

The Praxis® Study Companion

Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing

5722



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 40).

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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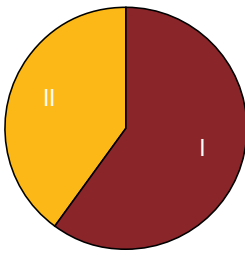
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1. Learn About Your Test

Learn about the specific test you will be taking

Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing (5722)

Test at a Glance			
Test Name	Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing		
Test Code	5722		
Time	100 minutes, divided into a 40-minute selected-response section and two 30-minute essay sections		
Number of Questions	40 selected-response questions and two essay questions		
Format	Selected-response questions involving usage, sentence correction, revision in context, and research skills; 2 essay topics as the basis for writing samples		
Test Delivery	Computer delivered		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions*	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Text Types, Purposes, and Production II. Language and Research Skills for Writing	6–12 selected-response 2 essay 28–34 selected-response	60% 40%
* Includes both scored and unscored (pretest) questions. Depending on the number of pretest questions included in each scoring category, the total number of questions in that category may vary from one form of the test to another.			

Note: On your score report, points earned on the selected-response section of the test are reported separately from points earned on the essay sections of the test.

About This Test

The Core Academic Skills for Educators Test in Writing measures academic skills in writing needed to prepare successfully for a career in education. All skills assessed have been identified as needed for college and career readiness, in alignment with the Common Core State Standards for Writing.

The Writing test is 100 minutes in length and has three separately timed sections: a 40-minute selected-response section containing 40 selected-response questions and two 30-minute essay sections that each require a response based on an essay topic. This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

The selected-response section is designed to measure examinees' ability to use standard written English correctly and effectively. This section is divided into four parts: usage, sentence correction, revision in context, and research skills. In the usage questions, examinees are asked to recognize errors in mechanics, in structural

and grammatical relationships, and in idiomatic expressions or word choice. They are also asked to recognize sentences that have no errors and that meet the conventions of standard written English. The sentence correction questions require examinees to select, from among the choices presented, the best way to restate a certain phrase or sentence by using standard written English; in some cases, the phrase or sentence is correct and most effective as stated. Examinees are not required to have a knowledge of formal grammatical terminology. In the revision-in-context questions, examinees are asked to recognize how a passage with which they are presented can be strengthened through editing and revision. Revision-in-context questions require examinees to consider development, organization, word choice, style, tone, and the conventions of standard written English. In some cases, the indicated portion of a passage will be most effective as it is already expressed and thus will require no changes.

In the research skills questions, examinees are asked to recognize effective research strategies, recognize the different elements of a citation, recognize information relevant to a particular research task, and assess the credibility of sources.

The two essays assess examinees' ability to write effectively in a limited period of time. The Argumentative essay topic invites examinees to draw from personal experience, observation, or reading to support a position with specific reasons and examples. The Informative/Explanatory essay topic asks examinees to extract information from two provided sources to identify important concerns related to an issue.

The topics for the Argumentative and Informative/Explanatory essays attempt to present situations that are familiar to all educated people; no topic will require any specialized knowledge other than an understanding of how to write effectively in English.

Examinees should write only on the topic assigned for each essay task, address all the points presented in the topic, and support generalizations with specific examples. For the Informative/Explanatory essay, examinees should also draw information from both sources, making sure to cite the source of the information. Before beginning to write each essay, examinees should read the topic and organize their thoughts carefully.

Experienced teachers read and evaluate each essay holistically (i.e., with a single score for overall quality) under carefully controlled conditions designed to ensure fair and reliable scoring. Acknowledging that writing comprises a number of features that are not independent of one another, scorers base their judgments on an assessment of such features as quality of insight or central idea, clarity, consistency of point of view, cohesiveness, strength and logic of supporting information, rhetorical force, appropriateness of diction and syntax, and correctness of mechanics and usage. In addition, for the Informative/Explanatory essay, scorers will also evaluate the examinees' ability to synthesize information from the provided sources and to cite this information in the essay.

Test Specifications

Test specifications in this chapter describe the knowledge and skills measured by the test.

I. Text Types, Purposes, and Production

A. Text Production: Writing Arguments

1. Produce an argumentative essay to support a claim using relevant and sufficient evidence
2. Write clearly and coherently
 - a. address the assigned task appropriately for an audience of educated adults
 - b. organize and develop ideas logically, making coherent connections between them
 - c. provide and sustain a clear focus or thesis
 - d. use supporting reasons, examples, and details to develop clearly and logically the ideas presented
 - e. demonstrate facility in the use of language and the ability to use a variety of sentence structures
 - f. construct effective sentences that are generally free of errors in standard written English

B. Text Production: Writing Informative/ Explanatory Texts

1. Produce an informative/explanatory essay to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content
 - a. write clearly and coherently
 - b. address the assigned task appropriately for an audience of educated adults
 - c. draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis
 - d. organize and develop ideas logically, making coherent connections between them
 - e. synthesize information from multiple sources on the subject
 - f. integrate and attribute information from multiple sources on the subject, avoiding plagiarism
 - g. provide and sustain a clear focus or thesis
 - h. demonstrate facility in the use of language and the ability to use a variety of sentence structures
 - i. construct effective sentences that are generally free of errors in standard written English

C. Text Production: Revision

1. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing
 - a. recognize how a passage can be strengthened through editing and revision
 - apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts and to make effective choices for meaning or style
 - > choose words and phrases for effect
 - > choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely
 - > maintain consistency in style and tone

II. Language and Research Skills for Writing**A. Language Skills**

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage
 - a. grammatical relationships
 - recognize and correct:
 - errors in the use of adjectives and adverbs
 - errors in noun-noun agreement
 - errors in pronoun-antecedent agreement
 - errors in pronoun case
 - errors in the use of intensive pronoun
 - errors in pronoun number and person
 - vague pronouns
 - errors in subject-verb agreement
 - inappropriate shifts in verb tense
 - b. structural relationships
 - recognize and correct:
 - errors in the placement of phrases and clauses within a sentence
 - misplaced and dangling modifiers
 - errors in the use of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions
 - fragments and run-ons
 - errors in the use of correlative conjunctions
 - errors in parallel structure
 - c. word choice
 - recognize and correct:
 - errors in the use of idiomatic expressions
 - errors in the use of frequently confused words
 - wrong word use
 - redundancy
 - d. No Error
 - recognize:
 - sentences free of errors in the conventions of standard English grammar and usage
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization and punctuation
 - a. mechanics
 - recognize and correct::
 - errors in capitalization
 - errors in punctuation
 - > commas (e.g., the use of a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence)
 - > semicolons (e.g., the use of a semicolon [and perhaps a conjunctive adverb] to link two or more closely related independent clauses)

- > apostrophes (e.g., the use of an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives)
- b. no error
 - recognize sentences free of errors in the conventions of standard English capitalization and punctuation

B. Research Skills

1. Recognize and apply appropriate research skills and strategies
 - a. assess the credibility and relevance of sources
 - b. recognize the different elements of a citation
 - c. recognize effective research strategies
 - d. recognize information relevant to a particular research task

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 19.

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Computer Delivery

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

The screenshot displays a test interface with a light blue header. On the left is the ETS PRAXIS Series logo. In the center, it says "Question 1 of 94". On the right, there are five buttons: "Review" (with a document icon), "Mark" (with a square icon), "Help" (with a question mark icon), "Back" (with a left arrow icon), and "Next" (with a right arrow icon). Below the header, the question text reads: "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?" Below the text are four radio button options: "Ideas", "Voice", "Conventions", and "Organization". At the bottom, a grey box contains the instruction: "Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response."

ETS **PRAXIS**
Series

Question 1 of 94

Show Time

Review Mark Help Back Next

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

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.

Usage

Directions: Each question consists of a sentence that contains four underlined portions. Read each sentence and decide whether any of the underlined parts contains a grammatical construction, a word use, or an instance of incorrect or omitted punctuation or capitalization that would be inappropriate in carefully written English. If so, select the underlined portion that must be revised to produce a correct sentence. If there are no errors in the sentence as written, select “No error.” **No sentence has more than one error.**

- The club members agreed that each would contribute ten days of volunteer work annually each year at the local hospital .
 A
 B
 C
 D
 E
 No error
- For a writer, the rarest privilege is not merely to describe her country and time but to help shape it . No error
 A
 B
 C
 D
 E
- The school magazine will print those who win prizes for poetry, short stories, and drama ; nonfiction, however, will not be accepted for publication. No error
 A
 B
 C
 D
 E
- Plagued by robbers, Paris in 1524 passed an ordinance requiring citizens to burn candles in windows fronting on the streets.
 A
 B
 C
 D
 E
 No error
- Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke out passionately for the poor of all races.
 (A) spoke out passionately
 (B) spoke out passionate
 (C) did spoke out passionate
 (D) has spoke out passionately
 (E) had spoken out passionate
- As a consumer, one can accept the goods offered to us or we can reject them, but we cannot determine their quality or change the system’s priorities.
 (A) As a consumer, one can accept
 (B) We the consumer either can accept
 (C) The consumer can accept
 (D) Either the consumer accepts
 (E) As consumers, we can accept

Sentence Correction

Directions: In each of the following sentences, some part of the sentence or the entire sentence is underlined. Beneath each sentence you will find five ways of writing the underlined part. The first of these repeats the original, but the other four are all different. If you think the original sentence is better than any of the suggested changes, you should select the first answer choice; otherwise you should select one of the other choices.

This is a test of correctness and effectiveness of expression. In choosing answers, follow the requirements of standard written English; i.e., pay attention to acceptable usage in grammar, diction (choice of words), sentence construction, and punctuation. Choose the answer that expresses most effectively what is presented in the original sentence; this answer should be clear and exact, without awkwardness, ambiguity, or redundancy.

7. The agent, passing through the crowd without being noticed by hardly anyone.

- (A) The agent, passing through the crowd without being noticed by hardly anyone.
- (B) The agent passed through the crowd without hardly being noticed by anyone.
- (C) The agent's passing through the crowd was not hardly noticed by anyone.
- (D) No one hardly noticed how the agent passed through the crowd.
- (E) The agent was hardly noticed as she passed through the crowd.

Revision in Context

Directions: The following passage is a draft of an essay. Some portions of the passage need to be strengthened through editing and revision. Read the passage and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. Some questions ask you to improve particular sentences or portions of sentences. In some cases, the indicated portion of the passage will be most effective as it is already expressed and thus will require no changes. In choosing answers, consider development, organization, word choice, style, and tone, and follow the requirements of standard written English.

(1) Many people have a narrow idea of what is involved in being a scientist. (2) Most students surveyed in a recent study, for example, assume that all scientists work indoors in a lab and approach their work in a serious, deliberate manner. (3) But apparently, these students hadn't read the story of how acoustic biologist Katy Payne came to study elephant sound. (4) Payne's work with elephants is now well-documented in popular and scientific articles, but it did not begin in a conventional way. (5) Therefore, Payne wasn't working in her lab, doing fieldwork, or even thinking formally about science. (6) Instead, out of curiosity, she visited a zoo. (7) At the zoo, she was immediately drawn to the elephants. (8) A specialist in whalesong, Payne knew little about elephants; she simply sat down and started watching them out of fascination, with no specific scientific questions in mind and no intention of taking notes. (9) Barely registering the faint vibration accompanying interactions between elephants, Payne simply enjoys watching them play and use their trunks to smell and eat.

(10) Even less conventional is the way it was finally discovered that the elephants had been doing something remarkable that day. (11) Flying home, closing her eyes and feeling the plane's vibration, Payne suddenly realized that the elephants' antics had fascinated her so much that she'd wrongly dismissed the accompanying vibrations as unimportant. (12) It eventually led to Payne's groundbreaking discovery that elephants communicate through sounds largely inaudible to humans. (13) In the process, Payne went on to conduct fieldwork on elephant-sound in Africa. (14) Of course, she also applied conventional laboratory resources, including sound-equipment that detects low-frequency sounds, to confirm her theory.

8. In context, which is the best version of the underlined portion of sentence 5 (reproduced below)?

Therefore, Payne wasn't working in her lab, doing fieldwork, or even thinking formally about science.

- (A) (As it is now)
- (B) However
- (C) In fact
- (D) In effect
- (E) To be clear

9. Which is the best way to revise and combine sentences 6 and 7 (reproduced below) at the underlined portion?

Instead, out of curiosity, she visited a zoo. At the zoo, she was immediately drawn to the elephants.

- (A) zoo, which is the place she
- (B) zoo, and while there she
- (C) zoo; she too
- (D) zoo, where she
- (E) zoo, but she

10. In context, which revision to sentence 12 (reproduced below) is most needed?

It eventually led to Payne’s groundbreaking discovery that elephants communicate through sounds largely inaudible to humans.

- (A) Replace “It” with “This insight”
 - (B) Change “eventually led” to “would eventually lead”
 - (C) Replace “groundbreaking” with “startling”
 - (D) Change “elephants communicate” with “the elephant communicates”
 - (E) Replace “largely” with “mostly”
11. In context, which sentence provides the best conclusion to the last paragraph?
- (A) In other words, a true scientist knows that failure is just another opportunity to learn.
 - (B) Nevertheless, the name of Katy Payne will be known by many generations of biologists to come.
 - (C) Still, it is clear that most significant scientific discoveries were made without any equipment at all.
 - (D) And it is well known that even the most brilliant hypothesis must be empirically verified.
 - (E) But Payne’s journey of discovery had started with just a trip to the zoo and an open mind.

Research Skills

Directions: The following question is a test of your familiarity with basic research skills.

12. Which is the main purpose of reviewing the references in a research article when one writes an academic paper?
- (A) To check that the authors did their own research
 - (B) To identify additional relevant sources
 - (C) To learn how to write citations correctly
 - (D) To verify that the authors did not cite themselves
 - (E) To avoid reading other sources on the same topic

Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (C). The error in this sentence occurs at (C). The phrase “annually each year” is redundant, since “annually” and “each year” convey the same information. The sentence would be correct with either “annually” or “each year” at (C). The error is one of diction, or word option.
2. The correct answer is (D). The error in this sentence occurs at (D). The pronoun “it” is incorrectly used to refer to two nouns, “country” and “time.” The pronoun required here is the plural “them.”
3. The correct answer is (A). The error occurs at (A). In the phrase “those who win,” the pronoun “those” indicates the people who win prizes. But the magazine will not print the people who win; it will print what the winners have written, or the submissions of those who won prizes. The error in this question is the illogical use of a pronoun. The correct phrase would be “the works of those who win.”
4. The correct answer is (E). Because this sentence contains no grammatical, idiomatic, logical, or structural errors, the best answer is choice (E). Note that at (B) you are required to determine whether the underlined letter — a lowercase “o” — needs to be capitalized, and that at (D) you are asked to determine whether the sentence requires some mark of punctuation in the underlined space. In this sentence, the use of the lowercase “o” is correct because “ordinance” is not a proper noun, and no comma is required after “candles.” Further, choices (A) and (C) do not require changes.
5. The correct answer is (A). This sentence presents no problem of structure or logic. The verb tense is correct, and the use of the adverb “passionately” is also correct in this context. In choice (B), the verb form is correct, but the adjective “passionate” is incorrectly used instead of the adverb. Choices (C) and (E) also use the incorrect adjective, and choice (D), although it uses the correct adverb, introduces an incorrect verb form, “has spoke out.” Thus, the best answer is choice (A).
6. The correct answer is (E). The problem in this sentence concerns parallelism and agreement in pronoun number. The underlined portion of the sentence uses the singular pronoun “one,” which correctly agrees with its antecedent, “consumer.” However, in the portion of the sentence that is not underlined, the first person plural, “we,” is used as the subject in the second part of the sentence. To create a sentence free of agreement faults, you must look for a choice that contains both “we” and the plural of “consumer.” Choice (E) is the only one that corrects the agreement problem and has a phrase parallel to “we can reject them.”
7. The correct answer is (E). Choice (A) presents two major problems: it is not a complete sentence, and the phrase “without . . . hardly” is not idiomatic. Although choices (B), (C), and (D) are complete sentences, each uses “hardly” in an equally unidiomatic construction. Choice (E), the best answer, is an idiomatic and complete sentence.
8. The correct answer is (C). The sentence that begins the second paragraph says that Payne’s research did not begin in a conventional way (i.e., indoors in a laboratory). Sentence 5 continues along the same lines, stating that Payne was not working in her laboratory and was not engaged in methodical research. The third choice, “In fact,” is the best version of the underlined portion of sentence 5 because the phrase indicates in an emphatic way that what Payne was doing was unorthodox and unconventional compared to traditional scientific inquiry.
9. The correct answer is (D). This question requires the candidate to combine two sentences to avoid the redundant use of “zoo.” Choice (D) — “zoo, where she” — accomplishes this in an economical way, is grammatically correct, and fits the logic of the context of the second paragraph.
10. The correct answer is (A). Sentence 12 begins with the pronoun “It,” which here does not have a clear referent: there is no singular noun in the preceding sentence to which “It” unambiguously and directly refers. Replacing the vague pronoun with “This insight,” which refers to Payne’s realization that the vibrations that accompany elephant interactions are actually important, results in a clear and easily interpreted statement.

11. The correct answer is (E). The last paragraph describes the unconventional way in which Payne made her groundbreaking discovery and then adds that Payne ultimately did use ordinary laboratory resources. Choice (E), "But Payne's journey of discovery had started with just a trip to the zoo and an open mind," best concludes the last paragraph by returning to and restating the main theme: the discovery Payne made was the result not of what many people think of as formal scientific research, but rather of curiosity, openness to experience, and readiness to follow her inklings without a predetermined goal.

12. The correct answer is (B). The most important reason to review the references in a research article is to find additional sources on the topic. Although a reference list might be used to check that the authors did their own research or to verify that the authors did not cite themselves, the former goal is better achieved through other means while the latter is not a major concern as one writes a research paper. Further, the most appropriate resource for learning to write citations correctly would be a style guide, not a reference list. Finally, one would review references in a research article to identify sources that one might read to obtain additional information on the topic, not to avoid reading other sources.

Sample Test Questions - Argumentative Essay

This section presents an argumentative topic and sample responses along with the standards used in scoring the argumentative essays. When you read these sample responses, keep in mind that they will be less polished than if they had been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented. The examinee does not know what question will be asked and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. Readers take these circumstances into account when scoring the essays; they have been trained to judge the overall quality rather than to attempt to count errors.

Each essay is scored holistically, on the basis of its total quality. In computing your total Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing score, the scores for both the argumentative and explanatory essays are combined with the score for the selected-response part of the Writing test.

Readers assign scores for the argumentative essay based on the following scoring guide.

Scoring Guide for Argumentative Essay

Score of 6

A 6 essay demonstrates a *high degree of competence* in response to the assignment but may have a few minor errors.

An essay in this category:

- states or clearly implies the writer’s position or thesis
- organizes and develops ideas logically, making insightful connections between them
- clearly explains key ideas, supporting them with well-chosen reasons, examples, or details
- displays effective sentence variety
- clearly displays facility in the use of language
- is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 5

A 5 essay demonstrates *clear competence* in response to the assignment but may have minor errors.

An essay in this category:

- states or clearly implies the writer’s position or thesis
- organizes and develops ideas clearly, making connections between them
- explains key ideas, supporting them with relevant reasons, examples, or details
- displays some sentence variety
- displays facility in the use of language
- is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 4

A 4 essay demonstrates *competence* in response to the assignment.

An essay in this category:

- states or implies the writer’s position or thesis
- shows control in the organization and development of ideas
- explains some key ideas, supporting them with adequate reasons, examples, or details
- displays adequate use of language
- shows control of grammar, usage, and mechanics, but may display errors

Score of 3

A 3 essay demonstrates *some competence* in response to the assignment but is obviously flawed.

An essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- limited in stating or implying a position or thesis
- limited control in the organization and development of ideas
- inadequate reasons, examples, or details to explain key ideas
- an accumulation of errors in the use of language
- an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 2

A 2 essay is *seriously flawed*.

An essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- no clear position or thesis
- weak organization or very little development
- few or no relevant reasons, examples, or details
- frequent serious errors in the use of language
- frequent serious errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 1

A 1 essay demonstrates *fundamental deficiencies* in writing skills.

An essay in this category:

- contains serious and persistent writing errors or
- is incoherent or
- is undeveloped

Sample Argumentative Essay Topic

On the computer screen will you see the following:

Read the opinion stated below:

"Minimum-wage jobs are a ticket to nowhere. They are boring and repetitive and teach employees little or nothing of value. Minimum-wage employers take advantage of people because they need a job."

Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with this opinion. Support your views with specific reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Cut
Paste
Undo

The essay topic will appear on the top half of the computer screen. You will compose and type your response to the topic on the bottom half of the computer screen.

Directions: You will have 30 minutes to plan and write an argumentative essay on the topic presented above. The essay will be based on your own reading, experience, or observations.

Read the topic carefully. You will probably find it best to spend a little time considering the topic and organizing your thoughts before you begin writing. **DO NOT WRITE ON A TOPIC OTHER THAN THE ONE SPECIFIED.** Essays on topics of your own choice will not be acceptable. In order for your test to be scored, your responses must be in English.

The essay questions are included in this test to give you an opportunity to demonstrate how well you can write. You should, therefore, take care to write clearly and effectively, using specific examples where appropriate. Remember that how well you write is much more important than how much you write, but to cover the topic adequately, you will probably need to write more than one paragraph.

Sample Argumentative Essay That Received a Score of 6

I agree wholeheartedly that "Minimum-wage employers take advantage of people because they need a job." Given the existing high unemployment rates in today's economy, people do not have as much power to negotiate for reasonable pay. Thus, they are at the mercy of employers who seize the opportunity to line their

own pockets while underpaying their workers. Since all jobs necessitate the mastery of certain skills, and involve responsibility and effort on the part of employees, laws governing minimum wages should be evaluated frequently and government should intervene to make sure that employers are not being taken advantage of. All work is worthwhile and valuable; workers should be treated with dignity and respect and paid appropriately.

Having said that, however, I strongly disagree with the rest of the statement, especially the claim that "Minimum-wage jobs are a ticket to nowhere." Most people's introduction to the workforce is through a minimum-wage job; we all have to start somewhere and we are unlikely to begin our working lives with high salaries. Granted, minimum-wage jobs often do involve tasks that are "boring and repetitive" but that doesn't mean these tasks "teach employees little or nothing." Our first jobs actually teach us a lot about the workforce and how to conduct ourselves at work.

For example, my first job was a minimum-wage office job. Because I thought the job wasn't that complicated, I initially didn't pay attention to what I was doing and, as a result, found myself making mistakes. I neglected to follow procedures or proofread my work and I found that I wasn't doing a good job. Ultimately I realized that no matter how menial a task may seem, it was still vital for me to focus on what I was doing and to do my best. I learned that in order to succeed at any kind of job, I had to make an effort and work hard. So while it may not have been that important for me to know how to fill out a travel voucher without errors, it was imperative for me to learn that I couldn't approach work with a lackadaisical attitude and expect to succeed. That was a very crucial, lifelong lesson for me. I learned other important lessons as well. I learned to be punctual, to get up and go to work day after day, to persevere and troubleshoot, and to cooperate with others. I became adept at communicating with my boss and negotiating with my co-workers. Best of all, I learned that work could be very gratifying when things went well and that it was a pleasure to have co-workers to collaborate with on projects. Minimum-wage jobs are like apprenticeships for the work world. You may not spend the rest of your life making hamburgers or typing letters but the general work skills you master teach you how to become a productive member of the workforce for the rest of your life.

Comments on Sample Argumentative Essay that Received a Score of 6

This highly competent response begins by agreeing with the last part of the prompt, situating it in the current economy, whose high unemployment rates guarantee that “people do not have as much power to negotiate for reasonable pay.” The essay continues its argument by stating that minimum wage laws should be evaluated frequently and that governments should oversee the labor market to make sure employees are not being exploited. The essay, however, then shifts its focus to disagree with the rest of the prompt, which argues that minimum-wage jobs “are a ticket to nowhere” and “teach employees little or nothing of value.” After deftly conceding that some minimum wage jobs are often “boring and repetitive,” the writer presents a clear thesis at the end of the second paragraph: “Our first jobs actually teach us a lot about the workforce and how to conduct ourselves at work.”

Using the well-chosen example of the writer’s own first job, the essay effectively develops the main idea by enumerating the lifelong lessons the writer learned there, beginning with the writer’s initial mistake of regarding the job as uncomplicated, and thereby undeserving of proper attention and hard work. In discussing this misapprehension, the essay insightfully links the writer’s attitude with the one expressed in the prompt, which it then refutes. Through detailed examples, such as filling out a travel voucher, the response explains how the writer’s initial failures led to the valuable lesson that “I couldn’t approach work with a lackadaisical attitude and expect to succeed.”

The final paragraph continues with other lessons the writer learned from this first job before concluding that minimum-wage jobs “are like apprenticeships for the work world.” This statement reiterates the response’s thesis that, far from being worthless, minimum-wage jobs actually “teach you how to become a productive member of the workforce for the rest of your life.” The essay’s final sentence effectively reinforces the main argument, which has been highlighted throughout this highly organized response. In addition to being free from grammatical, usage, or mechanical errors, the essay displays clear facility with language and effective variation in sentence structure. These qualities, along with the well-organized structure of the response and the in-depth development of its key idea with a well-chosen example and details, are more than enough to merit a score of 6.

“Minimum-wage jobs are a ticket to nowhere. They are boring and repetitive and teach employees little or nothing of value. Minimum-wage employers take advantage of people because they need a job.”

Sample Argumentative Essay That Received a Score of 5

I disagree with the position taken in the statement above. We all have to start working at some point in our lives, and especially if we start working while still in high-school or before obtaining an advanced level of education, we will most likely start in a minimum wage job. These jobs, while low-paying, provide a necessary training ground for those new to the world of work and provide the base for developing skills in working that we will need later in life. One of my co-workers provided the best example of using a minimum-wage job to develop skills in a way that benefitted both the employee and the employer. Her younger brother, who was still in high school, was very excited about getting his first job at McDonalds. My co-worker simply saw this as a way for him to pick up a little money to help with his expenses and support some of her brother’s teenage pleasures. He, on the other hand, was looking at this job as the start of a career path. Explaining McDonald’s emphasis on training entry level workers and recruiting from within for management positions, her brother saw himself as eventually managing a restaurant, a region, or even becoming a franchise owner. Clearly for him, his first minimum-wage job was not a ticket to nowhere, and his employer, rather than taking advantage of him, was helping him to develop for better things.

Likewise, a number of other minimum-wage jobs provide stepping off points for other careers. Nurses’ aides may be inspired to go to school to become future nurses. Daycare assistants or pre-school teachers may find that their love of working with children will propel them to study education and become teachers, counselors, or administrators of programs that provide services for children. Even for those who are not planning a higher level of education or who may decide to do something else, the minimum-wage job will allow them to develop their skills and find out if they really enjoy what they are doing. Sometimes, high school students decide they want to go to college to major in a particular area, but they really don’t understand what the job market will be for that area. A carefully selected minimum-wage job could help a student decide that he/she really

hates the area before it is too late to change their major.

One other point also needs to be made about minimum-wage jobs: someone has to do them and it is not just the employers who gain. As all of us go about our daily lives, we need cashiers, waitresses, janitors, restaurant workers, garbage collectors, nannies, and the varied assortment of low level factory workers and technicians that make our world operate. These are the people we rarely recognise, but if we tried to go without them, either the costs that we pay would rise significantly or we would do without a lot of the things we have today. Overall, minimum-wage jobs, provide the base for our society.

Comments on Sample Argumentative Essay that Received a Score of 5

This response opens with a clear statement disagreeing with the prompt and explains that minimum-wage jobs “provide a necessary training ground” for new workers along with “the base for developing skills in working that we will need later in life.” Making a direct connection with the idea of developing skills, the response provides a personal example that counters several of the prompt’s claims and demonstrates that employees can benefit from minimum-wage jobs without being taken advantage of. This specific example is then used to make a generalization about other minimum-wage jobs that may help to prepare workers for other careers or allow them to make informed choices about careers. In the final paragraph, the response approaches the argument in a slightly different way, noting that “someone has to do” minimum-wage jobs and that it is the general public, and not just an employer, that benefits from having “cashiers, waitresses, janitors, . . . and the varied assortment of low level factory workers and technicians that make our world operate.” This portion of the response is less developed than the position presented in the first three paragraphs, but the ideas are still clearly connected and relevant.

Throughout the response there is a clear line of organization and ideas are clearly connected. Examples are relevant, but not necessarily insightful. Sentences are varied, and the response verges on some effective sentence use, but it is not consistent. Language facility is certainly more than adequate, but the response lacks the vocabulary and effective use of language that would characterize a response scored at the 6 level. The response is generally free of errors, but does contain a few grammar or mechanical errors.

Sample Argumentative Essay That Received a Score of 2

Minimum-wage jobs are a ticket to nowhere. They are boring and repetitive and teach little or nothing of value. Minimum-wage employers take advantage of people because they need a job.

When I worked at a fast food restaurant at the mall I received minimum wage. All they do is see how much work they can get out of you for as little pay as possible. Many minimum-wage employers are harder on you in places like that than they are at high paying jobs. Yes, minimum-wage jobs are boring because you do the same thing over and over which means that you learn little skill from working there.

Comments on Sample Argumentative Essay that Received a Score of 2

This response, while relatively error-free, has very little development. The first paragraph, which appears to indicate agreement with the position given in the prompt, merely repeats the prompt and provides no other development. The second paragraph adds to that by noting that the writer worked at a fast food restaurant for minimum wage, but then mostly repeats the same ideas included in the prompt without providing much in the way of reasons, examples, or details. Without further development, it cannot be scored higher than a 2.

Sample Test Questions - Source-based Essay

This section presents a source-based essay topic and sample responses along with the standards used in scoring the source-based essays. When you read these sample responses, keep in mind that they will be less polished than if they had been developed at home, edited, and carefully presented. The examinee does not know what question will be asked or what sources will be used in conjunction with the topic and must decide, on the spot, how to respond. Readers take these circumstances into account when scoring the essays; they have been trained to judge the overall quality rather than to attempt to count errors.

Each essay is scored holistically, on the basis of its total quality. In computing your total Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing score, the scores for both the argumentative and explanatory essays are combined with the score for the selected-response part of the Writing test.

Readers assign scores for the source-based essay based on the following scoring guide.

Scoring Guide for Source-based Essay

Score of 6

A 6 essay demonstrates a *high degree of competence* in response to the assignment but may have a few minor errors.

An essay in this category:

- insightfully explains why the concerns are important, supporting the explanation with effective links between the two sources and well-chosen reasons, examples, or details
- incorporates information from both sources to identify and explain important concerns regarding the issue discussed in the sources
- organizes and develops ideas logically
- displays effective sentence variety
- clearly displays facility in the use of language
- is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- cites both sources when paraphrasing or quoting

Score of 5

A 5 essay demonstrates *clear competence* in response to the assignment but may have minor errors.

An essay in this category:

- clearly explains why the concerns are important, supporting the explanation with clear links between the two sources and relevant reasons, examples, or details
- incorporates information from both sources to identify and explain important concerns regarding the issue discussed in the sources
- organizes and develops ideas clearly
- displays some sentence variety
- displays facility in the use of language
- is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- cites both sources when paraphrasing or quoting

Score of 4

A 4 essay demonstrates *competence* in response to the assignment.

An essay in this category:

- adequately explains why the concerns are important, supporting the explanation with some links between the two sources and adequate reasons, examples, or details
- incorporates information from both sources to identify and explain important concerns regarding the issue discussed in the sources
- shows control in the organization and development of ideas
- displays adequate use of language
- shows control of grammar, usage, and mechanics, but may display errors
- cites both sources when paraphrasing or quoting

Score of 3

A 3 essay demonstrates *some competence* in response to the assignment but is obviously flawed.

An essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- limited in explaining why the concerns are important
- incorporates only one source to identify and explain concerns regarding the issue discussed in the sources, or incorporates two sources inadequately
- limited in supporting the explanation (establishes only a weak link between the sources and/or offers inadequate reasons, examples, or details)
- limited control in the organization and development of ideas
- an accumulation of errors in the use of language
- an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- cites sources when paraphrasing or quoting

Score of 2

A 2 essay is *seriously flawed*.

An essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- fails to explain why the concerns are important
- incorporates only one source weakly or fails to identify concerns regarding the issue discussed in the sources
- offers weak support for the explanation (no link between the sources and/or few or no relevant reasons, examples, or details)
- weak organization or very little development
- frequent serious errors in the use of language
- frequent serious errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- fails to cite any sources when paraphrasing or quoting

Score of 1

A 1 essay demonstrates *fundamental deficiencies* in writing skills.

An essay in this category:

- contains serious and persistent writing errors or
- is incoherent or
- is undeveloped

Sample Source-based Essay Topic

On the computer screen will you see the following:

<p>Directions:</p> <p>The following assignment requires you to use information from two sources to discuss the most important concerns that relate to a specific issue. When paraphrasing or quoting from the sources, cite each source used by referring to the author's last name, the title, or any other clear identifier.</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>Copyright protection grants the author of a creative work (such as a book, film, painting, or recording) the sole right to copy, publish, or profit from the work. Copyright protection lasts for a specific term. If a copyright is not renewed or if a work reaches a certain age, copyright protection no longer applies and the work is considered to be in the public domain, meaning that any person can reproduce it without owning for the right to do so. Both of the following sources address the ways in which artists create new works and how copyright</p>	<p>Cut</p> <p>Paste</p> <p>Undo</p>

The essay topic will appear on the top half of the computer screen. You will compose and type your response to the topic on the bottom half of the computer screen.

Directions: In the following section you will have 30 minutes to read two short passages on a topic and then plan and write an essay on that topic. The essay will be an informative essay based on the two sources that are provided.

Read the topic and sources carefully. You will probably find it best to spend a little time considering the topic and organizing your thoughts before you begin writing. **DO NOT WRITE ON A TOPIC OTHER THAN THE ONE SPECIFIED.** Essays on topics of your own choice will not be acceptable. In order for your test to be scored, your responses must be in English.

The essay questions are included in this test to give you an opportunity to demonstrate how well you can write. You should, therefore, take care to write clearly and effectively, using specific examples where appropriate. Remember that how well you write is much more important than how much you write, but to cover the topics adequately, you will probably need to write more than one paragraph.

Assignment

Copyright protection grants the author of a creative work (such as a book, film, painting, or recording) the sole right to copy, publish, or profit from the work. Copyright protection lasts for a specific term. If a copyright is not renewed or if a work reaches a certain age, copyright protection no longer applies and the work is considered to be in the public domain, meaning that any person can reproduce it without paying for the right to do so. Both of the following sources address the ways in which artists create new works and how copyright protection affects artistic creation, and particularly whether copyright protection of existing works hinders or promotes creativity.

Read the two passages carefully and then write an essay in which you identify the most important concerns regarding the issue and explain why they are important. Your essay must draw on information from BOTH of the sources. In addition, you may draw on your own experiences, observations, or reading. Be sure to CITE the sources whether you are paraphrasing or directly quoting.

Source 1

Adapted from: McLeod, Kembrew. *Freedom of Expression®: Overzealous Copyright Bozos and Other Enemies of Creativity*. New York: Doubleday, 2005. 79–80. Web. 14 Feb. 2013.

One of the more headache-inducing aspects of the way copyright law is interpreted is the seeming randomness of it all. When writing a book, quoting from another book is perfectly acceptable. . . . But quoting more than two lines from a song's lyrics in a book . . . might get you and your publisher in trouble. As long as it's brief, singing a phrase from an old song and placing it in a new song probably won't get you sued, and a court likely wouldn't consider it an infringement. However, David Sanjek—director of the Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI) archives—is careful to point out to me that any copyright owner with an axe to grind *could* sue . . .

More mind-numbing examples from other mediums: Referring to a trademarked good in everyday conversation will cause no problem, but movie directors often have to get permission from an intellectual-property owner to show it or even mention it in movie dialogue. Referring to trademarked brands in pop songs is okay. But creating satire on a Web site by using a company logo requires you to exactly duplicate a privately owned image, and this leaves you more vulnerable to a lawsuit.

Today's unrealistically high standards of originality don't reflect the way people have always made art and music. What's the difference, really, between T. S. Eliot invoking and *directly quoting from* the Bible, Greek myths, Dante, Shakespeare, Arthurian legend, and dozens of other cultural works, and Public Enemy doing the same sort of thing with sound? There is no convincing argument I have heard that justifies why it is fine in printed works to quote small fragments from books, poems, or plays, but quoting and collaging small fragments of sound is unacceptable.

Source 2

Adapted from: Martin, Scott M. "The Mythology of the Public Domain: Exploring the Myths Behind Attacks on the Duration of Copyright Protection." *Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review*. 36.1 (2002): 272. Web. 14 Feb. 2013.

At the risk of speaking words of heresy, it is copyright protection that *encourages* innovation and creativity, while the public domain *discourages* both innovation and creativity.

Why create something new if you can reprint or reuse something that already exists? Why invest in untested new works if you can instead distribute royalty-free existing works?

The fact that creators of new works cannot merely re-use the expression contained in copyrighted work of others without permission forces them to be creative. Composers cannot rehash the melodies created by earlier composers, they must create their own new original melodies. Writers must invent new characters and plots instead of recycling the efforts of others. Animators and motion picture studios cannot freeload on Mickey Mouse; copyright protection forces them to create their own original cartoon characters. This promotion of fresh creation is an entirely appropriate goal for Congress to pursue through legislation.

Counter to the "copyright good, public domain better" myth, an extension of the term of copyright protection at the temporary expense of public domain *encourages* rather than *discourages* the creation of fresh new original works. Opponents of the current duration of copyright protection argue that an earlier termination of copyright protection would encourage the copyright owner to create new works rather than relying on income from old works. While such a result may ensue from earlier loss of copyright protection, if creation of fresh works is a policy goal for copyright law, is it not better to create incentives for all creators to develop new works in lieu of free-loading on existing works than it is to encourage just one party—the copyright owner—to develop new works?

Sample Source-based Essay That Received a Score of 5

Major areas of concern with regards to copyright law seem to stem for the most part from issues with creativity and with consistency of the law. In his piece, Kembrew McLeod attacks the “seeming randomness” (“Freedom of Expression®: Copyright Bozos and Other Enemies of Creativity”) of the standards for copyright laws. He compares the differences between quoting from text versus quoting sound, such as song lyrics, as well as other aspects that fall under the law. Essentially, he feels that the main issue with copyright laws is the fact that it is acceptable to quote in or from some areas of conversation (such as text) but dangerous to do so in others (such as in song). Also, McLeod implies that copyright laws have contributed to “unrealistically high standards of originality [which] don’t reflect the way people have always made art and music” (McLeod). He implies that using and expanding on other work does not hinder creativity or originality and standards on plagiarism today are unrealistic.

Scott Martin’s piece complicates this idea by presenting a viewpoint in direct opposition to it. He very explicitly states, “it is copyright protection that encourages innovation and creativity, while the public domain discourages both innovation and creativity” (Martin). Martin’s logic for this is that if it weren’t for copyright laws, creators would have no reason to make new work when they could benefit much more easily from earlier works.

So, simply put, along with the inconsistency of the copyright law as explained by McLeod, the argument over creativity is the central concern of the issue at hand. On one side, McLeod implies that using other works is not a hindrance to creativity. On the other hand, Martin argues that copyright laws are what force innovation since artists cannot rely on other works.

Comments on Sample Source-based Essay That Received a Score of 5

This response offers a clear explanation of important issues discussed in the provided sources, immediately identifying “issues with creativity and consistency of the law.” Information from the two sources is smoothly incorporated as evidence in the discussion of the issues and used to further identify related problems. The sources are acknowledged or cited when necessary. The organization and development of ideas is clear, and the writer links the sources to each other: “Martin’s piece complicates this [McLeod’s] idea ...” The essay has a variety of sentence structures and displays facility in the use of language (e.g., “So, simply put, along with the inconsistency . . .”). While its explanation of the importance of the identified concerns is clear, it does not quite reach the level of insightful explanation required for a score of 6. Nevertheless, this is a clearly competent response that earns a score of 5.

Sample Source-based Essay that Received a Score of 4

There are many good things associated with copyright law and many bad things associated with it. In an essay written by Kembrew McLeod he explains the issues he has with copyright law. While in an essay written by Scott M. Martin, he explains why copyright law is good. To look at this issue Kembrew’s essay will be looked at followed by Scott’s.

Kembrew is not a big fan of copyright law. The thing that annoys him the most about this it is that it seems to be pretty random in how it is applied (McLeod). He gives an example of how “when writing a book, quoting from another book is perfectly acceptable...But quoting more than two lines from a song’s lyrics in a book...might get you and your publisher in trouble” (McLeod). A few more examples of how inconstant copyright law is, are that a person can talk about a company in a private conversation but for it to be in a movie the director must get permission to use it and that in pop songs they can state the name of trademark companies for free but if an online show wants to use a logo of a company they have to get permission (McLeod). It can be seen that there is quite an issue with the way copyright law is applied. After seeing how inconstant the law is does that mean that it should be done away with?

In Scott M. Martin’s essay he defends the copyright law and shows why it is a very good

thing. He claims that copyright protection “encourages innovation and creativity” (Martin). In his essay he discusses the differences between copyright protection and public domain. He thinks that copyright law is by far the better of the two choices. This is because if everything was in the public domain people would just make money of idea’s that have already been made they wouldn’t want to create new ideas (Martin). Some people’s argument for wanting copyright law to end earlier is that it would encourage the people that came up with the idea to create other things. Scott thinks that if those people really want people to create more new ideas then there should be incentives in the law its self for that sort of thing (Martin). Scott makes a convincing argument for why copyright is indeed a good thing that encourages creativity. Which is one thing that is highly valued.

Is copyright law worth the trouble it causes? According to Kembrew it is not because of its inconsistency. But on the flip side Scott believes it is because of all the creative that comes out of it. If it were not for copyright law creativity would be limited in scope. It might have its issues but is a required part of the law so that it can be assured that people will keep what is rightfully theirs.

Comments on Sample Source-based Essay That Received a Score of 4

This competent response adequately explains the concerns evoked in each of the provided sources, pointing to both “how inconstant copyright law is” and how it encourages creativity. The essay also explains why the issues raised are important. It links the two sources by pointing out that McLeod and Martin are arguing from different perspectives. Both sources are used and cited when necessary. Organization and development of ideas are controlled as the response compares and contrasts the perspectives of the two writers on the same issues. The response exhibits general control of grammar, usage, and mechanics, but it contains some sentence fragments and other errors (e.g., “Which is one thing that is highly valued.”). With its adequate explanations and language use, this essay earns a score of 4.

Sample Source-Based Essay That Received a Score of 2

Many artists are concerned about copyright because they want to be protected from other people stealing their work and passing it off as theirs. “why create something new if you can reprint or reuse something that already exists?” Copyright laws protect against this.

Copyright laws are confusing and “headache-inducing.” You can quote from another book in a book that you write but you can’t quote from a song. Artists don’t know what they can and can’t do. And copyright laws make “unrealistically high standards of originality” so it is hard for artists to create totally new things.

In conclusion, copyright laws help protect artists from people stealing their work while at the same time making it harder for them to create work that is original.

Comments on Sample Source-Based Essay That Received a Score of 2

This response offers very little development. It identifies important concerns—the copyright protects artists from having their work stolen and that copyright laws are not inconsistent—and offers some explanation of them, but it provides weak support for the explanation, with very few reasons or details. The essay incorporates both of the provided sources, but it fails to cite or otherwise acknowledge its use of information taken from the sources. While its failure to acknowledge the use of source material keeps this essay from receiving a score higher than a 2, its lack of development also demonstrates that it is seriously flawed and would keep this essay at the 2-level even if outside sources were acknowledged.

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/centers_dates.
- Work backward from that date to figure out how much time you will need for review.
- Set a realistic schedule—and stick to it.

5) Practice explaining the key concepts.

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

6) Understand how questions will be scored.

Scoring information can be found on page 43.

7) Develop a study plan.

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

And most important—get started!

Would a Study Group Work for You?

Using this guide as part of a study group

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

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

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

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

Use this worksheet to:

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

Praxis Test Name: Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading
Praxis Test Code(s): 5712
Test Date: 9/15/14

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Core Academic Skills for Educators:						
Main Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of main idea or primary purpose of reading selection	3	Middle school English text book	College library, middle school teacher	7/15/14	7/15/14
Supporting Ideas	Identify summaries or paraphrases of supporting ideas and specific details in reading selection	3	Middle school English text book	College library, middle school teacher	7/17/14	7/17/14
Organization	Identify how reading selection is organized in terms of cause/effect and compare/contrast	3	Middle and high school English text book	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/20/14	7/21/14
Organization	Identify key transition words/phrases in reading selection and how used	4	Middle and high school English text book	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/14	7/26/14
Vocabulary in Context	Identify meanings of words as used in context of reading selection	3	Middle and high school English text book, dictionary	College library, middle and high school teachers	7/25/14	7/27/14

(continued on next page)

Content covered	Description of content	How well do I know the content? (scale 1–5)	What resources do I have/need for the content?	Where can I find the resources I need?	Dates I will study the content	Date completed
Craft, Structure, and Language Skills						
Evaluation	Determine whether evidence strengthens, weakens, or is relevant to arguments in reading selection	5	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Determine role that an idea, reference, or piece of information plays in author's discussion/argument	5	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Determine if information presented is fact or opinion	4	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Evaluation	Identify relationship among ideas presented in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/1/14	8/1/14
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas						
Inferential Reasoning	Determine logical assumptions on which argument or conclusion is based	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/8/14	8/8/14
Inferential Reasoning	Determine author's attitude toward materials discussed in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/15/14	8/17/14
Generalization	Recognize or predict ideas/situations that are extensions of, or similar to, what has been presented in reading selection	2	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/22/14	8/24/14
Generalization	Draw conclusions from materials presented in reading selection	4	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/24/14	8/24/14
Generalization	Apply ideas presented in a reading selection to other situations	3	High school text book, college course notes	College library, course notes, high school teacher, college professor	8/27/14	8/27/14

My Study Plan

Use this worksheet to:

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

Praxis Test Name: _____
Praxis Test Code: _____
Test Date: _____

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

(continued on next page)

6. Review Smart Tips for Success

Follow test-taking tips developed by experts

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

Should I guess?

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

Can I answer the questions in any order?

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

Are there trick questions on the test?

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

Are there answer patterns on the test?

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

Can I write on the scratch paper I am given?

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

Smart Tips for Taking the Test

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

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

7. Check on Testing Accommodations

See if you qualify for accommodations that may make it easier to take the Praxis test

What if English is not my primary language?

Praxis tests are given only in English. If your primary language is not English (PLNE), you may be eligible for extended testing time. For more details, visit www.ets.org/praxis/register/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 http://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/bulletin_supplement_test_takers_with_disabilities_health_needs.pdf.

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

8. Do Your Best on Test Day

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

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

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

On the day of the test, you should:

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

9. Understand Your Scores

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

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

What are the score requirements for my state?

States, institutions, and associations that require the tests set their own passing scores. Visit www.ets.org/praxis/states 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
- *The Praxis Passing Scores* (PDF), found at www.ets.org/praxis/scores/understand
- 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 *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 *Praxis* tests?

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

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

How were the tests developed?

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

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

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

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

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

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

How long will it take to receive my scores?

Scores for tests that do not include constructed-response questions are available on screen immediately after the test. Scores for tests that contain constructed-response questions or essays aren’t available immediately after the test because of the scoring process involved. Official score reports are available to you and your designated score recipients approximately two to three weeks after the test date for tests delivered continuously, or two to three weeks after the testing window closes for other tests. See the test dates and deadlines calendar at www.ets.org/praxis/register/centers_dates 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*](#) (2003, Princeton, NJ) are consistent with the [*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*](#), industry standards issued jointly by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (1999, Washington, DC).

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