

Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure



AGENDA ITEM: 1

DATE: November 15, 2021

TOPIC: Recommendation for a Passing Score for the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) Test

Statutory and Regulatory Authority:

The *Code of Virginia* provides the authority for the Board of Education to promulgate *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel*.

Section [22.1-298.1](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, states in part, the following:

§ [22.1-298.1](#) Regulations governing licensure.

C. The Board of Education's regulations shall include requirements that a person seeking initial licensure:

- 1. Demonstrate proficiency in the relevant content area, communication, literacy, and other core skills for educators by achieving a qualifying score on professional assessments or meeting alternative evaluation standards as prescribed by the Board;*
- 2. Complete study in attention deficit disorder;*
- 3. Complete study in gifted education, including the use of multiple criteria to identify gifted students; and*
- 4. Complete study in methods of improving communication between schools and families and ways of increasing family involvement in student learning at home and at school.*

Code of Virginia, Section [22.1-16. Bylaws and regulations generally.](#)

Code of Virginia, Section [22.1-299. License required of teachers.](#)

Code of Virginia, Section [22.1-305.2. Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure.](#)

The [Licensure Regulations for School Personnel](#) state, in part, the following:

8VAC20-22-40. Conditions for Licensure.

- ... B. All candidates who hold at least a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and who seek an initial Virginia teaching license shall obtain passing scores on professional teacher's assessments prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education. With the exception of the career switcher program that requires assessments as prerequisites, individuals shall complete the professional teacher's*

assessment requirements within the three-year validity of the initial provisional license....

8VAC20-22-70. Additional Endorsements.

- A. *An individual who holds a teaching license may add an additional teaching endorsement to the license by passing a rigorous academic subject test for endorsements in which a test is prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education. This testing option does not apply to individuals (i) who are seeking an early/primary education preK-3 or elementary education preK-6 endorsement, special education endorsements, or a reading specialist endorsement or (ii) who hold a Technical Professional License, Vocational Evaluator License, Pupil Personnel Services License, School Manager License, or Division Superintendent License.*

Background:

Currently, the Board of Education requires the following assessments for initial licensure:

- Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA);
- Praxis Subject Assessments; and
- Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE) for specified endorsements.

The Board prescribes the Praxis Subject Assessments as a professional teacher's assessment requirement for initial licensure in Virginia. In addition, Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education-RVE is required for individuals seeking initial licensure in any of the following endorsements (teaching areas): Early/Primary Education preK-3, Elementary Education preK-6, Special Education-General Curriculum, Special Education Hearing Impairments, and Special Education Visual Impairments.

The Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test will replace the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education (5306) test. The Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary test focuses on the knowledge and skills a beginning teacher must have to support reading and writing development in kindergarten through sixth-grade students. Built to assess the science of reading, the test is structured around the five essential components of effective reading instruction as identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The test also assesses the relationship between reading skills and writing instruction, since receptive and productive literacy are interrelated.

In February 2019, a multistate standard-setting study was designed and conducted by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to support the decision-making process of education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test. Panelists from 13 states and Washington, D.C., participated on the panel. The education agencies recommended panelists with (a) experience as either elementary reading teachers, reading specialists, or college faculty who prepare elementary reading teachers or specialists and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning elementary reading teachers.

Virginia did not participate in the multi-state standard study. Instead, ETS facilitated a panel discussion with six Virginia educators that mirrored the multi-state standard study in July 2021. The Virginia report reflects the panel disagreed with the recommended cut score of the multi-state study and had mixed recommendations that ranged higher than the original panel.

A detailed summary of the study, Multistate Standard-Setting Technical Report -- Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) is attached, as well as the Virginia report. The technical report contains three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the test. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

The [Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary Study Companion](#) document describes the purpose and structure of the test. In brief, the test measures whether entry-level elementary reading teachers have the knowledge/skills believed necessary for competent professional practice. The two and a half-hour assessment contains 90 selected-response and three constructed-response items covering six content areas: *Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy* (approximately 13 selected-response items), *Phonics and Decoding* (approximately 18 selected-response items), *Vocabulary and Fluency* (approximately 21 selected-response items), *Comprehension of Literacy and Informational Text* (approximately 22 selected-response items), *Writing* (approximately 15 selected response items) and *Assessment and Instructional Decision Making* (approximately 3 constructed response items) The reporting scale for the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary test ranges from 100 to 200 scale-score points.

Multistate Standard-Setting Study

The Multistate standard-setting study for the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test is detailed in the attached report.

The following table presents the estimated conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM) around the recommended passing score. A standard error represents the uncertainty associated with a test score. The scale scores associated with one and two CSEM above and below the recommended passing score are provided. The conditional standard error of measurement provided is an estimate.

Conditional Standard Error of Measurement Summaries PRAXIS® TEACHING READING: ELEMENTARY (5205)

	Raw Score	Scale Score Equivalent
<i>Recommended passing score (CSEM)</i>	67 (4.79)	159
- 2 CSEM	58	148
- 1 CSEM	63	154
+1 CSEM	72	165
+2 CSEM	77	171

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to help education agencies determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test, the recommended passing score is 67 out of a possible 107 raw-score points. The scale score associated with a raw score of 67 is 159 on a 100–200 scale.

Information regarding the multistate standard-setting process will be presented to the Advisory Board members by Malik K. McKinley, Sr., Director of Client Relations, Professional Educator Programs, Office for Teacher Licensure and Certification, Student and Teacher Assessment Division, Educational Testing Service.

Action:

The Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure is to receive the presentation by Mr. McKinley on the multistate standard setting and recommend to the Board of Education a passing score for the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test.

Multistate Standard-Setting Technical Report

***Praxis*® TEACHING READING: ELEMENTARY (5205)**

Licensure and Credentialing Research

ETS

Princeton, New Jersey

March 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To support the decision-making process of education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the *Praxis*® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study.

PARTICIPATING STATES

Panelists from 13 states and Washington, DC were recommended by their respective education agencies. The education agencies recommended panelists with (a) experience as either elementary reading teachers, reading specialists or college faculty who prepare elementary reading teachers or specialists and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning elementary reading teachers.

RECOMMENDED PASSING SCORE

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to help education agencies determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test, the recommended passing score is 67 out of a possible 107 raw-score points. The scale score associated with a raw score of 67 is 159 on a 100–200 scale.

To support the decision-making process for education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the *Praxis*® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study in February 2019 in Princeton, New Jersey. Education agencies¹ recommended panelists with (a) experience as either elementary reading teachers, reading specialists, or college faculty who prepare elementary reading teachers or specialists and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning elementary reading teachers. Thirteen states and Washington, DC were represented by 22 panelists (see Table 1). (See Appendix A for the names and affiliations of the panelists.)

Table 1
Participating Jurisdictions and Number of Panelists

Alabama (1 panelist)	Mississippi (2 panelists)
Arkansas (3 panelists)	Oregon (1 panelist)
Colorado (1 panelist)	Pennsylvania (1 panelist)
District of Columbia (1 panelist)	South Carolina (1 panelist)
Hawaii (1 panelist)	Tennessee (3 panelists)
Idaho (1 panelist)	Utah (2 panelists)
Maryland (2 panelists)	West Virginia (2 panelists)

The following technical report contains three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the test. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to education agencies. In each jurisdiction, the department of education, the board of education, or a designated educator licensure board is responsible for establishing the operational passing score in accordance with applicable regulations. This study provides a recommended passing score, which represents the combined judgments of a group of experienced educators. Each jurisdiction may want to consider the recommended passing score but also other sources of information when setting the final *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary passing score (see Geisinger & McCormick, 2010). A jurisdiction may accept the recommended passing score, adjust the score upward to reflect more stringent expectations, or adjust the score downward to reflect more lenient expectations. There is no *correct* decision; the appropriateness of any adjustment may only be evaluated in terms of its meeting the jurisdiction’s needs.

¹ States and jurisdictions that currently use Praxis tests were invited to participate in the multistate standard-setting study.

Two sources of information to consider when setting the passing score are the standard error of measurement (SEM) and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The former addresses the reliability of the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test score and the latter, the reliability of panelists' passing-score recommendation. The SEM allows a jurisdiction to recognize that any test score on any standardized test—including a *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test score—is not perfectly reliable. A test score only *approximates* what a candidate truly knows or truly can do on the test. The SEM, therefore, addresses the question: How close of an approximation is the test score to the *true* score? The SEJ allows a jurisdiction to gauge the likelihood that the recommended passing score from the current panel would be similar to the passing scores recommended by other panels of experts similar in composition and experience. The smaller the SEJ, the more likely that another panel would recommend a passing score consistent with the recommended passing score. The larger the SEJ, the less likely the recommended passing score would be reproduced by another panel.

In addition to measurement error metrics (e.g., SEM, SEJ), each jurisdiction should consider the likelihood of classification errors. That is, when adjusting a passing score, policymakers should consider whether it is more important to minimize a false-positive decision or to minimize a false-negative decision. A false-positive decision occurs when a candidate's test score suggests that he should receive a license/certificate, but his actual level of knowledge/skills indicates otherwise (i.e., the candidate does not possess the required knowledge/skills). A false-negative decision occurs when a candidate's test score suggests that she should not receive a license/certificate, but she actually does possess the required knowledge/skills. The jurisdiction needs to consider which decision error is more important to minimize.

OVERVIEW OF THE *PRAXIS* TEACHING READING: ELEMENTARY TEST

The Praxis Teaching Reading: Elementary *Study Companion* document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the test. In brief, the test measures whether entry-level elementary reading teachers have the knowledge/skills believed necessary for competent professional practice.

The two and a half-hours assessment contains 90 selected-response and 3 constructed-response items² covering six content areas: *Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy* (approximately 13 selected-response items), *Phonics and Decoding* (approximately 18 selected-response items), *Vocabulary and Fluency* (approximately 21 selected-response items), *Comprehension of Literacy and Informational Text* (approximately 22 selected-response items), *Writing* (approximately 15 selected-response items) and *Assessment and Instructional Decision Making* (approximately 3 constructed-response items).³ The reporting scale for the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test ranges from 100 to 200 scale-score points.

PROCESSES AND METHODS

The design of the standard-setting study included an expert panel. Before the study, panelists received an email explaining the purpose of the standard-setting study and requesting that they review the content specifications for the test. This review helped familiarize the panelists with the general structure and content of the test.

The standard-setting study began with a welcome and introduction by the meeting facilitator. The facilitator described the test, provided an overview of standard setting, and presented the agenda for the study. Appendix B shows the agenda for the panel meeting.

REVIEWING THE TEST

The standard-setting panelists first took the test and then discussed it. This discussion helped bring the panelists to a shared understanding of what the test does and does not cover, which serves to reduce potential judgment errors later in the standard-setting process.

² Ten of the 90 selected-response items are pretest items and do not contribute to a candidate's score.

³ The number of items for each content area may vary slightly from form to form of the test.

The test discussion covered the major content areas being addressed by the test. Panelists were asked to remark on any content areas that would be particularly challenging for entry-level teachers or areas that address content particularly important for entry-level teachers.

DESCRIBING THE JUST QUALIFIED CANDIDATE

Following the review of the test, panelists described the just qualified candidate. The *just qualified candidate description* plays a central role in standard setting (Perie, 2008); the goal of the standard-setting process is to identify the test score that aligns with this description.

The panel created a description of the just qualified candidate —the knowledge/skills that differentiate a *just* from a *not quite* qualified candidate. To create this description, the panel first split into smaller groups to consider the just qualified candidate. The full panel then reconvened and, through whole-group discussion, determined the description of the just qualified candidate to use for the remainder of the study.

The written description of the just qualified candidate summarized the panel discussion in a bulleted format. The description was not intended to describe all the knowledge and skills of the just qualified candidate but only highlight those that differentiate a *just* qualified candidate from a *not quite* qualified candidate. The written description was distributed to panelists to use during later phases of the study (see Appendix C for the just qualified candidate description).

PANELISTS' JUDGMENTS

The *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test includes both dichotomously-scored (selected-response items) and constructed-response items. Panelists received training in two distinct standard-setting approaches: one standard-setting approach for the dichotomously-scored items and another approach for the constructed-response items.

A panel's passing score is the sum of the interim passing scores recommended by the panelists for (a) the dichotomously-scored items and (b) the constructed-response items. As with scoring and reporting, the panelists' judgments for the constructed-response items were weighted such that they contributed 25% of the overall score.

Dichotomously scored items. The standard-setting process for the dichotomously-scored items was a probability-based Modified Angoff method (Brandon, 2004; Hambleton & Pitoniak, 2006). In this study, each panelist judged each item on the likelihood (probability or chance) that the just qualified candidate would answer the item correctly. Panelists made their judgments using the following rating scale: 0, .05, .10, .20, .30, .40, .50, .60, .70, .80, .90, .95, 1. The lower the value, the less likely it is that the just qualified candidate would answer the item correctly because the item is difficult for the just qualified candidate. The higher the value, the more likely it is that the just qualified candidate would answer the item correctly.

Panelists were asked to approach the judgment process in two stages. First, they reviewed both the description of the just qualified candidate and the item and determined what was the probability that the just qualified candidate would answer the question correctly. The facilitator encouraged the panelists to consider the following rules of thumb to guide their decision:

- Items in the 0 to .30 range were those the just qualified candidate would have a low chance of answering correctly.
- Items in the .40 to .60 range were those the just qualified candidate would have a moderate chance of answering correctly.
- Items in the .70 to 1 range were those that the just qualified candidate would have a high chance of answering correctly.

Next, panelists decided how to refine their judgment within the range. For example, if a panelist thought that there was a high chance that the just qualified candidate would answer the question correctly, the initial decision would be in the .70 to 1 range. The second decision for the panelist was to judge if the likelihood of answering it correctly is .70, .80, .90, .95 or 1.

After the training, panelists made practice judgments and discussed those judgments and their rationales. All panelists completed a post-training evaluation to confirm that they had received adequate training and felt prepared to continue; the standard-setting process continued only if all panelists confirmed their readiness.

Constructed-response items. An Extended Angoff method (Cizek & Bunch, 2007; Hambleton & Plake, 1995) was used for the constructed-response items. For this portion of the study, a panelist decided on the assigned score value that would most likely be earned by the just qualified candidate for each constructed-response item. Panelists were asked first to review the definition of the just qualified candidate and then to review the constructed-response item and its rubric. The rubric for a constructed-response item defines (holistically) the quality of the evidence that would merit a response earning a particular score. During this review, each panelist independently considered the level of knowledge/skill required to respond to the constructed-response item and the features of a response that would earn a particular score, as defined by the rubric. Each panelist decided on the score most likely to be earned by the just qualified candidate from the possible values a test taker can earn.

A test-taker's response to a constructed-response item is independently scored by two raters, and the sum of the raters' scores is the assigned score⁴; possible scores, therefore, range from zero (both raters assigned a score of zero) to six (both raters assigned a score of three). For their ratings, each panelist decided on the score most likely to be earned by a just qualified candidate from the following possible values: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. For each of the constructed-response item, panelists recorded the score (0 through 6) that a just qualified candidate would most likely earn.

After the training, panelists made practice judgments and discussed those judgments and their rationale. All panelists completed a post-training survey to confirm that they had received adequate training and felt prepared to continue; the standard-setting process continued only if all panelists confirmed their readiness.

Multiple Rounds. Following this first round of judgments (*Round 1*), item-level feedback was provided to the panel. The panelists' judgments were displayed for each item and summarized across panelists. For dichotomously-scored items, items were highlighted to show when panelists converged in their judgments (at least two-thirds of the panelists located an item in the same difficulty range) or diverged in their judgments.

⁴ If the two raters' scores differ by more than one point (non-adjacent), the Chief Reader for that item assigns the score, which is then doubled.

The panelists discussed their item-level judgments. These discussions helped panelists maintain a shared understanding of the knowledge/skills of the just qualified candidate and helped to clarify aspects of items that might not have been clear to all panelists during the Round 1 judgments. The purpose of the discussion was not to encourage panelists to conform to another's judgment, but to understand the different relevant perspectives among the panelists.

In Round 2, panelists discussed their Round 1 judgments and were encouraged by the facilitator (a) to share the rationales for their judgments and (b) to consider their judgments in light of the rationales provided by the other panelists. Panelists recorded their Round 2 judgments only for items when they wished to change a Round 1 judgment. Panelists' final judgments for the study, therefore, consist of their Round 1 judgments and any adjusted judgments made during Round 2.

RESULTS

EXPERT PANELS

Table 2 presents a summary of the panelists' demographic information. The panel included 22 educators representing 13 states and Washington, DC. (See Appendix A for a listing of panelists.) Four panelists were teachers, five were reading specialists, nine were college faculty, and four held another position. All of the faculty members' job responsibilities included the training of elementary reading teachers.

Table 2
Panel Member Demographics

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Current position		
Elementary School Teacher	4	18
Reading Specialist	5	23
College faculty	9	41
Other	4	18
Race		
White	18	82
Black	2	9
Hispanic	1	5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	5

Table continues

Table 2 (continued)

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Female	17	77
Male	5	23
Are you currently certified/licensed to teach elementary school (grades preK-6) in your state?		
Yes	18	82
No	4	18
Are you currently teaching this subject in your state?		
Yes	16	73
No	6	27
Are you currently preparing elementary school teacher candidates or reading specialist candidates?		
Yes	9	41
No	0	0
I am not “College Faculty”	13	59
Including this year, how many years of experience do you have teaching elementary school?		
Less than 4 years	3	14
4–9 years	3	14
10–14 years	5	23
15 years or more	2	9
I do not work in a K-12 setting	9	41
Which best describes the location of your K–12 school?		
Urban	3	14
Suburban	3	14
Rural	6	27
Not currently working at the K–12 level	10	45
In the past five years, have you supervised elementary school student teachers?		
Yes	8	36
No	1	5
I am not “College Faculty”	13	59

STANDARD-SETTING JUDGMENTS

Table 3 summarizes the standard-setting judgments of panelists. The table shows the passing scores—the number of raw points needed to pass the test—recommended by each panelist.

Table 3 also includes estimate of the measurement error associated with the judgments: the standard deviation of the mean and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The SEJ is one way of estimating

the reliability or consistency of a panel’s standard-setting judgments.⁵ It indicates how likely it would be for several other panels of educators similar in makeup, experience, and standard-setting training to the current panel to recommend the same passing score on the same form of the test.

Table 3
Passing Score Summary by Round of Judgments

Panelist	Round 1	Round 2
1	56.71	60.93
2	72.83	73.92
3	69.15	68.75
4	53.07	60.03
5	55.30	60.40
6	60.10	62.00
7	68.82	69.62
8	59.27	58.97
9	69.50	68.80
10	73.65	72.10
11	61.22	61.62
12	59.30	61.80
13	70.30	67.03
14	56.75	59.03
15	81.78	79.58
16	66.97	70.00
17	70.58	70.48
18	52.50	56.03
19	75.93	76.43
20	72.05	71.45
21	69.20	69.90
22	73.80	74.68
Average	65.85	66.98
Lowest	52.50	56.03
Highest	81.78	79.58
SD	8.21	6.55
SEJ	1.75	1.40

Round 1 judgments are made without discussion among the panelists. The most variability in judgments, therefore, is typically present in the first round. Round 2 judgments, however, are informed by

⁵ An SEJ assumes that panelists are randomly selected and that standard-setting judgments are independent. It is seldom the case that panelists are randomly sampled, and only the first round of judgments may be considered independent. The SEJ, therefore, likely underestimates the uncertainty of passing scores (Tannenbaum & Katz, 2013).

panel discussion; thus, it is common to see a decrease both in the standard deviation and SEJ. This decrease — indicating convergence among the panelists’ judgments — was observed (see Table 3). The Round 2 average score is the panel’s recommended passing score.

The panel’s passing score recommendation for the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test is 66.98 (out of a possible 107 raw-score points). The value was rounded to the next highest whole number, 67, to determine the functional recommended passing score. The scale score associated with 67 raw points is 159.

Table 4 presents the estimated conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM) around the recommended passing score. A standard error represents the uncertainty associated with a test score. The scale scores associated with one and two CSEM above and below the recommended passing score are provided. The conditional standard error of measurement provided is an estimate.

Table 4

Passing Scores Within 1 and 2 CSEM of the Recommended Passing Score⁶

Recommended passing score (CSEM)		Scale score equivalent
	67 (4.79)	159
-2 CSEM	58	148
-1 CSEM	63	154
+ 1 CSEM	72	165
+ 2 CSEM	77	171

Note. CSEM = conditional standard error(s) of measurement.

FINAL EVALUATIONS

The panelists completed an evaluation at the conclusion of their standard-setting study. The evaluation asked the panelists to provide feedback about the quality of the standard-setting implementation and the factors that influenced their decisions. The responses to the evaluation provided evidence of the validity of the standard-setting process, and, as a result, evidence of the reasonableness of the recommended passing score.

Panelists were also shown the panel’s recommended passing score and asked (a) how comfortable they are with the recommended passing score and (b) if they think the score was too high, too low, or about right. A summary of the final evaluation results is presented in Appendix D.

⁶ The unrounded CSEM value is added to or subtracted from the rounded passing-score recommendation. The resulting values are rounded up to the next-highest whole number and the rounded values are converted to scale scores.

All panelists *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they understood the purpose of the study and that the facilitator’s instructions and explanations were clear. All panelists *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that they were prepared to make their standard-setting judgments. All panelists *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that the standard-setting process was easy to follow.

All panelists reported that the description of the just qualified candidate was at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their standard-setting judgments; 18 of the 22 panelists indicated the description was *very influential*. All but one of the panelists reported that between-round discussions were at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their judgments. More than three-quarters of the panelists (17 of the 22 panelists) indicated that their own professional experience was *very influential* in guiding their judgments.

All but one of the panelists indicated they were *very comfortable* with the passing score they recommended and that the recommended passing score was *about right* with the remaining panelist indicating that the passing score was *too low*.

SUMMARY

To support the decision-making process for education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test, research staff from ETS designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study.

ETS provides a recommended passing score from the multistate standard-setting study to help education agencies determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test, the recommended passing score is 67 out of a possible 107 raw-score points. The scale score associated with a raw score of 67 is 159 on a 100–200 scale.

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APPENDIX A

PANELISTS' NAMES & AFFILIATIONS

Participating Panelists With Affiliation

<u>Panelist</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Deidre Alexander	Madison County Schools (MS)
Adam Baker	Harding University (AR)
Brianna Ballantyne	Clearwater Valley Elementary (ID)
Lucinda Burns	Point Harmony Elementary School (WV)
Kristie Caldwell	Learning Way Elementary School(TN)
Murray Collum	Pontotoc City School District (MS)
Ronda Fritz	Eastern Oregon University (OR)
Paula Hull	Cache County School District (UT)
Jennifer Jordan	University of Tennessee (TN)
Karin Keith	East Tennessee State University (TN)
Kananinohea Māka‘imoku	University of Hawaii at Hilo (HI)
Gilda Martinez-Alba	Towson University (MD)
Janet Mattern	Frostburg State University (MD)
Christy McDowell	Henderson State University (AR)
James Darin Pope	Tuscaloosa City Schools (AL)
Samuel Propst	Alderson-Broaddus University (WV)
Kaitlin Reed	Center City PCS - Capitol Hill Campus (DC)
Andreia Simon	Colorado Department of Education (CO)
David Soslau	Springfield School District - Delaware County (PA)
Caitlin Staton	Lavaca Elementary School (AR)
Beth White	University of South Carolina Columbia (SC)

Note. One panelist did not wish to be listed in the final report. The remaining panelists provided permission to be listed.

APPENDIX B

STUDY AGENDA

AGENDA

***Praxis*[®] Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) Standard-Setting Study**

Day 1

Welcome and Introduction

Overview of Standard Setting and the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary Test

Review the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary Test

Break

Discuss the *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary Test

Define the Knowledge/Skills of a Just Qualified Candidate

Lunch

Define the Knowledge/Skills of a Just Qualified Candidate (continued)

Break

Training and practice of Modified Angoff Standard-Setting judgments

Collect Materials; End of Day 1

AGENDA

***Praxis*[®] Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) Standard-Setting Study**

Day 2

Overview of Day 2

Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments

Training and Practice for CR items

Complete CR judgments

Break

Round 1 Feedback and Round 2 Judgments (*break as needed*)

Lunch

Round 1 Feedback and Round 2 Judgments (*continued*)

Break

Feedback on Round 2 Recommended Cut Score

Complete Final Evaluation

Collect Materials; End of Study

APPENDIX C

JUST QUALIFIED CANDIDATE DESCRIPTION

Description of the Just Qualified Candidate⁷

A just qualified candidate...

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy

1. Understands (i.e., applies) instructional methods for teaching phonological (recognition of rhyme and alliteration; segmenting, blending, manipulation of syllables as well as onset and rime and phonemic awareness (e.g., deletion, substitution).
2. Is familiar with developing students' expressive and receptive language skills Solve problems involving integers, decimals, percents and fractions.

Phonics and Decoding

3. Understands evidence-based practice for teaching phonics systematically, explicitly, and recursively.
4. Knows instructional methods for teaching common phonics patterns and rules (consonant digraphs, blends, diphthongs, schwa sound, syllable types, word families, etc.).
5. Knows evidence based practices to teach morphological analysis (i.e., affixes, roots, and base words).
6. Knows multisensory approaches for supporting student recognition of non-decodable/irregularly spelled words (i.e., was, listen, though, the, once).

Vocabulary and Fluency

7. Is familiar with ways to build, expand, and use expressive and receptive vocabulary.
8. Knows methods for teaching vocabulary systematically, explicitly, and repeatedly in multiple contexts.
9. Knows multiple approaches to teaching word solving, including the use of context clues and structural analysis.
10. Knows multiple approaches to guide students to understand a wide variety of words (common, contextual, content-specific, structural analysis) through direct instruction and independent vocabulary learning.
11. Knows instructional methods of supporting fluent reading behaviors (i.e, accuracy, appropriate rate, and prosody) at the phoneme, word, and passage level.
12. Knows how fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are interrelated.

Comprehension of Literary and Informational Text

13. Understands how to support students' listening comprehension and its relationship to reading comprehension.
14. Knows how to support students' speaking and listening skills as they discuss texts.
15. Understands how to activate and build students' background knowledge to increase comprehension.
16. Is familiar with methods for teaching comprehension systematically and explicitly to all learners.

⁷ Description of the just qualified candidate focuses on the knowledge/skills that differentiate a *just* from a *not quite* qualified candidate.

17. Knows strategies to guide students' self-selection of appropriate texts to increase motivation and engagement.
18. Is familiar with how to differentiate instruction, tasks, and materials (print and digital) that are appropriate and culturally responsive to all learners.
19. Understands how to teach the use of graphic and semantic organizers to support comprehension.
20. Knows how to teach the genres (i.e., poetry, prose, drama), structures (i.e., story elements), and features of literary texts.
21. Knows how to teach literary devices (i.e., figurative language, nuance of words, and alliteration).
22. Knows strategies for supporting readers as they construct literal and inferential meaning, including author's use of language.
23. Understands how to teach the types (i.e., biography, how-to), structures (i.e., description, cause and effect, sequence), and features of informational texts.
24. Is familiar with how to use technology to support students' ability to critically examine online resources and foster digital literacy, to personalize learning experiences for students of different needs, and to support active learning across content areas.

Writing

25. Knows how to teach writing as a recursive process that supports self-evaluation and expression.
26. Knows systematic, explicit methods to teach the writing process to all learners.
27. Knows strategies for integrating reading and writing (i.e., summarizing, annotation).
28. Knows methods to use digital tools for communication, writing, collaboration, and publishing.
29. Is familiar with the defining characteristics and appropriate instructional methods for teaching the various types of writing: informational/expository, argument/persuasive/opinion, and narrative.
30. Knows how to take a systematic, explicit, multisensory, and recursive approach to spelling development.
31. Knows methods for teaching the structure of written language, including the rules of grammar and mechanics.
32. Understands how to use data to guide both individual instruction and create flexible groups.
33. Understands informal and formal methods (i.e., formative and summative) for assessing essential elements of beginning literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing.
34. Knows how to monitor student progress by analyzing and interpreting formative assessment data to inform instruction.
35. Is familiar with the decision-making process that leads to the modification or accommodation of assessments based on the needs of diverse learners (i.e., gifted, English learners, struggling readers and writers, and students with learning disabilities).
36. Knows ways to integrate digital tools into the assessment process.

APPENDIX D

FINAL EVALUATION RESULTS

Table D1***Final Evaluation***

	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
• I understood the purpose of this study.	20	91	2	9	0	0	0	0
• The instructions and explanations provided by the facilitators were clear.	19	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
• The training in the standard-setting method was adequate to give me the information I needed to complete my assignment.	20	91	2	9	0	0	0	0
• The explanation of how the recommended passing score is computed was clear.	17	77	5	23	0	0	0	0
• The opportunity for feedback and discussion between rounds was helpful.	18	82	3	14	1	5	0	0
• The process of making the standard-setting judgments was easy to follow.	16	73	6	27	0	0	0	0
• I understood how to use the survey software	19	86	3	14	0	0	0	0

Table D1 (continued)

Final Evaluation

How influential was each of the following factors in guiding your standard-setting judgments?	Very influential		Somewhat influential		Not influential			
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%		
• The description of the just qualified candidate	18	82	4	18	0	0		
• The between-round discussions	12	55	9	41	1	5		
• The knowledge/skills required to answer each test item	19	86	3	14	0	0		
• The passing scores of other panel members	9	41	13	59	0	0		
• My own professional experience	17	77	5	23	0	0		
	Very comfortable		Somewhat comfortable		Somewhat uncomfortable		Very uncomfortable	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
• Overall, how comfortable are you with the panel's recommended passing score?	21	95	1	5	0	0	0	0
	Too low		About right		Too high			
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%		
• Overall, the recommended passing score is:	1	5	21	95	0	0		

TEST REVIEW WORKSHOP REPORT

Praxis Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) Test Review

Virginia

Tuesday, Jul 20, 2021

OVERVIEW

This meeting was conducted using Zoom. The participants and agenda followed are provided in ATTENDEES and AGENDA below. RESULTS provides the panelists' feedback—captured through online polls—about the test and a recommended passing score.

The results include:

- All three panelists agreed that the test is appropriate for licensure as an elementary teacher.
- Asked about recommended passing score, panelists answers ranged between 159 and 165 on the Praxis scale:
 - 159—67 out of 105 total points on the form reviewed—is the recommended value from the multistate standard setting (MSSS RSV) and is the passing score adopted by the ten states using the test for elementary licensure.
 - 165 is one standard error of measurement above the MSSS RSV—72 points on the form reviewed

When initially asked for a recommended score, two panelists selected 159 and one selected 165.

After discussion, one panelist who had selected 159 indicated, *via* poll and e-mail, that she judges 159 to be too low, indicating that a score of 162 (69 points on the score review) or higher would be her recommendation.

ATTENDEES

• MALIK MCKINLEY (ETS)	• MAGGIE CLEMMONS (VA DOE)	<u>PANELISTS</u>
• ERIC STEINHAEUER (ETS)	• JILL NOGUERAS (VA DOE)	1. KELLY CARTWRIGHT
• DAVID DICKERMAN (ETS)		2. KRISTIN CONRADI SMITH
		3. CHRISTINA WHITFIELD

AGENDA

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Approx. time</i>
Whole panel	
▪ Welcome and Introductions	
▪ Overview of the test and its development	40 mins
▪ Overview of standard setting process	
Agreement to proceed.	
Breakout rooms	
▪ Review of the test form (BREAK 5 mins)	1:40
▪ Discussion: What is measured?	
Whole panel	
▪ Discussion: What is measured?	20 mins
Poll: Test review feedback.	
Whole panel	
▪ Review of standard setting results	
Poll: Passing score recommendation.	20 mins
▪ Review of panel recommendation	
Poll: Feedback on panel recommendation.	

RESULTS

- I. Following an overview of (i) the test's structure and content, (ii) the test's development, and (iii) the standard setting process, panelists responded to a poll indicating their agreement to proceed. All agreed to these two statements
- (A) I understand that, by proceeding, I agree not to keep or disclose (1) secure test material provided and/or (2) any information provided specific to secure tests and/or (3) details of panel discussions of secure material, including panel recommendation.
- (B) I understand that, by proceeding, I agree not to take this Praxis test any time within the next year.
- II. Following a review of the test form used in standard setting, panelists discussed among themselves what they saw being measured including (1) what content they expect to be particularly challenging for candidates and (2) what content is especially important for beginning practice. Then panelists provided feedback about the test, starting with two questions to evaluate the test:
- (C) How important are the knowledge and skills being assessed for effective beginning practice?
- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| ○ Very important | 3 |
| ○ Important | — |
| ○ Moderately important | — |
| ○ Of some importance | — |
| ○ Of little importance | — |
| <i>Total</i> | 3 |
- (D) Based on the knowledge and skills being assessed, is the test appropriate for licensure?
- | | |
|--------------|---|
| ○ Yes | 3 |
| ○ No | — |
| <i>Total</i> | 3 |

Provided with an optional open-ended question

- (E) About the knowledge and skills being assessed: Please provide any further feedback about alignment to the knowledge and skills a teacher needs?

the three panelists provided further feedback:

- *I do think that the test has been created in such a way that appropriately identifies candidates as being prepared for elementary reading instruction. I appreciate the focus on practical application of effective vs. ineffective strategies but this may be difficult for pre-service teachers. The scenarios given for the constructed response accurately provide a range of understanding from an emergent reader to a more advanced readers.*
- *Appreciated the focus on linguistics (grapheme/phoneme, syllables, morphemes, etc)--although those questions were pretty basic they are important (note: would like more on identify # of phonemes). Comprehension questions were well done--liked diversity of genre, text structure, focus on comprehension support before, during, and after reading. The open-ended questions deserve their weight: appreciated that they invite students to critically look at data (or consider a scenario) and to explain why constructs are important.*
- *As we discussed, the phonemic awareness items seemed fairly easy. This is a critical foundational skill that many preservice teachers struggle with. I'd like to see more/more difficult items. I appreciated the spread of items across all the "big 5" areas of the NRP. Inferential comprehension questions, questions about the types of processes good comprehenders use, these are important and necessary for understanding that comprehension instruction is not just teaching kids to answer questions. (Good things = distinguishing text structures for various text types, teaching inferencing, teaching connectives, teaching strategies for comprehension.) I appreciated inclusion of spelling and writing as ways to reinforce phonics and word recognition knowledge.*

- III. The panel was provided an overview of the process and results of a multistate standard setting (MSSS) conducted for the test. *(Note: In advance of the meeting, panelists received a technical report describing the MSSS process and results in detail.)*

Results included:

- The recommended score value (RSV) from the study was 67 (out of 105 possible points) on the test form you reviewed
- The 105 total points come from.
 - 78 scored selected response questions
 - 27 possible points from constructed response questions (CRs): 3 CRs each scored by 2 raters on a 0-3 score scale with a 1.5 weighting applied ($3 \times 2 \times 3 \times 1.5 = 27$)
- The scale score associated with 67 raw points is 159.

Panelists were asked for their recommended passing score based on their review of the test, the panel's discussion of the test and the results of the MSSS. Choices presented were the MSSS RSV and raw scores ranging two conditional standard errors of measurement (CSEM) above and below the RSV:

(F) What passing score would you recommend [raw number correct]

○ 77 Scale 171 (+2.0 CSEM)	—
○ 74 Scale 168	—
○ 72 Scale 165 (+1.0 CSEM)	1
○ 69 Scale 162	—
○ 67 Scale 159 (Recommended Value from MSSS)	2
○ 65 Scale 157	—
○ 63 Scale 155 (-1.0 CSEM)	—
○ 60 Scale 151	—
○ 58 Scale 149 (-2.0 CSEM)	—
<i>Total</i>	3

The panel was shown these results for a brief discussion and then asked for feedback on the panel's recommended passing score, identified as 67 the median of the panelists' recommendations (equivalent to a scaled score of 159). The conversation involved discussion of the concern about the possibility that a candidate might reach that score while not performing well on some foundational content—as captured in the first panelist comment below. Following the discussion, panelists feedback—including poll responses and a post-workshop e-mail—indicated a shift in one panelist's recommendation from an initial recommendation of 67 (159) to a passing score of 69 (Scale 162) or higher.

Panelists provided feedback about this recommended passing score in answers to two questions:

(G) Overall, how comfortable are you with the panel's recommended cut score?

○ Very Comfortable	1
○ Somewhat Comfortable	1
○ Somewhat Uncomfortable	1
○ Very Uncomfortable	—
<i>Total</i>	3

(H) Overall, the panel's recommended cut score is:

○ Too high	—
○ About Right	1
○ Too Low	2
<i>Total</i>	3

Provided with an optional open-ended question

(I) Please provide any further comments about your recommendation

two panelists provided further feedback:

1. *I am concerned that elementary teachers could "pass" with no knowledge of foundational skills (i.e. phonemic awareness, phonics, etc.). An appropriate cut score would not permit that to happen. Elementary teachers must have facility with foundational skills to be adequately prepared.*
2. *I understand the limitations of any test and I certainly don't want passing a test to serve as a barrier for teachers, but my one concern w/ the current score is that you could still pass while failing every single question about foundational knowledge. It was helpful to hear that this is uncommon. :).*

In a follow-up e-mail, the panelist with feedback comment (1) reinforced her change in judgment about passing score: "The new test represents the breadth of the scientific evidence on effective reading instruction very well, and better than the test currently in use. One concern about ETS's recommended cut score for passing (i.e., 67) is that it may be possible for a pre-service teacher to obtain a passing score on the test but miss ALL of the questions on phonemic awareness and phonics: critical foundational skills for teaching early reading."

She indicated that this discussion led her "to favor a higher cut score (e.g., 69 or perhaps greater) to better ensure some degree of foundational skills knowledge in our teacher candidates. (Young readers must have these skills in order to read effectively, and preservice teachers without these skills are ill-equipped to teach early reading.)."

The *Praxis*® Study Companion

Teaching Reading: Elementary

5205



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.

How are the *Praxis* tests given?

Praxis tests are given on computer. Other formats are available for test takers approved for accommodations (see page 39).

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.

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1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205)

Test at a Glance			
Test Name	Teaching Reading: Elementary		
Test Code	5205		
Time	150 minutes		
Number of Questions	90 selected response; 3 constructed response		
Format	Selected-response and constructed-response questions. This test may include questions with an audio or video component.		
Test Delivery	Computer delivered		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy	13	11%
	II. Phonics and Decoding	18	15%
	III. Vocabulary and Fluency	21	18%
	IV. Comprehension of Literary and Informational Text	22	18%
	V. Writing	15	13%
	VI. Assessment and Instructional Decision Making (Constructed Response)	3	25%

About This Test

The *Praxis* Teaching Reading: Elementary test focuses on the knowledge and skills a beginning teacher must have to support reading and writing development in kindergarten through sixth-grade students. Built to assess the science of reading, the test is structured around the five essential components of effective reading instruction as identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The test also assesses the relationship between reading skills and writing instruction, since receptive and productive literacy are interrelated. Questions about assessment will be included throughout.

The test as a whole acknowledges multiple approaches to pedagogy used in tandem with content. This includes but is not limited to integrating skills and embedding student instruction within context, as well as looking at concepts in isolation in order to build upon them.

Test questions call on the individual's knowledge of research-based reading instruction and the science of teaching reading, covering language, foundational skills and comprehension. Test takers must be able to apply that knowledge to specific instructional scenarios, including showing an understanding of how to differentiate instruction for diverse students. The test taker will be required to analyze and respond to situations involving

both entire classes and individual students at grade levels from kindergarten through grade six, including English-language learners and students with diverse needs and backgrounds.

The test includes texts from a wide range of genres and requires the candidate to be familiar with strategies for handling multiple text types with students, including print, digital, and image-based prompts.

In addition to selected-response questions, the test contains three constructed-response questions designed to allow the test taker to show understanding in the areas of early literacy, developing reading instruction, and written expression. These questions are intended to be authentic teaching tasks that require instructional decision making about such things as choosing instructional strategies and materials based on assessment information.

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 33.

I. Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy

- A. Understands instructional methods for teaching phonological awareness (recognition of rhyme and alliteration; segmenting, blending, manipulation of syllables as well as onset and rime)
- B. Understands instructional methods for teaching phonemic awareness, both basic (e.g., segmenting and blending) and advanced (e.g., deletion, substitution)
- C. Knows ways to develop students' expressive and receptive language skills
- D. Knows instructional methods to teach beginning readers the concepts about print such as directionality, return sweep, parts of a book, and the form and function of print
- E. Understands instructional strategies to help emergent readers fluently identify upper- and lowercase letters in various fonts

II. Phonics and Decoding

- A. Understands how to teach phoneme-grapheme correspondence
- B. Understands methods for teaching phonics systematically, explicitly, and recursively
- C. Knows instructional methods for teaching common phonics patterns and rules (consonant digraphs, blends, diphthongs, schwa sound, syllable types, word families, etc.)
- D. Knows how to teach morphological analysis (i.e., affixes, roots, and base words)
- E. Knows how to teach syllable types in decoding multisyllabic words
- F. Is familiar with multisensory approaches for supporting student recognition of nondecodable/irregularly spelled words (i.e., was, listen, though, the, once)

III. Vocabulary and Fluency

- A. Understands ways to build, expand, and use expressive and receptive vocabulary
- B. Understands methods for teaching vocabulary systematically, explicitly, and repeatedly in multiple contexts
- C. Knows how to match an instructional method to word complexity
- D. Knows multiple approaches to teaching word solving, including the use of context clues and structural analysis
- E. Knows how to guide students to understand a wide variety of words (common, contextual, content-specific) through direct instruction and independent vocabulary learning
- F. Understands instructional methods to foster students' automaticity through accuracy, appropriate rate, and prosody
- G. Knows methods of supporting fluent reading behaviors at the phoneme, word, and passage level
- H. Knows how fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are interrelated

IV. Comprehension of Literary and Informational Text

- A. Understands how to support students' listening comprehension and its relationship to reading comprehension
- B. Knows how to support students' speaking and listening skills as they discuss texts
- C. Understands how to activate and build all students' background knowledge to increase comprehension
- D. Is familiar with methods for teaching comprehension systematically and explicitly to all learners
- E. Knows how metacognition guides students' development of monitoring their own comprehension and analysis of different types of text
- F. Is familiar with strategies to guide students' self-selection of appropriate texts to increase motivation and engagement
- G. Knows how to differentiate instruction, tasks, and materials (print and digital) that are appropriate and culturally responsive to all learners
- H. Understands how to teach the use of graphic and semantic organizers to support comprehension
- I. Knows how to teach the genres (i.e., poetry, prose, drama), structures (i.e., story elements), and features of literary texts
- J. Knows how to teach literary devices (i.e., figurative language, nuance of words, and alliteration)
- K. Understands strategies for supporting readers as they construct literal and inferential meaning, including author's use of language
- L. Understands how to teach the types (i.e., biography, how-to), structures (i.e., description, cause and effect, sequence), and features of informational texts
- M. Knows how to use technology to support students' ability to critically examine online resources and foster digital literacy, to personalize learning experiences for students of different needs, and to support active learning across content areas

V. Writing

A. Written Expression

1. Understands how to teach writing as a recursive process that supports self-evaluation and expression
2. Knows systematic, explicit methods to teach the steps of the writing process to all learners
3. Knows strategies for integrating reading and writing (i.e., summarizing, annotation)
4. Knows methods to use digital tools for communication, writing, collaboration, and publishing
5. Is familiar with the defining characteristics and appropriate instructional methods for teaching the various types of writing: informational/expository, argument/persuasive/opinion, and narrative

B. Spelling and Grammar

1. Knows methods to connect the teaching of both decoding and encoding as reciprocal skills
2. Knows how to take a systematic, explicit, multisensory, and recursive approach to spelling development
3. Understands methods for teaching the structure of written language, including the rules of grammar and mechanics

VI. Assessment and Instructional Decision Making (Constructed-Response Items)

- A. Developing emergent literacy learners (phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, and decoding/encoding)
- B. Supporting independent literacy learners (fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing)
- C. Responding to diverse learners (i.e., gifted, English learners, struggling readers and writers, and students with learning disabilities)

Included in ALL Categories:

Assessment—statement tying the purpose of assessment to driving instruction

- A. Understands how to use data to guide both individual instruction and create flexible groups
- B. Knows how to apply informal and formal methods (i.e., formative and summative) for assessing all essential elements of beginning literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing
- C. Knows how to monitor student progress by analyzing and interpreting formative assessment data to inform instruction
- D. Is familiar with the decision-making process that leads to the modification or accommodation of assessments based on the needs of diverse learners (i.e., gifted, English learners, struggling readers and writers, and students with learning disabilities)
- E. Is familiar with ways to integrate digital tools into the assessment process

2. Familiarize Yourself with Test Questions

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

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

Understanding Computer-Delivered Questions

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

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

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

- **Clicking more than one oval** to select answers from a list of choices.
- **Typing in an entry box.** When the answer is a number, you may be asked to enter a numerical answer. Some questions may have more than one place to enter a response.
- **Clicking check boxes.** You may be asked to click check boxes instead of an oval when more than one choice within a set of answers can be selected.
- **Clicking parts of a graphic.** In some questions, you will select your answers by clicking on a location (or locations) on a graphic such as a map or chart, as opposed to choosing your answer from a list.
- **Clicking on sentences.** In questions with reading passages, you may be asked to choose your answers by clicking on a sentence (or sentences) within the reading passage.
- **Dragging and dropping answer choices into targets on the screen.** You may be asked to select answers from a list of choices and drag your answers to the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting answer choices from a drop-down menu.** You may be asked to choose answers by selecting choices from a drop-down menu (e.g., to complete a sentence).

Remember that with every question you will get clear instructions.

Perhaps the best way to understand computer-delivered questions is to view the [Computer-delivered Testing Demonstration](#) on the Praxis web site to learn how a computer-delivered test works and see examples of some types of questions you may encounter.

Understanding Selected-Response Questions

Many selected-response questions begin with the phrase “which of the following.” Take a look at this example:

Which of the following is a flavor made from beans?

- (A) Strawberry
- (B) Cherry
- (C) Vanilla
- (D) Mint

How would you answer this question?

All of the answer choices are flavors. Your job is to decide which of the flavors is the one made from beans.

Try following these steps to select the correct answer.

- 1) **Limit your answer to the choices given.** You may know that chocolate and coffee are also flavors made from beans, but they are not listed. Rather than thinking of other possible answers, focus only on the choices given (“which of the following”).
- 2) **Eliminate incorrect answers.** You may know that strawberry and cherry flavors are made from fruit and that mint flavor is made from a plant. That leaves vanilla as the only possible answer.
- 3) **Verify your answer.** You can substitute “vanilla” for the phrase “which of the following” and turn the question into this statement: “Vanilla is a flavor made from beans.” This will help you be sure that your answer is correct. If you’re still uncertain, try substituting the other choices to see if they make sense. You may want to use this technique as you answer selected-response questions on the practice tests.

Try a more challenging example

The vanilla bean question is pretty straightforward, but you’ll find that more challenging questions have a similar structure. For example:

Entries in outlines are generally arranged according to which of the following relationships of ideas?

- (A) Literal and inferential
- (B) Concrete and abstract
- (C) Linear and recursive
- (D) Main and subordinate

You’ll notice that this example also contains the phrase “which of the following.” This phrase helps you determine that your answer will be a “relationship of ideas” from the choices provided. You are supposed to find the choice that describes how entries, or ideas, in outlines are related.

Sometimes it helps to put the question in your own words. Here, you could paraphrase the question in this way: “How are outlines usually organized?” Since the ideas in outlines usually appear as main ideas and subordinate ideas, the answer is (D).

QUICK TIP: Don't be intimidated by words you may not understand. It might be easy to be thrown by words like "recursive" or "inferential." Read carefully to understand the question and look for an answer that fits. An outline is something you are probably familiar with and expect to teach to your students. So slow down, and use what you know.

Watch out for selected-response questions containing "NOT," "LEAST," and "EXCEPT"

This type of question asks you to select the choice that does not fit. You must be very careful because it is easy to forget that you are selecting the negative. This question type is used in situations in which there are several good solutions or ways to approach something, but also a clearly wrong way.

How to approach questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages

When answering questions about graphs, tables, or reading passages, provide only the information that the questions ask for. In the case of a map or graph, you might want to read the questions first, and then look at the map or graph. In the case of a long reading passage, you might want to go ahead and read the passage first, noting places you think are important, and then answer the questions. Again, the important thing is to be sure you answer the questions as they refer to the material presented. So read the questions carefully.

How to approach unfamiliar formats

New question formats are developed from time to time to find new ways of assessing knowledge. Tests may include audio and video components, such as a movie clip or animation, instead of a map or reading passage. Other tests may allow you to zoom in on details in a graphic or picture.

Tests may also include interactive questions. These questions take advantage of technology to assess knowledge and skills in ways that standard selected-response questions cannot. If you see a format you are not familiar with, **read the directions carefully**. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

QUICK TIP: Don't make the questions more difficult than they are. Don't read for hidden meanings or tricks. There are no trick questions on *Praxis* tests. They are intended to be serious, straightforward tests of your knowledge.

Understanding Constructed-Response Questions

Constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by creating your own response to particular topics. Essays and short-answer questions are types of constructed-response questions.

For example, an essay question might present you with a topic and ask you to discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the opinion stated. You must support your position with specific reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Take a look at a few sample essay topics:

- "Celebrities have a tremendous influence on the young, and for that reason, they have a responsibility to act as role models."
- "We are constantly bombarded by advertisements—on television and radio, in newspapers and magazines, on highway signs, and the sides of buses. They have become too pervasive. It's time to put limits on advertising."
- "Advances in computer technology have made the classroom unnecessary, since students and teachers are able to communicate with one another from computer terminals at home or at work."

Keep these things in mind when you respond to a constructed-response question

- 1) **Answer the question accurately.** Analyze what each part of the question is asking you to do. If the question asks you to describe or discuss, you should provide more than just a list.
- 2) **Answer the question completely.** If a question asks you to do three distinct things in your response, you should cover all three things for the best score. Otherwise, no matter how well you write, you will not be awarded full credit.
- 3) **Answer the question that is asked.** Do not change the question or challenge the basis of the question. You will receive no credit or a low score if you answer another question or if you state, for example, that there is no possible answer.
- 4) **Give a thorough and detailed response.** You must demonstrate that you have a thorough understanding of the subject matter. However, your response should be straightforward and not filled with unnecessary information.
- 5) **Reread your response.** Check that you have written what you thought you wrote. Be sure not to leave sentences unfinished or omit clarifying information.

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

For tests that have constructed-response questions, more detailed information can be found on page 23.

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Computer Delivery

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 computer-delivered test interface. At the top, there is a dark header bar with the ETS PRAXIS logo on the left and a row of navigation buttons (Volume, Mark, Review, Help, Back, Next) on the right. Below the header, a light green bar shows the test title 'Reading & Language Arts CKT | Question 1 of 63' and the time '01:29:56' with a 'Hide Time' option. The main content area is white and 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 content area, a gray box contains the instruction: 'Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response.'

Sample Test Questions

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

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

1. A sixth-grade teacher selects several domain-specific vocabulary words from a textbook before starting a new chapter. In planning an instructional strategy, the teacher chooses the new vocabulary words because they are essential to understanding the new topic. An instructional technique that requires students to gain the deepest level of vocabulary knowledge is the most appropriate instructional technique for the teacher to select.

Based on the teacher’s goal, which of the following research-based techniques is best for the teacher to include in the instructional plan?

- (A) Having students create original sentences using the words and apply word meanings across contexts
- (B) Creating activities in which students categorize words and generate multiple meanings for each word
- (C) Presenting new vocabulary in an authentic context by asking students to use the words to complete framed sentences
- (D) Telling students to associate an unfamiliar word with a definition and a synonym or an antonym

2. A third-grade teacher has completed a running record and a spelling inventory for each member of the class. One student misread the words “big,” “chat,” and “pen” during the running record. On the spelling inventory, the student was able to successfully complete all beginning and ending consonants in CVC pattern words. Which of the following is the best instructional focus for the student?

- (A) Digraphs
- (B) Short vowels
- (C) Word-attack skills
- (D) Long vowels

3. A second-grade teacher is reading the text *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin to the class. The teacher reads the sentence, “The cows were growing impatient with the farmer.” The teacher stops reading after this sentence and says to the class, “Hmm... I wonder what the word ‘impatient’ means? I know that the farmer just got another note from the cows that said they won’t give any milk. I bet that makes the farmer really mad! I’m going to keep reading to see whether I can figure out what impatient means.” The teacher is using which of the following?

- (A) A miscue analysis
- (B) A semantic-feature analysis
- (C) A think-aloud strategy
- (D) A running record

4. Place the reading strategies in the list in order according to when the strategy is used: before, during, or after reading. Click and drag each strategy to the appropriately labeled box.

Summarizing
Self-monitoring
Setting a purpose

- 1. Before reading
- 2. During reading
- 3. After reading

5. Which of the following is the best way for a teacher to assess students’ phonological awareness?

(A) Saying the word “lamp” and asking students to come up with rhyming words

(B) Asking students to identify the letter at the beginning of the word “desk”

(C) Distributing the letter cards “b,” “a,” and “t” and asking students to order the letters to create a word

(D) Displaying the written word “cat” and asking students to sound it out as they tap each letter
6. Which of the following best identifies the long-range goal of the instructional technique used to support students’ learning?

(A) Providing direct instruction to help students learn the conventions of formal academic writing

(B) Supporting students’ ability to paraphrase a variety of facts that can be later used as a source in other writing assignments

(C) Fostering students’ critical-thinking skills and processing of key concepts and ideas in a content area

(D) Showing students that writing can be used to initiate oral discussions and generate a diversity of views about an author’s purpose

A sixth-grade teacher engages students in an activity that integrates reading and writing in a social studies unit of study. In the note-taking format shown, students take notes on the right side of the organizer as they read part of a chapter in the textbook. When the reading is complete, the students summarize the main ideas and read the notes they have recorded to develop questions that the notes would answer.

Questions Answered by the Notes	Notes
Summary of Notes	

7. Which of the following text-dependent questions best focuses students to think about the craft and structure of a text?

(A) What did the main character do when he saw the letter? Why?

(B) Have you ever read another story like this? How are they similar?

(C) How has Ma and Karin’s relationship changed over the course of the story? What changed it?

(D) How did the author describe Bradley’s uncle? Why did the author choose to describe him that way?

8. A dialogue between a teacher and a student follows.

Teacher: What is a nocturnal animal?

Student: An animal that stays awake at night.

Which of the following probing questions best ensures that the student understands the vocabulary with no misconceptions?

- (A) Can you give me an example of a nocturnal animal?

(B) Does a nocturnal animal have any special characteristics?

(C) What is a diurnal animal?

(D) Where do nocturnal animals live?

9. A fourth-grade teacher presents the word “mobile” to students when discussing cell phones and states that sometimes a cell phone is called a “mobile phone.” The teacher then presents the class with the words “automobile” and “mobilize” and asks them to explain, based on their knowledge of these two words, why it makes sense to refer to a cell phone as a “mobile phone.” The teacher is focusing instruction on which of the following?
- (A) Context clues
 - (B) Letter-sound correspondence
 - (C) Morphology
 - (D) Syntactic knowledge
10. Which of the following actions best reflects an understanding of the research on teaching the alphabetic principle to young students?
- (A) Teaching students the letters and their corresponding sounds in alphabetical order
 - (B) Introducing students to similar-sounding or similar-looking letters in close succession
 - (C) Introducing students to the long vowel sounds before introducing them to the short vowel sounds
 - (D) Teaching students continuous vowel and consonant sounds before teaching stops, or clipped sounds
11. A fourth-grade teacher works with a group of English learners (ELs) on academic vocabulary words. The students discuss the words “house,” “bill,” and “state,” which appear in a social studies text. Before the students read the text, the teacher asks them to write down the definition they already know for each word. Which of the following strategies will best help the students determine the meaning of the vocabulary words while reading?
- (A) Underlining the vocabulary words as they read and using the text around the words to figure out the alternate definitions
 - (B) Looking up the vocabulary words in a dictionary and writing down the definitions on a piece of paper to refer to while reading
 - (C) Locating synonyms for the vocabulary words in a thesaurus and replacing them in the text with similar terms
 - (D) Examining the part of speech for each vocabulary word and using it to help determine its meaning in context
12. A class prepares to read a science text about an unfamiliar, complex process. The best way the teacher can support students’ successful reading of the text is to
- (A) guide students to continue reading when they come to an unfamiliar word in order to search for context clues
 - (B) assign a small portion of text, and then pause for discussion and student questions before moving on
 - (C) make dictionaries available to students so that they can look up the meanings of challenging vocabulary words before reading each section of the text
 - (D) ask students to do a quick write-up about the process using their background knowledge, and then ask them to share their writing with a partner

13. A student demonstrates mastery in spelling the CVC and CVCe pattern words. The next spelling word pattern that will be focused on during explicit instruction are vowel digraphs. Which of the following instructional activities best supports directed instruction of vowel digraphs?
- (A) Picture sorts
 - (B) Elkonin boxes
 - (C) Open-word sorts
 - (D) Closed-word sorts
14. After reading a short story with the class, a teacher asks students to write about two ways that Coyote is clever. A student, Devon, responds as follows.
- The first way hes clever is that he can Shot bowinerows The Next way hes clever is that He noes howto get to the moon
- Which of the following best describes Devin's writing skill?
- (A) Devon uses evidence from the text and knows that each syllable of a word contains a vowel sound.
 - (B) Devon spells most high-frequency words correctly and inserts spaces between individual words.
 - (C) Devon understands one-to-one letter-sound correspondence and knows how to apply capitalization and punctuation rules.
 - (D) Devon shows an understanding of story structure and knows how an author uses details to portray characters.
15. Which of the following is most appropriate for a teacher to use when organizing flexible groups for reading instruction?
- (A) Current standardized reading assessment results when developing long-range goals
 - (B) Results from a variety of assessments when forming balanced mixed-ability groups
 - (C) Formal and informal measures when targeting students' short-term common needs
 - (D) A teacher-prepared survey when determining students' authentic reading interests

16. **Example #1**

- a. Dylan ate lunch at Joe's Pizzeria.
- b. Joe's Pizzeria is Dylan's favorite restaurant to go to on weekends.

Dylan ate lunch at Joe's Pizzeria, his favorite restaurant to go to on weekends.

Example # 2

- a. Ms. Tyler is Sally's favorite teacher.
- b. Ms. Tyler is kind and always fair to everyone in the class.

Ms. Tyler, Sally's favorite teacher, is kind and always fair to everyone in the class.

A teacher engages students in a discussion of how the two sentences in each of the preceding examples are combined into one sentence. The teacher's goal can best be identified as providing instruction in which of the following rules of grammar?

- (A) Complete sentences contain a subject, a verb, and a stand-alone idea.
- (B) Appositives are modifying nouns or phrases that eliminate wordiness and redundancy.
- (C) Dangling modifiers can be avoided by writing in the active rather than the passive voice.
- (D) Parallelism means that phrases in the same sentence have the same grammatical structure.

17. A teacher sets up an intervention lesson using a three-pocket chart holder for a student struggling with spelling. The teacher chooses the word “fog” because it appears in a picture book that is familiar to the student. The teacher then places an alphabet card representing individual letters of the word in each pocket and flips the cards over so the letters do not show. The teacher then asks the student to find the correct sound-letter placement of the word by pronouncing a sound and asking questions such as “Where is the /g/ in fog?”

The activity primarily targets the student’s understanding of which of the following?

- (A) High-frequency sight words
 - (B) Short vowel sounds
 - (C) Initial consonant sounds
 - (D) Phoneme segmentation
18. As students read a complex piece of text, a teacher asks them to record their reactions in the margin, including their questions, summaries, and personal connections. The primary purpose of the activity is to ensure that students
- (A) develop strong sequencing skills
 - (B) apply word-analysis strategies effectively
 - (C) identify the organizational structure of the text
 - (D) think strategically about what and why they are reading
19. During a reading conference, a teacher notices that a student is unable to answer basic comprehension questions about a book after reading it. Which of the following actions is best for the teacher to take first?
- (A) Preparing an outline of the plot to assist the student in recalling important details
 - (B) Encouraging the student to reread the parts of the book that were difficult to understand
 - (C) Conducting a mini-lesson on active reading strategies the student can use while reading
 - (D) Administering an informal assessment to identify the skills with which the student is struggling

20. A student spells the following words correctly: “chat,” “fish,” “shape,” and “church.” Which of the following spelling patterns has the student mastered?

- (A) Digraphs
- (B) Blends
- (C) Short vowels
- (D) Long vowels

21. Which of the following instructional strategies best completes the chart?

Reading Comprehension	Reading Fluency	Writing	Vocabulary
Directed reading-thinking activity	Shared reading	Sentence combining	Word hunts
Inquiry chart	Partner reading	Paragraph hamburger	Possible sentences
Think pair-share	?	Revising	Word walls

- (A) Semantic feature analysis
 - (B) Brainstorming
 - (C) Readers’ theater
 - (D) Anticipation guide
22. During a lesson on how to conduct online research, a teacher introduces guidelines to students about how to determine whether information is credible. Which of the following statements describes the most important guiding principle of assessing the reliability of sources?
- (A) Using only primary sources for research
 - (B) Evaluating sources based on their authority, relevance, and accuracy
 - (C) Examining the information to ensure it is thorough enough for the topic
 - (D) Incorporating resources that are blogs or wikis, no matter the type of research

23. A first-grade teacher engages students in phonemic awareness activities. Students have worked on segmenting and blending words and are now working on phoneme deletion. Which of the following activities best incorporates the target concept?
- (A) Asking students to guess which classmate's name will be said by enunciating the first phoneme only and repeating several times
 - (B) Directing students to look at picture cards and telling them to identify one word in a series of four containing a different vowel sound
 - (C) Presenting students with a colored tile that represents one phoneme and adding a different colored tile representing a new sound
 - (D) Showing students a word made of three different colored tiles containing three phonemes and removing one colored tile to create a new word

Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (A). When students create their own sentences using domain-specific vocabulary and then apply the word meanings in multiple contexts, they have achieved the deepest level of understanding a word. Choice (B) is incorrect because categorizing words and generating multiple meanings for them requires comprehension of the domain-specific words but not at the deepest level of understanding. Choice (C) is incorrect because having students use domain-specific words to fill in the blanks in framed sentences requires only a minimum level of knowledge. Choice (D) is incorrect because associating an unfamiliar word with a definition and a synonym or an antonym requires only a minimum level of knowledge.

2. The correct answer is (B). The student misread three short-vowel words during the running record and was able to correctly identify beginning and ending consonants in CVC pattern words. Choice (A) is incorrect because there is only one word from the running record that contains a digraph; therefore, a pattern has not developed with this word feature. Choice (C) is incorrect because while it is known that this student is not able to read the three CVC pattern words, it is not known if the student tried to sound them out. It is known from the spelling inventory that the student does understand beginning and ending consonants. Choice (D) is incorrect because there was no information given about long vowels from these two assessments.

3. The correct answer is (C). The teacher is using a think-aloud strategy to talk through how to figure out unfamiliar words in connected text. Choice (A) is incorrect because a miscue analysis is completed by the teacher when a student reads a passage for an informal reading inventory. Choice (B) is incorrect because a semantic-feature analysis is a type of graphic organizer and is used to support comprehension of text. Choice (D) is incorrect because a running record is something that a teacher gives a student while he or she is reading.

4. The correct answers are (3), (2), and (1). 1. Before Reading: (3) Setting a purpose for reading is a before-reading strategy. 2. During Reading: (2) Self-monitoring is a strategy that is used while reading. 3. After Reading: (1) Summarizing is a strategy that occurs after reading has taken place.

5. The correct answer is (A). Phonological awareness refers to the recognition that words are comprised of sound units, or phonemes, and can be broken down into syllables. Choices (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because a phonemic awareness assessment focuses on identification of the skills of phoneme matching,

isolation, blending, and segmentation.

6. The correct answer is (C). The activity described is known as the Cornell note-taking system, which is a system for taking, organizing, and reviewing notes. The activity asks students to take notes on important information in a text, develop questions that may be asked related to the notes, and then write a summary of the content. The teacher's primary goal in engaging students in the activity that integrates reading and writing is to help students develop critical-thinking skills and engage in the processing of key ideas and concepts. Choice (A) is incorrect because the scenario does not indicate that the teacher is providing direct instruction in the conventions of formal academic writing. Choice (B) is incorrect because although students are most likely encouraged to paraphrase information they read when writing key ideas, the scenario does not indicate that the teacher plans to use the experience of integrating reading and writing as a springboard for future writing projects. Choice (D) is incorrect because although the activity is effective in initiating oral discussion about content among peers, it is incorrect to indicate that the students are discussing the author's purpose.

7. The correct answer is (D). Asking about the author's word choices encourages students to think about the author's intentions and about how the author's word choices affect the reading experience. Choices (A), (B), and (C) are incorrect because these text-dependent questions are intended to focus the reader on gaining greater understanding of the text or making judgments about the text.

8. The correct answer is (B). Asking about special characteristics will uncover any misconceptions in understanding the term "nocturnal." The characteristics the students give will lead the teacher into further clarification or allow him or her to move on to other vocabulary. Choice (A) is incorrect because asking for examples will not clear up misconceptions. Choice (C) is incorrect because asking what a diurnal animal is does not clarify misconceptions about the term "nocturnal." Choice (D) is incorrect because asking where nocturnal animals live will not help the teacher determine whether the student understands the term "nocturnal." The student could provide most settings where nocturnal animals can live with very little understanding of the term.

9. The correct answer is (C). The teacher is having students deduce the meaning of the word "mobile" using morphology. Morphology uses roots and the knowledge of two words that contain the root "mobile." Choice (A) is incorrect because context clues are clues

to the meaning of a word contained in text that surrounds it. Choice (B) is incorrect because the teacher is not focusing on letter-sound correspondence. Choice (D) is incorrect because syntactic knowledge focuses on the order of the words in a sentence.

10. The correct answer is (D). Continuous vowel or consonant sounds can be prolonged or stretched out when they are pronounced and are easier to say without distortion. Voiced stop sounds are not as easy to pronounce in isolation without a vowel sound. Choice (A) is incorrect because introducing letter sounds in alphabetical order limits the number of words the students can form, thus limiting their ability to practice using the alphabetic principle to read and write. Research generally agrees that the earliest relationships introduced should be those that enable students to begin reading words as soon as possible. That is, the relationships chosen should have high utility. Choice (B) is incorrect because the simultaneous introduction of auditorily or visually similar sounds and letters should be avoided. Choice (C) is incorrect because research does not support the effectiveness of introducing students to all long vowel sounds before short vowels.

11. The correct answer is (A). By first brainstorming the familiar definitions of the words and then using the context of the piece of academic writing to learn another definition for each word, students are assimilating the idea that many words in English have more than one meaning. If they are reading and a word doesn't quite make sense as they know it, they need to seek out alternate definitions to help the text make sense, and using context clues is an excellent strategy for this purpose. Choice (B) is incorrect because while looking up the words in a dictionary may help the students, it is not the most efficient method. Furthermore, many of the given words have multiple definitions, beyond even what the assignment requires, and that is confusing for many students, especially English learners (ELs). Using context clues is a more valuable life skill as students will not always have a dictionary at their disposal. Choice (C) is incorrect because similar to choice (B), looking up the words in a thesaurus to replace them with synonyms is not an efficient use of time or reading strategies. Furthermore, when used in a social studies context, the words listed have a specific application and students need to learn them in the social studies context as they are. Choice (D) is incorrect because while a word's part of speech can sometimes add to the context clues, the words given in the example remain the same part of speech for the familiar version and its social studies application, so it is not the best strategy to use for this purpose.

12. The correct answer is (B). By assigning the class a small section of a complex science text and pausing for discussion, the teacher will allow students to monitor their own comprehension and employ fix-up strategies to clarify any misunderstandings. Choices (A) and (C) are incorrect because weaknesses in word-level processes hinder comprehension, but neither of these choices is the best answer. Choice (D) is incorrect because doing a write-up activating prior knowledge about the science process is more likely to be a prereading activity and is not the most effective strategy to support students while reading the text.

13. The correct answer is (D). Closed-word sorts are teacher-directed word-sorting activities that support students' word-pattern learning. The teacher-provided words introduce students to the spelling pattern that is being focused on during the unit. Choice (A) is incorrect because picture sorts focus on phonemic-awareness skills. Choice (B) is incorrect because use of Elkonin boxes is a phonemic-awareness activity. Choice (C) is incorrect because an open-word sort is not a teacher-directed activity.

14. The correct answer is (A). The writing sample shows the student draws on the text for evidence of Coyote's cleverness, and an examination of the sample supports the claim that the student understands that each syllable in a word needs to contain at least one vowel. Choice (B) is incorrect because the sample contains several spelling errors, and individual words are not consistently separated by spaces. Choice (C) is incorrect because the sample does not adhere to basic capitalization or punctuation rules. Choice (D) is incorrect because the sample does not address story structure; it provides details about Coyote.

15. The correct answer is (C). Flexible grouping is a form of differentiated instruction in which a teacher uses a combination of formal and informal assessments and observations to meet the short-term needs of individual students. Based on data, small groups of students are formed, and the teacher provides systematic and explicit instruction in identified skill areas. How long and how often the teacher meets with a group depends on common student needs. Choice (A) is incorrect because current standardized reading assessment results are only one measure to consider when forming flexible groups, which is not a long-range strategy. Choice (B) is incorrect because in flexible grouping, the teacher forms groups based on similar instructional needs. Choice (D) is incorrect because flexible grouping is used to meet individual students' current needs in specific skill areas. The model does not address reading interests.

16. The correct answer is (B). In the combined sentence in each example, an appositive is used as a modifier, thereby reducing the repetition and wordiness of the two short sentences. Choice (A) is incorrect because all sentences in the examples are complete sentences. Choice (C) is incorrect because no sentence in the examples contains a dangling or misplaced modifier. Choice (D) is incorrect because the sentences in the examples do not present any problem with parallel construction.

17. The correct answer is (D). The activity focuses on phoneme segmentation, an aspect of phonemic awareness. Phonemic segmentation requires students to determine the position of sounds in words. Choice (A) is incorrect because the activity focuses more on the identification of sounds than it does on the retention of vocabulary. Choices (B) and (C) are incorrect because the activity focuses on all sounds in the word and not just short vowel sounds or initial consonant sounds.

18. The correct answer is (D). Good readers are extremely active as they read. When students reading a complex piece of text respond in writing by asking questions, summarizing, and making personal connections, they are thinking strategically about what and why they are reading. Through annotation, students create a visual record of their thoughts while making sense of the text. Choices (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because sequencing, applying word-analysis strategies, and identifying text organization are necessary but not sufficient by themselves to reach a deep level of engagement and comprehension of complex text.

19. The correct answer is (D). Administering an informal assessment to identify the skills with which the student is struggling is the best first step to help the teacher provide guided instruction in the area the student needs most. All of the other choices are strategies to use after performing an informal assessment to find the skill level of the student.

20. The correct answer is (A). Each of the words contains a digraph either at the beginning or end of the word. Choice (B) is incorrect because none of these words contain a blend. Blends and digraphs are commonly confused. Choice (C) is incorrect because the word “church” contains an r-controlled vowel, not a short vowel. Choice (D) is incorrect because only one word contains a long vowel: the word “shape.”

21. The correct answer is (C). Facilitating a readers’ theater is an effective strategy for improving fluency skills. Choice (A) is incorrect because semantic feature analysis is used to work on vocabulary skills, not fluency. Choice (B) is incorrect because brainstorming is

used to help students struggling with writing content. Choice (D) is incorrect because an anticipation guide is used to strengthen comprehension.

22. The correct answer is (B). Students must determine who created the Web site and whether it gives them useful and accurate information before they can use the source as an effective means of research. Choice (A) is incorrect because primary sources are not the only sources that can be used for effective research. Choice (C) is incorrect because, even if the source is not completely thorough on the topic, students can use it as a source of information. They can look to other sources for further in-depth information on their topic. Choice (D) is incorrect because blogs and wikis can be used, depending on the kind of information needed. Blogs and wikis are not always reliable but shouldn’t be eliminated in the search for information.

23. The correct answer is (D). Looking at a series of three colored tiles and removing one of them forms a new word using the skill of deletion. Choice (A) is incorrect because enunciating the initial phoneme of a student’s name, repeating it several times, and asking students to guess whose name will be said is a phoneme-isolation activity. Choice (B) is incorrect because the ability to look at a set of picture cards and name which one contains a different vowel sound is a phonemic categorization activity instead of a phoneme-deletion activity. Choice (C) is incorrect because using different colored tiles with different sounds assigned to them to form words is a blending activity.

About the Constructed-Response Questions

The Teaching Reading test consists of three constructed-response questions that require the candidate to demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and theory of reading to specific students' needs and classroom scenarios.

Each task will be scored on a 0–3 scale using the following general scoring guide:

General Scoring Guide for Constructed-Response Questions

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 understanding shown.
- Provides a strong explanation that is well supported by relevant evidence.

Score of 2

The response demonstrates a basic or 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 basic or general knowledge of concepts, theories, facts, procedures, or methodologies relevant to the question. Any errors do not detract from the general understanding shown.
- Provides a basic explanation that is adequately supported by relevant evidence.

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.
 - Provides no explanation or an explanation that is weak and inadequately supported by evidence.

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.

Sample Questions Directions

Read the scenario and then respond to all parts of the task. The suggested time to spend on this question is 10 minutes.

Constructed-Response Question with Sample Responses and Annotations

Mr. Jimenez, a sixth-grade science teacher, teaches a diverse group of 24 students. Eight of Mr. Jimenez' students read at a fourth-grade level and often need instructional support in reading informational materials. Six students are proficient in fluently reading and comprehending the science text and curriculum-based printed materials. The remaining ten students are reading more than two years below grade level and have significant difficulty in reading the science textbook with fluency. These students struggle in particular with decoding, understanding the meaning of unfamiliar content-specific words, and recalling what they have read.

Task 1: Based on information given in the scenario above, identify and describe **two** specific ways that Mr. Jimenez can group students that would best address their specific needs. Be sure to include in your response the benefit of each grouping practice in further developing students' literacy skills related to science instruction.

Task 2: Identify and describe the purpose of **two** differentiated instructional strategies that Mr. Jimenez can use to improve students' learning of print-based materials related to science.

Sample Response that Received a Score of 3

Task 1: One grouping practice that Mr. Jimenez can implement in the classroom is to create several heterogeneous small groups of 4—6 4 to 6 students, each of which are comprised of a mix of the eight students reading at the fourth-grade level and the six students who are proficient at reading materials in science. The students in each small mixed-ability group can work cooperatively as a team in completing a content-based assignment with guided support from Mr. Jimenez. In this grouping structure, all students can benefit from having shared responsibility in coordinating the work, completing a task together, and learning from each other.

A second grouping structure that Mr. Jimenez can use to meet the needs of diverse students in his classroom is through implementing a jigsaw model. In this grouping practice for example, Mr. Jimenez can select a current scientific article with a readability level slightly higher than students' reading level, break the information into sections, and ask each of the six students with proficient reading skills in the group to learn a section and then teach the information to other group members. This grouping strategy allows each group member to be challenged, become an "expert" in certain areas, assume responsibility for teaching others, and improve the listening and communication skills of all group members.

Task 2: To differentiate instruction by supporting the ten students who are having difficulty decoding and understanding content-specific words, Mr. Jimenez can make a list of Tier 3 words in a text students are expected to read before instruction in the material begins. He can use the Frayer Model as a technique to develop students' understanding of the difficult words. The Frayer Model is a graphic organizer with four sections that requires a student to write a definition for each word, its characteristics, and examples and nonexamples of how the word is used in context. This preteaching strategy is likely to be very helpful to students' comprehension when they see the difficult vocabulary in sustained reading activities.

A second way to differentiate instruction for students who need support in comprehending science-based materials is for Mr. Jimenez to use an anticipation guide as a prereading activity. An anticipation guide is a series of questions (statements) related to a text that ask students to either agree or disagree with each idea based on their prior knowledge of the topic. As students read a text, they return to the anticipation guide to either confirm or change their original evaluation of the statement. The purpose of engaging students in this activity is to focus their attention on what they think they already know about a particular topic and then remain focused on the information as they read and determine the extent to which they can verify or change their ideas as they learn new content.

Commentary on a Response with a Score of 3

This sample received a score of 3 because every part of both tasks is clearly and specifically addressed. In task 1, the test taker identifies and thoroughly describes two grouping practices intended to meet the needs of a diverse student population: forming heterogeneous groups and grouping students through the use of a

jigsaw model. The benefits of each grouping structure is also appropriately and clearly identified in the response. In task 2, the test taker identifies and clearly describes two strategies and the purposes of each that Mr. Jimenez can use to differentiate instruction: using the Frayer Model to provide explicit instruction in content-based vocabulary and using an anticipation guide as a way to support students with comprehension difficulties when engaged in reading curriculum-based materials in science. This response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction.

Sample Response that Received a Score of 2

Mr. Jimenez teaches a class with a wide range of student strengths and weaknesses.

One strategy he can use to group students for instruction is to implement peer tutoring groups. In this technique, the teacher can assign a student with problems comprehending scientific concepts with a higher-performing student. Together the pair can work together to successfully complete an assigned task. This strategy gives extra support and guidance to the lower-performing student in learning difficult content, and it helps the higher-performing student in reinforcing his or her learning and assuming responsibility for aiding a peer.

Mr. Jimenez can also use flexible grouping to meet his students' specific learning needs. Based on current classroom assessments, he can organize students into small groups on a temporary basis.

There are many techniques Mr. Jimenez can use in the classroom to differentiate instruction that will most appropriately meet students' needs. For example, one strategy could be to form small groups based on student interest in a particular aspect of science instruction. This technique would be very motivating to students and increase their engagement in reading science materials.

Also, Mr. Jimenez can use the concept of curriculum compacting to meet the needs of several of his more capable students.

Commentary on a Response with a Score of 2

This sample received a score of 2 because most parts of the question are addressed but at a general level. In task 1, the test taker identifies two ways Mr. Jimenez can group students for instruction based on their specific needs: peer tutoring groups and flexible grouping. The sample provides a description of each technique but does not provide an explanation of the benefit of flexible grouping. In task 2, the test taker gives two differentiated-instruction strategies: forming groups based on individual student interest and using curriculum compacting as ways to provide instruction. The test taker does not provide a clear description or the purpose of the concept of curriculum compacting. This response demonstrates a general understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.

Sample Response that Received a Score of 1

Mr. Jimenez has many students who are reading at different levels. He should teach skills students need to read science materials to the whole class. Mr. Jimenez should talk to other teachers in his school to get new ideas about how to teach students who don't have the same reading skills.

Mr. Jimenez can write different lesson plans to meet the needs of different students. Some may need help with decoding words and others may have trouble comprehending what they read since science has many ideas that a lot of students don't have knowledge of at the beginning of a lesson.

Commentary on a Response with a Score of 1

This response received a score of 1 because some parts of the question were answered at a weak or limited level. The response does not address any part of task 1, i.e. that is, two ways of grouping students to meet their specific needs in reading science-based information. Task 2 is partially addressed. The test taker identifies the need for the teacher to develop different lesson plans based on specific student needs, e.g. for example, word recognition and comprehension. This response demonstrates a weak or limited understanding of the elements of reading and reading instruction relevant to the question.

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 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. 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.
- 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 42.

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 31 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 31, 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 13.
- **Prepare your presentation for the group.** When it's your turn to present, prepare something that is more than a lecture. Write two or three original questions to pose to the group. Practicing writing actual questions can help you better understand the topics covered on the test as well as the types of questions you will encounter on the test. It will also give other members of the group extra practice at answering questions.

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

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

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

5. Develop Your Study Plan

Develop a personalized study plan and schedule

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

Use this worksheet to:

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

Praxis Test Name (Test Code): Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading (5712)
Test Date: 9/15/15

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

(continued on next page)

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

Use this worksheet to:

-

Test Date: _____

[illegible]

6. Review Study Topics

Detailed study topics with questions for discussion

Using the Study Topics That Follow

The Teaching Reading: Elementary 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 will help improve your understanding of fundamental concepts and may 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. Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy

- A. Understands instructional methods for teaching phonological awareness (recognition of rhyme and alliteration; segmenting, blending, manipulation of syllables as well as onset and rime)
- B. Understands instructional methods for teaching phonemic awareness, both basic (e.g., segmenting and blending) and advanced (e.g., deletion, substitution)
- C. Knows ways to develop students' expressive and receptive language skills
- D. Knows instructional methods to teach beginning readers the concepts about print such as directionality, return sweep, parts of a book, and the form and function of print
- E. Understands instructional strategies to help emergent readers fluently identify upper- and lowercase letters in various fonts

Discussion areas: Phonological and Phonemic Awareness including Emergent Literacy

- What are ways that teachers can model the rules of Standard English while respecting regional and dialectal variations?
- What are some instructional strategies for teaching letter recognition?
- How can students' print awareness be assessed?
- At which age ranges should the various phonological skills be acquired?
- What does the term "phonemic awareness" mean?
- How is phonemic awareness related to phonological awareness?

II. Phonics and Decoding

- A. Understands how to teach phoneme-grapheme correspondence

- B. Understands methods for teaching phonics systematically, explicitly, and recursively
- C. Knows instructional methods for teaching common phonics patterns and rules (consonant digraphs, blends, diphthongs, schwa sound, syllable types, word families, etc.)
- D. Knows how to teach morphological analysis (i.e., affixes, roots, and base words)
- E. Knows how to teach syllable types in decoding multisyllabic words
- F. Is familiar with multisensory approaches for supporting student recognition of nondecodable/irregularly spelled words (i.e., was, listen, though, the, once)

Discussion areas: Phonics and Decoding

- What does it mean for instruction to be explicit, systematic, and recursive?
- What are some of the common phonics patterns beginning readers need to learn?
- What are the most common syllable types?
- What is the relationship between phonemic awareness and the development of decoding and encoding skills?
- What is the difference between phonics and phonological awareness?
- What role do decodable text, writing practice, and spelling practice play in reinforcing specific phonics skills?

III. Vocabulary and Fluency

- A. Understands ways to build, expand, and use expressive and receptive vocabulary
- B. Understands methods for teaching vocabulary systematically, explicitly, and repeatedly in multiple contexts
- C. Knows how to match an instructional method to word complexity
- D. Knows multiple approaches to teaching word solving, including the use of context clues and structural analysis
- E. Knows how to guide students to understand a wide variety of words (common, contextual, content-specific) through direct instruction and independent vocabulary learning

- F. Understands instructional methods to foster students' automaticity through accuracy, appropriate rate, and prosody
- G. Knows methods of supporting fluent reading behaviors at the phoneme, word, and passage level
- H. Knows how fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are interrelated

Discussion areas: Vocabulary and Fluency

- What criteria should be used when selecting words for vocabulary instruction?
- How can teachers model the use of context as a strategy to confirm word meaning?
- How do common prefixes, suffixes, and roots affect the meaning of English words?
- What instructional strategies can be used to improve oral reading fluency?
- What is the relationship between fluency and comprehension?

IV. Comprehension of Literary and Informational Text

- A. Understands how to support students' listening comprehension and its relationship to reading comprehension
- B. Knows how to support students' speaking and listening skills as they discuss texts
- C. Understands how to activate and build all students' background knowledge to increase comprehension
- D. Is familiar with methods for teaching comprehension systematically and explicitly to all learners
- E. Knows how metacognition guides students' development of monitoring their own comprehension and analysis of different types of text
- F. Is familiar with strategies to guide students' self-selection of appropriate texts to increase motivation and engagement
- G. Knows how to differentiate instruction, tasks, and materials (print and digital) that are appropriate and culturally responsive to all learners

- H. Understands how to teach the use of graphic and semantic organizers to support comprehension
- I. Knows how to teach the genres (i.e., poetry, prose, drama), structures (i.e., story elements), and features of literary texts
- J. Knows how to teach literary devices (i.e., figurative language, nuance of words, and alliteration)
- K. Understands strategies for supporting readers as they construct literal and inferential meaning, including author's use of language
- L. Understands how to teach the types (i.e., biography, how-to), structures (i.e., description, cause and effect, sequence), and features of informational texts
- M. Knows how to use technology to support students' ability to critically examine online resources and foster digital literacy, to personalize learning experiences for students of different needs, and to support active learning across content areas

Discussion areas: Comprehension and Informational Text

- How can writing activities be used to support reading comprehension?
- In what ways do students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds affect comprehension?
- What factors should be taken into account when choosing texts for students?
- What is the relationship between listening and reading comprehension?
- What is metacognition? Why is it important for strategic reading?
- Why does the explicit teaching of the structures and features of texts support comprehension?

V. Writing

A. Written Expression

- 1. Understands how to teach writing as a recursive process that supports self-evaluation and expression
- 2. Knows systematic, explicit methods to teach the steps of the writing process to all learners

3. Knows strategies for integrating reading and writing (i.e., summarizing, annotation)
4. Knows methods to use digital tools for communication, writing, collaboration, and publishing
5. Is familiar with the defining characteristics and appropriate instructional methods for teaching the various types of writing: informational/expository, argument/persuasive/opinion, and narrative

B. Spelling and Grammar

1. Knows methods to connect the teaching of both decoding and encoding as reciprocal skills
2. Knows how to take a systematic, explicit, multisensory, and recursive approach to spelling development
3. Understands methods for teaching the structure of written language, including the rules of grammar and mechanics

Discussion areas: Writing

- What does it mean that writing is a recursive process?
- What are the stages of spelling development? How can teachers help students move to the next stage?
- How does writing support reading development?
- What are the defining characteristics of , informational/expository, argument/persuasive/opinion, and narrative writing?
- What are some ways teachers can use technology and digital tools to support students at every stage of the writing process?

Discussion areas: Assessment and Instructional Decision Making

- How can teachers use assessment data to inform their instruction?
- What are some ways teachers can modify instruction for students with diverse learning profiles?

VI. Assessment and Instructional Decision Making (Constructed-Response Items)

- A. Developing emergent literacy learners (phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, and decoding/encoding)
- B. Supporting independent literacy learners (fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing)
- C. Responding to diverse learners (i.e., gifted, English learners, struggling readers and writers, and students with learning disabilities)

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*® 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/plne_accommodations/.

What if I have a disability or other health-related need?

The following accommodations are available for *Praxis* test takers who meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act disability requirements:

- Extended testing time
- Additional rest breaks
- Separate testing room
- Writer/recorder of answers
- Test reader
- Sign language interpreter for spoken directions only
- Perkins Braille
- Braille slate and stylus
- Printed copy of spoken directions
- Oral interpreter
- Audio test
- Braille test
- Large print test book
- Large print answer sheet
- Listening section omitted

For more information on these accommodations, visit www.ets.org/praxis/register/disabilities.

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.

You can find additional information on available resources for test takers with disabilities or health-related needs at 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)
- 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)
- 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.

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 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.

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.

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 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.

Put your scores in perspective

Your score report indicates:

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

If you have taken the same *Praxis* test or other *Praxis* tests in the last 10 years, your score report also lists the highest score you earned on each test taken.

Content category scores and score interpretation

Questions on the *Praxis* tests are categorized by content. To help you in future study or in preparing to retake the test, your score report shows how many raw points you earned in each content category. Compare your “raw points earned” with the maximum points you could have earned (“raw points available”). The greater the difference, the greater the opportunity to improve your score by further study.

Score scale changes

ETS updates *Praxis* tests on a regular basis to ensure they accurately measure the knowledge and skills that are required for licensure. When tests are updated, the meaning of the score scale may change, so requirements may vary between the new and previous versions. All scores for previous, discontinued tests are valid and reportable for 10 years, provided that your state or licensing agency still accepts them.

These resources may also help you interpret your scores:

- *Understanding Your Praxis Scores* (PDF), found at www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand
- *Praxis Passing Scores*, found at <https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/>
- State requirements, found at 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.

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 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 and click on your score report. If you do not already have a *Praxis* account, you must create one to view your scores.

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

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

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

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

www.ets.org/praxis/testprep

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

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