluate the material in meeting these instructional needs.
- Briefly describe an activity using technology with the interdisciplinary science units. Specify how the activity supports student reading goals.

## Organizing Your Response

Successful responses start with successful planning, either with an outline or with another form of notes. By planning your response, you greatly decrease the chances that you will forget to answer any part of the question. You increase the chances of creating a well-organized response, which is something the scorers look for. Your note-taking space also gives you a place to jot down thoughts whenever you think of them—for example, when you have an idea about one part of the question while you are writing your response to another part. Like taking time to make sure you understand what the question is asking, planning your response is time well invested, although you must keep track of the time so that you leave sufficient time to write your response.

To illustrate a possible strategy for planning a response, let us focus again on the sample task introduced above. The question asks for a two-part response. You might begin by jotting down those parts on your notes page, leaving space under each. This will ensure that you address each part when you begin writing.

### Sample Notes—Main Parts to be Answered

Here you start by identifying each part of the question:

- *Reading material related to science unit*
  - *How to evaluate the selected material's ability to successfully support reading focus*
- *Integrating technology to support reading focus*

**Sample Notes—Ideas under Each Main Part**

You then might quickly fill out the main ideas you want to address in each part, like this:

- *Reading material related to science unit*
  - *Tradebooks*
    - *How to evaluate the selected material's ability to successfully support reading focus*
    - *Different readability levels to support all students at their current reading level*
    - *Connect to the science topic being studied*
    - *The tradebooks present accurate and current information*
- *Integrating technology to support reading focus*
  - *WebQuests or online labs—support reading skill development (i.e., cause and effect), content-related vocabulary development, and support comprehension of what was read in the tradebooks*

To earn the highest number of points from the scorers, you will need to do all of the following:

- Answer all parts of the question.
- Give reasons for your answers.
- Demonstrate subject-specific knowledge in your answer.
- Refer to the data in the stimulus.

Now look at your notes and add any ideas that would address these characteristics. You have now created the skeleton of your written response.

**Writing Your Response**

Now the important step of writing your response begins. The scorers will not consider your notes when they score your paper, so it is crucial that you integrate all the important ideas from your notes into your actual written response.

Some test takers believe that every written response on a *Praxis* test has to be in formal essay form—that is, with an introductory paragraph, then paragraphs with the response

to the question, then a concluding paragraph. This is **not** the case for the Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education test. It does not require formal essays, so you should use techniques that allow you to communicate information efficiently and clearly. For example, you can use bulleted or numbered lists, or a chart, or a combination of essay and chart.

Sample responses for each score point follow:

**Sample Response that Received a Score of 3**

*Teachers can use tradebooks to help integrate reading into a science unit. The instructional material that is needed is a variety of books on the differing reading levels of the students. An example of this would be teaching a science unit on deserts. The teacher would collect books at different readability levels on living in a desert, animals in a desert, or any other related topics to use with the class. The criteria used to ensure the books meet instructional needs are that they are at an appropriate reading level for the students, have a connection to the topic being studied, and contain accurate information.*

*A technological activity the students could do would be an online net lab. The students would, for example, be required to follow written instructions as they completed a simulation of a lab activity such as the dissection of an owl pellet. Reading skills such as cause and effect could be reinforced with a webquest through which students discovered and observed relationships between actions. Related hands-on activities could be linked to the webquest tasks. By using these methods of integrating science and reading, the teachers can meet the technology component mandated by the district and further support students' reading development.*

**Commentary on Sample Response that Earned a Score of 3**

This response answers each part of each task fully and completely, providing relevant supporting details.

### **Sample Response that Received a Score of 2**

*I would begin by finding books on insects. Every day we would read books and discuss reading techniques and skills. We would also collect bugs and caterpillars to study. Using PowerPoint, we would make slides that compared and contrasted different insects as a class. Each student would then choose a bug to study and make a slide with a picture and sentence about their insect. I will evaluate the students' ability to use PowerPoint and make notes on which students need a little more help. We will then make a CD with all the insect slides and burn copies of it so that each student can take one home. We will then have a short quiz on the reading to check for comprehension.*

### **Commentary on Sample Response that Earned a Score of 2**

Although most parts of the tasks are addressed, the response did not include how the instructional material was evaluated.

### **Sample Response that Received a Score of 1**

An instructional material that teachers would use for the unit could be how a butterfly grows. The kids are learning reading and science at the same time. They could have a computer in the classroom and have Leapfrog Interactive Reading on the computer. The technology would be helping the kids to read and they would be having fun while doing it.

### **Commentary on Sample Response that Earned a Score of 1**

This response shows a limited knowledge of choosing appropriate instructional materials. No supporting evidence or explanations are provided. Not all parts of the task are addressed.

### **In Conclusion**

Whatever format you select, the important thing is that your answer be thorough, complete, and detailed. You need to be certain that you do the following:

- Answer all parts of the question.
- Give reasons for your answers.
- Demonstrate subject-specific knowledge in your answer.
- Refer to the data in the stimulus.

It is a good idea to use the practice test in the next chapter to help you develop a plan for how you will take the test on the actual testing day, especially if you tend to get nervous or tend to freeze up in a testing situation. Whatever format you select for your response, the important thing is that your answer be thorough, complete, and detailed.

## 7. Review Smart Tips for Success

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

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

#### Should I guess?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Smart Tips for Taking the Test

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

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

## 8. Check on Testing Accommodations

*See if you qualify for accommodations to take the Praxis test*

### What if English is not my primary language?

*Praxis* tests are given only in English. If your primary language is not English (PLNE), you may be eligible for extended testing time. For more details, visit [www.ets.org/praxis/register/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 [https://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/bulletin\\_supplement\\_test\\_takers\\_with\\_disabilities\\_health\\_needs.pdf](https://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/bulletin_supplement_test_takers_with_disabilities_health_needs.pdf).

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

## 9. Do Your Best on Test Day

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

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

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

On the day of the test, you should:

- be well rested
- wear comfortable clothes and dress in layers
- eat before you take the test
- bring an acceptable and valid photo identification with you
- bring an approved calculator only if one is specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at [http://www.ets.org/praxis/test\\_day/policies/calculators](http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/policies/calculators))
- be prepared to stand in line to check in or to wait while other test takers check in

You can't control the testing situation, but you can control yourself. Stay calm. The supervisors are well trained and make every effort to provide uniform testing conditions, but don't let it bother you if the test doesn't start exactly on time. You will have the allotted amount of time once it does start.

You can think of preparing for this test as training for an athletic event. Once you've trained, prepared, and rested, give it everything you've got.

### What items am I restricted from bringing into the test center?

You cannot bring into the test center personal items such as:

- handbags, knapsacks, or briefcases
- water bottles or canned or bottled beverages
- study materials, books, or notes
- pens, pencils, scrap paper, or calculators, unless specifically permitted for the test you are taking (see Calculator Use, at [http://www.ets.org/praxis/test\\_day/policies/calculators](http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/policies/calculators))
- any electronic, photographic, recording, or listening devices

Personal items are not allowed in the testing room and will not be available to you during the test or during breaks. You may also be asked to empty your pockets. At some centers, you will be assigned a space to store your belongings, such as handbags and study materials. Some centers do not have secure storage space available, so please plan accordingly.

Test centers assume no responsibility for your personal items.

If you have health-related needs requiring you to bring equipment, beverages or snacks into the testing room or to take extra or extended breaks, you need to request accommodations in advance. Procedures for requesting accommodations are described in the [Bulletin Supplement for Test Takers with Disabilities or Health-related Needs \(PDF\)](#).

**Note:** All cell phones, smart phones (e.g., Android® devices, iPhones®, etc.), and other electronic, photographic, recording, or listening devices are strictly prohibited from the test center. If you are seen with such a device, you will be dismissed from the test, your test scores will be canceled, and you will forfeit your test fees. If you are seen *using* such a device, the device will be confiscated and inspected. For more information on what you can bring to the test center, visit [www.ets.org/praxis/test\\_day/bring](http://www.ets.org/praxis/test_day/bring).

### Are You Ready?

Complete this checklist to determine whether you are ready to take your test.

- Do you know the testing requirements for the license or certification you are seeking in the state(s) where you plan to teach?
- Have you followed all of the test registration procedures?
- Do you know the topics that will be covered in each test you plan to take?
- Have you reviewed any textbooks, class notes, and course readings that relate to the topics covered?
- Do you know how long the test will take and the number of questions it contains?
- Have you considered how you will pace your work?
- Are you familiar with the types of questions for your test?
- Are you familiar with the recommended test-taking strategies?
- Have you practiced by working through the practice questions in this study companion or in a study guide or practice test?
- If constructed-response questions are part of your test, do you understand the scoring criteria for these questions?
- If you are repeating a *Praxis* test, have you analyzed your previous score report to determine areas where additional study and test preparation could be useful?

If you answered “yes” to the questions above, your preparation has paid off. Now take the *Praxis* test, do your best, pass it—and begin your teaching career!

# 10. Understand Your Scores

*Understand how tests are scored and how to interpret your test scores*

Of course, passing the *Praxis* test is important to you so you need to understand what your scores mean and what your state requirements are.

## What are the score requirements for my state?

States, institutions, and associations that require the tests set their own passing scores. Visit [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states) for the most up-to-date information.

## If I move to another state, will my new state accept my scores?

The *Praxis* tests are part of a national testing program, meaning that they are required in many states for licensure. The advantage of a national program is that if you move to another state that also requires *Praxis* tests, you can transfer your scores. Each state has specific test requirements and passing scores, which you can find at [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states).

## How do I know whether I passed the test?

Your score report will include information on passing scores for the states you identified as recipients of your test results. If you test in a state with automatic score reporting, you will also receive passing score information for that state.

A list of states and their passing scores for each test are available online at [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states).

## What your *Praxis* scores mean

You received your score report. Now what does it mean? It's important to interpret your score report correctly and to know what to do if you have questions about your scores.

Visit [http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/sample\\_score\\_report.pdf](http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/sample_score_report.pdf) to see a sample score report.

To access *Understanding Your Praxis Scores*, a document that provides additional information on how to read your score report, visit [www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand](http://www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand).

## Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

- Your score and whether you passed
- The range of possible scores
- The raw points available in each content category
- The range of the middle 50 percent of scores on the test

If you have taken the same *Praxis* test or other *Praxis* tests 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)
- *Praxis Passing Scores*, found at <https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/>
- 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 the *Praxis* Subject Assessments for professional licensing.

## Do all states require these tests?

The *Praxis* tests are currently required for teacher licensure in approximately 40 states and United States territories. These tests are also used by several professional licensing agencies and by several hundred colleges and universities. Teacher candidates can test in one state and submit their scores in any other state that requires *Praxis* testing for licensure. You can find details at [www.ets.org/praxis/states](http://www.ets.org/praxis/states).

## What is licensure/certification?

Licensure in any area—medicine, law, architecture, accounting, cosmetology—is an assurance to the public that the person holding the license possesses sufficient knowledge and skills to perform important occupational activities safely and effectively. In the case of teacher licensing, a license tells the public that the individual has met predefined competency standards for beginning teaching practice.

Because a license makes such a serious claim about its holder, licensure tests are usually quite demanding. In some fields, licensure tests have more than one part and last for more than one day. Candidates for licensure in all fields plan intensive study as part of their professional preparation. Some join study groups, others study alone. But preparing to take a licensure test is, in all cases, a professional activity. Because a licensure exam surveys a broad body of knowledge, preparing for a licensure exam takes planning, discipline, and sustained effort.

## Why does my state require the *Praxis* tests?

Your state chose the *Praxis* tests because they assess the breadth and depth of content—called the “domain”—that your state wants its teachers to possess before they begin to teach. The level of content knowledge, reflected in the passing score, is based on recommendations of panels of teachers and teacher educators in

each subject area. The state licensing agency and, in some states, the state legislature ratify the passing scores that have been recommended by panels of teachers.

### How were the tests developed?

ETS consulted with practicing teachers and teacher educators around the country during every step of the *Praxis* test development process. First, ETS asked them what knowledge and skills a beginning teacher needs to be effective. Their responses were then ranked in order of importance and reviewed by hundreds of teachers.

After the results were analyzed and consensus was reached, guidelines, or specifications, for the selected-response and constructed-response tests were developed by teachers and teacher educators. Following these guidelines, teachers and professional test developers created test questions that met content requirements and [ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness](#).\*

When your state adopted the research-based *Praxis* tests, local panels of teachers and teacher educators evaluated each question for its relevance to beginning teachers in your state. During this “validity study,” the panel also provided a passing-score recommendation based on how many of the test questions a beginning teacher in your state would be able to answer correctly. Your state’s licensing agency determined the final passing-score requirement.

ETS follows well-established industry procedures and standards designed to ensure that the tests measure what they are intended to measure. When you pass the *Praxis* tests your state requires, you are proving that you have the knowledge and skills you need to begin your teaching career.

### How are the tests updated to ensure the content remains current?

*Praxis* tests are reviewed regularly. During the first phase of review, ETS conducts an analysis of relevant state and association standards and of the current test content. State licensure titles and the results of relevant job analyses are also considered. Revised test questions are then produced following the standard test development methodology. National advisory committees may also be convened to review and revise existing test specifications and to evaluate test forms for alignment with the specifications.

### How long will it take to receive my scores?

Scores for tests that do not include constructed-response questions are available on screen immediately after the test. Scores for tests that contain constructed-response questions or essays aren’t available immediately after the test because of the scoring process involved. Official score reports are available to you and your designated score recipients approximately two to three weeks after the test date for tests delivered continuously, or two to three weeks after the testing window closes for other tests. See the test dates and deadlines calendar at [www.ets.org/praxis/register/dates\\_centers](http://www.ets.org/praxis/register/dates_centers) for exact score reporting dates.

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

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

The process is easy—simply log into My *Praxis* Account at [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis) and click on your score report. If you do not already have a *Praxis* account, you must create one to view your scores.

**Note:** You must create a *Praxis* account to access your scores, even if you registered by mail or phone.

\*[ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness](#) (2014, Princeton, N.J.) are consistent with the [Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing](#), industry standards issued jointly by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (2014, Washington, D.C.).

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

To search for the *Praxis* test prep resources  
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**[www.ets.org/praxis/testprep](http://www.ets.org/praxis/testprep)**

To purchase official test prep made by the creators  
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