
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING REPORT: INITIAL, STANDARD, PROFESSIONAL AND TEMPORARY TEACHING CERTIFICATES



DECEMBER 2021

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POLICY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Education Committee of the Legislature has a joint responsibility of protecting students and teachers, and it doesn't take that role lightly. Ensuring that Nebraska's students are educated by qualified, law-abiding teachers of good moral character is of the utmost concern while, at the same time, ensuring that certification requirements are enacted in a way to increase opportunities for teachers across the state. Simultaneous to these considerations is ensuring that all school districts in Nebraska are able to hire the faculty necessary to provide robust education opportunities for its students to best prepare them for postsecondary education and/or to enter Nebraska's workforce, ideally, in those career fields where the state is experiencing a workforce shortage.

Although the Committee is interested in hearing other proposals that may be introduced, with its multifaceted responsibilities in mind, for the subsequently discussed reasons, and based on the data presented in this report, the Education Committee makes the following recommendations.

That the State Board of Education promptly remove the basic skills competency exam as an entrance requirement for teacher preparation programs in Nebraska, and that the governor sign such rules and regulations, thereby following the intent of the 2003 Legislature and Governor Johanns with the enactment of LB685.

That the State Board of Education allow for alternative methods of proving basic skills competency for the certification of teachers in Nebraska while still maintaining a commitment to high-quality teachers in Nebraska's classroom. That the Legislature adopt language supporting such alternative methods, and that the governor support both such efforts.

That the Commissioner of Education exercise his authority and look for ways to improve equivalency for licensed teachers in other states. Such efforts should explore agreements with specific states whose standards are equivocal to those in Nebraska, as well as processes that streamline the application approval from individual licensed teacher's with a proven track record of high-quality performance in the classroom. That the Nebraska Department of Education utilize all possible techniques for determining such applicant's qualifications prior to determining such approval requires additional college coursework.

That the Nebraska Department of Education establish a rotating review of subject-matter assessments to ensure that the exams accurately reflect the content being taught pursuant to the endorsements they support.

That the Department of Health and Human Services explore and, if possible, add the National Association of School Psychologists to the Provisional Licensed Mental Health practitioner application process as one of the approved credentialing institutions for the state Medicaid plan.

That the State Board of Education take the feedback of librarians and other school personnel before considering future changes in rules and regulations regarding these professionals.

CHAPTER I: RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION

CERTIFICATES AND PERMITS

The Legislature has delineated the responsibilities for educational certificates and permits across three entities. The Commissioner of Education (“Commissioner”) is responsible for issuing, reissuing, and denying certificates and permits,¹ as well as filing petitions, when applicable, with the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission (“PPC”) for sanctions of certificate or permit holders.² The responsibilities of the Commissioner may be carried out by the Nebraska Department of Education (“NDE”) staff.

The State Board of Education (“Board”) has the authority to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations related to the issuance, renewal, denial, revocation, and suspension of the certificates and permits.³ The Board has the authority to also issue temporary permits, valid for up to two years, to any applicant for certification who has not completed the requisite human relations training.⁴ Similarly, the Commissioner has the authority to issue conditional permits, valid for up to one year, while an applicant is waiting for criminal history record information checks if other requirements outlined in statute are satisfied.⁵

This report, in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Occupational Board Reform Act,⁶ is examining four teaching certificates: Initial, Standard, Professional and Temporary Teaching Certificates. The Initial, Standard, and Professional Teaching Certificates are referred to by NDE as regular certificates.⁷

In addition to certificates, which authorize a qualified individual to engage in teaching, administration, or providing special services,⁸ the Board has created permits that provide restricted authorization to an individual who does not yet meet the qualifications for a regular certificate to engage in teaching, administration, or providing of special services.⁹

The PPC has the authority to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations related to the private admonishments and public reprimands of certificate or permit holders, as well as the hearing process for petitions filed by the Commissioner and the reinstatement process for certificates and permits.¹⁰

Procedurally, the Board requests the PPC conduct hearings on petitions filed by the Commissioner, and, when deemed necessary, the PPC makes recommendations to the Board regarding appropriate action to be taken. Private admonishments and public reprimands are handled exclusively by the PPC, while recommendations for suspension or revocation are given to the Board to take action upon.¹¹ The Board is granted the sole authority to revoke, suspend or reinstate a license or permit.¹²

CHAPTER II: ENTITY INFORMATION

State Board of Education

The State Board of Education, created in the Nebraska Constitution, consists of eight members elected on a nonpartisan ballot representing districts of substantially equal population as provided by the Legislature.¹³ Board members are required to be United States citizens and Nebraska residents in the district from which he or she is elected for at least six months immediately prior to his or her election.¹⁴ Furthermore, board members shall not be actively engaged in the teaching profession nor shall they be currently holding any state office.¹⁵ Finally, board members shall not be the member of any state board or commission unless the entity is limited to an advisory capacity.¹⁶

The Board is required to meet regularly and periodically at least four times per year.¹⁷ In 2021, the Board held 11 regularly scheduled meetings.¹⁸

The annual budget for the Board for the past five fiscal years, as well as the current fiscal year, is as follows:¹⁹

Fiscal Year	Annual Budget Amount
2015-16	\$85,099
2016-17	\$85,099
2017-18	\$85,099
2018-19	\$85,099
2019-20	\$85,099
2020-21	\$85,099

Commissioner of Education and Nebraska Department of Education

The position of Commissioner and the Nebraska State Department of Education were also both created in the Nebraska Constitution with the Commissioner being hired by the Board.²⁰

The Commissioner, or a designated representative, is required to attend all Board meetings except when the Board is selecting a Commissioner.²¹ Commissioner Matt Blomstedt was present at all meetings.²²

The Educator Certification division of NDE is self-funded by fees.²³ The annual budget for the division, which accounts for all certification activities, for the past five fiscal years, as well as the current fiscal year, is as follows:²⁴

Fiscal Year	Annual Budget Amount
2015-16	\$561,263
2016-17	\$591,651
2017-18	\$619,038
2018-19	\$603,883
2019-20	\$589,635
2020-21	\$635,902

Nebraska Professional Practices Commission

The Professional Practices Commission was legislatively created and consists of 12 members appointed by the Governor and shall be representative of elementary classroom teachers, secondary classroom teachers, school administrators, and postsecondary education.²⁵

Meetings are held when called by the chairperson and are not required to be held in any specific frequency.²⁶ The PPC typically meets four times per year.²⁷ In 2021, the PPC met three times after having to cancel its September meeting.²⁸

The PPC is completely cash funded from the Professional Practices Commission Fund,²⁹ which receives \$13.00 from each fee paid for the issuance of a certificate or permit.³⁰ The annual budget for the PPC for the past five fiscal years, as well as the current fiscal year, is as follows:

Fiscal Year	Annual Budget Amount
2015-16 ³¹	\$136,955
2016-17 ³²	\$138,166
2017-18 ³³	\$137,561
2018-19 ³⁴	\$138,224
2019-20 ³⁵	\$140,486
2020-21 ³⁶	\$145,235

CHAPTER III: TYPES OF TEACHING CERTIFICATES

Teaching certificates reviewed in this report are statutorily authorized in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-808.³⁷ The Board has adopted specific rules for these certificates in Nebraska Administrative Code Title 92 Chapter 21 §§ 005 and 006.³⁸ Statements from the NDE on the effectiveness of the licenses can be found in Appendices A, B, C and D.³⁹

The fee associated with a teaching certificate valid in both public and nonpublic school districts is \$55 or \$105 with fingerprint costs. Certificates valid online in nonpublic school districts are \$40 or \$90 with fingerprint costs.⁴⁰ Refer to next chapter for fingerprint requirements.

Initial Teaching Certificate

The Initial Teaching Certificate is valid for teaching in all Nebraska school systems except, if requested by the applicant at the time of application, a certificate will be issued that is only valid in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. The Initial Teaching Certificate expires August 31 in the fifth year following the year of issuance or renewal.⁴¹

For the five most recent certification years (September 16, 2016 to August 31, 2021), 9,257 Initial Teaching Certificates have been issued and one denied. There have been 25 revocations, as well as penalties assessed against six Initial Teaching Certificate holders.⁴²

An application for any type of teaching certificate can be denied if someone does not disclose required information such as a prior conviction or loss of license in another state or agency. Any teaching certificate can be subject to a minimum two-year revocation, up to a permanent revocation, for a wide-ranging level of activity including, but not limited to, a violation of school district policy to criminal activity. Meanwhile, penalties for teaching certificates can range from a private or public reprimand to a one-year suspension.⁴³

Standard Teaching Certificate

The Standard Teaching Certificate is valid for teaching in all Nebraska school systems except, if requested by the applicant at the time of application, a certificate will be issued that is only valid in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. The Standard Teaching Certificate expires August 31 in the fifth year following the year of issuance or renewal. An individual possessing this certificate type must be eligible to hold or have held an Initial Teaching Certificate and taught half-time or more for a minimum of two consecutive school years while holding a regular certificate.⁴⁴

For the five most recent certification years (September 16, 2016 to August 31, 2021), 22,476 Standard Teaching Certificates have been issued and none denied. There have been 29 revocations, as well as penalties assessed against 10 Standard Teaching Certificate holders.⁴⁵

Professional Teaching Certificate

The Professional Teaching Certificate is valid for teaching in all Nebraska school systems except, if requested by the applicant at the time of application, a certificate will be issued that is only valid in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. An individual possessing this certificate type must be eligible to

hold or have held a Standard Teaching Certificate, taught half-time or more for a minimum of two consecutive school years and have earned a Master's degree within the past ten years.⁴⁶

For the five most recent certification years (September 16, 2016 to August 31, 2021), 5,510 Professional Teaching Certificates have been issued and one denied. There have been six revocations, as well as penalties assessed against 10 Professional Teaching Certificate holders.⁴⁷

Temporary Teaching Certificate

The Temporary Teaching Certificate may be issued to allow the applicant time to complete the Human Relations requirement. The certificate is valid in all Nebraska school systems and expires 180 days after the date of issuance.⁴⁸

For the five most recent certification years (September 16, 2016 to August 31, 2021), 210 Temporary Teaching Certificates have been issued and none denied. There have been no revocations nor any penalties assessed against Temporary Teaching Certificate holders.⁴⁹

Endorsements

Endorsements designate a certificated teacher's specialization area for which they are eligible to teach. A first-time applicant cannot receive a Nebraska Certificate unless they have completed requisite coursework in at least one regular endorsement area and passed the required content test (content tests are discussed in the following chapter); they can add additional endorsements as they meet the requirements. The fee to add an endorsement to a valid certificate is \$40.⁵⁰

This endorsement exam requirement, effective September 1, 2015, also applies to any new endorsements added to certificates issued prior to that date.⁵¹ There are currently 68 different teaching endorsements which include subject matter content areas, as well as School Counselor, School Librarian, School Psychologist, Secondary Transition Specialist, eight different Special Education endorsements, and Speech-Language Pathologist.⁵² Two of these endorsements, School Librarians and School Psychologists, are discussed briefly below due to recent concerns brought to the attention of this Committee by practitioners. Only those specific concerns are addressed.

School Librarians

While this Committee has not heard issues about the licensing process for school librarians, it has heard concerns about proposed rule & regulation changes by the Board related to their role. Three of the e-mails received concisely illustrate the universal concerns. The first is from a middle/high school librarian in a rural public school district:

I am emailing you because I am concerned about the proposed changes to Rule 10 regarding school libraries. To only require one part time librarian basically per district is an extreme disservice to our students for both small and large districts. There is a huge misconception that all librarians do is sit and read all day while telling everyone to be quiet. This is far from the truth. School libraries and librarians provide essential services to the school. Not only do we promote the love of reading (which is one of the most important skills a person can learn), we teach students how to find and analyze information for various projects and research. This includes instruction on digital resources. We are also responsible for ordering,

cataloging, and promoting new books. Students do not automatically know how to select books, and we can help with that. Librarians are also often responsible for STEM education and technology for both students and teachers. We provide professional development for teachers and research ideas that can be used in the classroom. All of this takes time, planning, and effort-which requires full time positions. No one will want to do the necessary college training and classes for a part time position.⁵³

The second e-mail is from a school librarian in a preschool through eighth grade nonpublic school in Omaha:

All schools need to have at least a part time certified librarian at their school. One librarian cannot serve an entire school system. First of all, students need to have a school library which is stocked with books that are current and appealing to them. One person could not possibly know the needs of each individual school. For example, when I was working at two different schools, I discovered that the students at one of my schools read more nonfiction than the students at my other school. Therefore, I ordered more nonfiction books for that particular school. Also, when I am at school, I can see what the children are checking out and plan my book purchases accordingly. As a certified librarian, I had training on how to create and maintain a current collection of books for my students. In addition, I read and become familiar with as many different books as I can because my students and the faculty are looking for book recommendations. These recommendations also include books for our guided reading program. An individual who is not at the school on a regular basis would not understand the students' needs and a paraprofessional would not have the training on proper collection development.⁵⁴

The final e-mail this report will highlight comes from a 13-year school librarian that has worked in a variety of schools in Iowa and Nebraska, but is currently employed by Lincoln Public Schools working in an elementary school. In her email to the Committee Chairwoman she included a recent antidote about how librarians stepped up during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Last spring as schools were closing due to Covid teachers, schools, and districts were scrambling to figure out how to continue serving our Nebraska students. Lincoln Public Schools Director of Library Services Dr. Chris Haeffner and her amazing team did not skip a beat. Within a week the Daily Learning Challenges were up and running and students were greeted with amazing new content daily that encouraged reading, researching, and critical thinking skills. This online site received thousands of clicks daily not only from Lincoln Public Schools students and their families but from students across the state and even our country!⁵⁵

School Psychologists

On October 5, 2021, this Committee held a hearing on Legislative Resolution 213 “Interim study to examine the mental and behavioral health needs of Nebraska students and the role of school psychologists” introduced by Senator Day. A recurring theme from testifiers was the diverse value that school psychologists add to schools and the licensing challenges they face in Nebraska. Explaining the former, the president of the Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors (“NASSES”) stated:⁵⁶

School psychologists are uniquely qualified to provide a wide spectrum of services. Not only are they trained to provide school-based mental and behavioral health services, but psychologists provide leadership in areas such as academic interventions and instructional supports, services to promote safe and supportive school buildings, and data-based decision-making, just to name a few. With such versatility, my first call for help with a problem or crisis is to the school psychologist.

Unfortunately, licensing issues exist in Nebraska with this profession. The Director of the School Psychology graduate program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (“UNO”) testified to this point:⁵⁷

A current barrier to the full utilization of school psychologists is the inability for schools to be reimbursed for these services through Medicaid in Public Schools. Currently, school psychologists are credentialed through the Department of Education. Unfortunately, this credential is not recognized by the state Medicaid plan. To remedy this, we propose that the National Association of School Psychologists be added to the Provisional Licensed Mental Health practitioner application process as one of the approved credentialing institutions. School psychologists would then fall under the umbrella of approved provider, and districts could be reimbursed by Medicaid in Public Schools for the mental and behavioral services they provide. To put this in a national context, 35 states and the District of Columbia receive Medicaid reimbursement for services provided by school psychologists.

CHAPTER IV: TEACHING PREPARATION AND OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

The first step for aspiring teachers generally is enrollment into a teacher's education program. Nebraska has fifteen such programs which are located at all three primarily undergraduate University campuses, all three state colleges, and nine private institutions.⁵⁸ Admittance into any such program requires the successful passage of three basic skills competency tests as described below.⁵⁹

Praxis Core Academic Skills Test

Legal basis for the exam with recent historical context

The Nebraska Legislature, in 2003, passed Legislative Bill 685 introduced by Senator Raikes, Chair of the Education Committee, which made significant changes to the teacher certification statutes. This Education Committee priority bill had a 49-0 vote on Final Reading and was signed into law by Governor Mike Johanns.⁶⁰

Among the many changes in LB685 was the removal of the statutory requirement that the Board establish or designate basic skills competency examinations for prospective teachers. Instead, it redefined basic skills competency as either the successful completion of a Board-designated examination "taken by teacher education students at a standard institution of higher education" or "successful employment experience", removed basic skills competency from the statutory minimum requirements for teacher certification and added permissive language that the Board may include in its rules and regulations for certification that an applicant "has satisfactorily demonstrated basic skills competency".⁶¹ In his floor opening for the bill, Senator Raikes stated that, "Employment experience would be allowed to meet requirements ... for basic skills competency."⁶² However, the Board's rules and regulations dedicated to basic skills competency testing (92 NAC 23) and teacher college approval (92 NAC 20) retained the examination requirement for prospective education students.⁶³ The rule specified, and continues to specify, that, "all persons entering the teacher or educational administrator program of such institution receive satisfactory scores on a designated basic skills competency examination prior to being admitted to such program pursuant to 92 NAC 20."⁶⁴ Due to the existence of such rule, the "successful employment experience" provision of the statute is effectively rendered moot and prospective educators must take the exam prior to becoming teacher education students.

The rules and regulations in 92 NAC 23 previously maintained a requirement that the basic skills competency tests be individually scored and passed in three subject matters (reading, writing, and mathematics) without a composite score. However, in 2008 the Board adopted a composite score of the sum of the three individual scores with a caveat that no individual score be less than one point below the individual requirement.⁶⁵ The designated examination, since September 1, 2014, has been the Praxis Core Academic Skills test ("Praxis Core") and has maintained an identical composite score calculation/requirement.⁶⁶

In 2017, the Board adopted a rule change to allow a student to achieve a passing composite score for reading, writing and math without meeting a minimum score on each separate component; and upon the recommendation of a standard institution of higher education;⁶⁷ however, the rule change

was not approved by the governor.⁶⁸ According to the *Lincoln Journal Star* article, “A spokesman for Ricketts said the governor ‘encouraged the Department of Education to maintain high content knowledge testing standards for teachers in Nebraska’ and noted that education officials will work to revise the rule to both increase the teaching workforce and maintain high teacher quality.”⁶⁹

In 2019, the Legislature struck the provision “taken by teacher education students at a standard institution of higher education” from Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-807(1) in Legislative Bill 675 prioritized by the Education Committee.⁷⁰ At the same time, the Commissioner recommended further rule changes to 92 NAC 23, which included the following key components:⁷¹

- Allowing applicants for a teaching certificate to meet the basic skills competency examination requirements by:
 - Meeting a composite score on the Praxis Core with minimum requirements for each of the reading, writing and math components; or
 - Meeting minimum scores in the ELA (English, Reading & Writing) and math portions of the American College Test (“ACT”); or
 - Meeting the requirements with a combination of the two different testing products.
- Repealing the basic skills competency tests as a requirement for entrance into a teacher education program.

A public hearing was held on the proposed rule changes on May 29, 2019 with testimony from the Administrator of the Office of Accountability, Accreditation & Program Approval at the NDE and the Certification Officer at the University of Nebraska at Kearney (“UNK”). Written testimony was also received by the Certification Officer at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (“UNL”) and a 32-year veteran teacher whose daughter was attempting to pass the Praxis Core math test for admission into the teacher education program at Chadron State College.⁷² The June 2019 Board agenda indicated the adoption of the proposed rules as an action item;⁷³ however, the meeting minutes indicate that action items were removed from the agenda.⁷⁴

In 2020, at the recommendation of the NDE, Legislative Bill 1131 proposed to further modify Neb. Rev. Stat. § 807(1) by allowing basic skills competency to be demonstrated by “earned college credit” as well as by examination or successful employment experience;⁷⁵ however, the provision was removed in the committee amendment (AM2456).⁷⁶ LB1131 was indefinitely postponed at sine die.⁷⁷

Comparison with other states: Required examinations

According to the Education Testing Service (“ETS”), Nebraska is one of only five states that requires the Praxis Core for admission to a teacher education program. The others are Connecticut, Kentucky, North Carolina, and South Carolina. While requiring the Praxis Core for admittance into a teacher education program, Connecticut allows each such program to set their minimum scores for admittance.⁷⁸ Refer to next subsection for score requirements.

Eleven states require the Praxis Core for certification without an alternative exam option (Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Vermont and West Virginia). Alaska and Hawaii require either the Praxis Core or an alternative exam for certification. Of these states, eight may have a possible requirement for admission imposed by a specific teacher education programs (Alaska, Maine, Maryland,

Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, and North Dakota). Tennessee does not require the Praxis Core for certification, but some teacher education programs may require it for admittance. Minnesota only requires the Praxis Core for out-of-state certification applicants; it uses its own exam for applicants attending in-state teacher education programs. Meanwhile, Pennsylvania only requires it for Career and Technical Education teacher certificates and Oregon as a subject-matter requirement for specific teaching endorsements.⁷⁹

Seven states (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, Texas, and Washington) have their own exam for teacher certification while Illinois uses edTPA, a Pearson Education product that is passed as part of a teacher preparation program.⁸⁰ The remaining twenty states use the Praxis for subject-matter exams, but not core competency.⁸¹

Comparison with other states: Passing scores

Nebraska requires the following passing scores for the Praxis Core: reading 156, writing 162 and math 150. It also allows a composite score of 468 with minimum scores for reading, writing and math of 155, 161, and 149 respectively.⁸² However, it is up to individual postsecondary institutions as to whether they accept the composite score for admittance into its teacher education program.⁸³

When the Board attempted to revise the composite score in 2017, the passing score of 468 had no minimum for any individual component.⁸⁴ As previously mentioned, in 2019 the Commissioner proposed a rule change, but the Board did not take action on the proposal. Among other changes it would have kept the composite score of 468 with the following minimums: reading 148, writing 156 and math 142.⁸⁵

Ten of the other states requiring the Praxis Core at some point prior to certification with no alternative testing options also have reading, writing and math scores of 156, 162 and 150 respectively. Those states are Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Vermont, and West Virginia. Likewise, Minnesota, which requires Praxis Core for out-of-state teacher certification applicants, as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and North Carolina which provide an alternative option to the Praxis Core, has set the same passing scores of reading 156, writing 162, and math 150. As previously mentioned, North Carolina has a composite score of 468 with no minimum for any individual component.⁸⁶

Maine, however, has a composite score of 468 with a minimum passing score of reading 153, writing 159, and math 147. North Dakota has a lower writing score of 160 and a composite score of 466 with the following minimums: reading 149, writing 153 and math 143. South Carolina has a lower writing score requirement –158 – but has not adopted a composite score. Finally, Mississippi has a lower math score of 130, but not a composite score.⁸⁷

The debate surrounding the Praxis Core

There is a debate, not only in Nebraska, but around the country on the value of licensure exams for teachers, and certainly about their worthiness as an entrance exam for a teacher education program. Dr. Dan Goldhaber, Director of the Center for Education Data & Research at the University of Washington, provides a good summary of the debate in the abstract to one of his many scholarly writings on the topic:

Empirical research bears out the conventional wisdom that teacher quality is the key schooling resource influencing student achievement, so it is not surprising that policy makers attempt to influence it by regulating admission into the teacher labor market through licensure systems. Most of these systems require teachers to graduate from an approved teacher training institution and pass one or more tests, the notion being that these preservice requirements ensure a basic level of teacher competence. A criticism, however, is that these requirements dissuade talented individuals from attempting to become teachers, thereby lowering the quality of teachers in the workforce. It is shocking how little we actually know about key aspects of the teacher licensure–teacher quality equation. The great majority of the empirical literature on licensure speaks to one crucial link in the teacher licensure–teacher quality equation: the correlation between licensure requirements and student achievement. In general this literature suggests only weak links between specific licensure requirements and student achievement. Far less evidence exists on the impact of licensure on the pool of potential teachers, or who school district hiring officials would employ in the face of fewer requirements, or the absence of requirements altogether.⁸⁸

On September 16, 2021, this Committee held a hearing on Legislative Resolution 157 “Interim study to examine how Nebraska schools can recruit teachers and administrators who accurately reflect the proportion of students of color attending Nebraska schools” introduced by Senator Pansing Brooks. A recurring theme from testifiers, including those that submitted written testimony ahead of the hearing, was the need to eliminate the Praxis Core as an admission requirement for teacher education programs or eliminate it altogether. Testifiers pointed out the research showing that the exams are not an indicator of effectiveness in the classroom. There were calls for its elimination by groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (“NAACP”) and the Nebraska Indian Education Association, as well as the Nebraska State Education Association (“NSEA”).⁸⁹

The NSEA shared the following example of a teacher struggling with the Praxis Core (in this case it was the licensing of a teacher from out-of-state, not entrance to a teacher education program):

And so, for instance, we’ve been working with a teacher who, who has been teaching on a probationary certificate for a couple of years. He can’t pass the Praxis Core because he’s a Spanish teacher and English is his second language. He’s great at what he does, but he can’t pass the writing portion of the Praxis Core. But he’s been proven to be an exemplary educator.⁹⁰

A recent update from the NSEA indicates that since the September hearing, this teacher has passed his exam. The district he was working for advocated on his behalf, and the NSEA worked with the NDE to get a Spanish version of the exam for him to take.⁹¹

At the hearing, the NSEA also cited to leading research on the exam in our state:

In his recently completed study of teacher education in Nebraska, Dr. David Steiner, executive director of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, stated: Admissions tests are controversial: (1) they’re expensive to take, particularly for

multiple-time test takers; (2) basic pedagogical tests, including the Praxis Core, have not been shown to correlate with teaching effectiveness; and (3) they reproduce the inequity-- the inequality of prior access to strong education, thereby disadvantaging minority applicants at disproportionate levels. The Institute recommends that the Praxis Core not be used as an entrance exam.⁹²

While less academic, numerous blog articles and websites, including Education Week and Forbes, have focused on this topic alleging, for example, that you're more likely to pass the bar exam than a teacher licensing exam or that the Praxis exam is becoming more difficult.⁹³ Several of the references cited provide sample questions. Additionally, Appendices E, F and G of this report provide sample questions directly from the ETS Praxis study guides for the three Praxis Core exams as a demonstration of what is expected of aspiring teachers.⁹⁴

Information on pass rates for the exam is difficult to come by. For example, according to the National Council on Teacher Quality ("NCTQ"), first time pass rates by subject matter for basic skills exams are only available from seven states (none of which require the Praxis Core) and that most published "pass rates reported are *final* pass rates after multiple attempts."⁹⁵ However, one statistic from UNK presented in 2019 testimony to the proposed rule changes by the Board, shows that, on its campus alone from 2014 to 2019 "over 250 students did not pass all three sections of the Praxis Core test."⁹⁶

A review of national data pulled from the ETS website indicates the following pass rates. This data represents statistics calculated from all attempts, including multiple attempts from a single individual, during 2019-2020.⁹⁷

Exam	Number of Examinees	Median Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Average Range	Nebraska Passing Score
Reading (5713)	21,140	170.00	168.17	21.44	154-186	156
Writing (5723)	27,416	160.00	159.69	13.83	152-168	162
Math (5733)	26,191	164.00	162.91	23.58	146-182	150

A review of the data indicates that despite the most exam attempts, the median score on the writing test is still below the Nebraska passing score by two points. The math exam, which is most frequently referred to as the biggest barrier to overall success, also has a significant number of attempts compared to reading, has the low end of the average performance range below the Nebraska passing score and the largest standard deviation. One must also keep in mind, that many of the test takers nationwide are taking this for certification not entrance into the teacher education program. Arguments lie on both sides of the issue as to whether the timing influences the results. Although the NTCQ suggests, "Practically speaking, screening needs to occur at an early enough stage in the college career that teacher candidates could take coursework to fill in any gaps, or choose a different major if they are falling far short."⁹⁸

There are also strong advocates in Nebraska for keeping either the Praxis Core or an alternative exam as a requirement both for certification and as an entrance requirement for teacher education programs. Highly-respected experts in the field have indicated that removing the requirement as a prerequisite to a teacher education program "is a disservice to students to allow them to invest significant time and money as they progress through an educator

preparation program only to potentially be denied the certificate if they do not meet the basic skills requirement.”⁹⁹ In testimony regarding the Board’s proposed rule change in 2019, UNL went on record supporting “the additional options to meet the basic skills requirement” stating “the use of composite score options in the current test, the addition of the ACT, and the ability to use a combination of tests to demonstrate basic skills ... would allow students a variety of ways to demonstrate proficiency. This would ensure that performance standards are maintained but give teacher candidates options.”¹⁰⁰

Cost of the exams

Each of the Praxis Core exams, if taken individually, cost \$90 and are approximately 90 minutes long. Students can also chose to take a combined test for \$150; it allows 4½ hours to complete. Fee waivers are available to qualified low-income applicants.¹⁰¹ These fees do not include any test preparation courses students choose to take. While the Khan Academy offers free prep,¹⁰² the UNO advertises test prep for \$129 to cover all three core exams.¹⁰³ Other options, including private tutoring, are pricier. For example, Teachers Test Prep’s Golden Apple premium level of support is \$255/exam.¹⁰⁴

Completion of a Teacher Education Program

There are two components of teacher licensure that are consistent across all states: applicants must have 1) earned a bachelor’s degree, and 2) completed an approved teacher education program. Often, these paths are combined in colleges of education. These two requirements are also part of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification Interstate Agreement (“NASDTEC Agreement”).¹⁰⁵

Nebraska Rev. Stat. § 79-809(2) requires that applicants for an entry-level certificate must have “satisfactorily completed, within two years of the date of application, an approved program at a standard institution of higher education.”¹⁰⁶ The Legislature has given the Board the authority to approve such teacher education programs, and it has adopted 92 NAC 20 to outline such approval requirements.¹⁰⁷ As previously noted, there are fifteen such programs in the state.¹⁰⁸ In addition to completing such a program, applicants must have a baccalaureate degree.¹⁰⁹ For a Professional Teaching Certificate they must have a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Technology, Special Education or in the applicant’s content area.¹¹⁰ All teaching certificates also have a recency requirement defined as:

Verification of required years of teaching/administration in the same school system within the immediate past five years from date of application while holding a valid regular certificate **OR** *completion of an appropriate number of* pre-approved semester hours at an approved teacher education institution in the immediate past five years from date of application.¹¹¹

One criticism about the teacher education program requirements stem from the difficulty of teachers from other states getting licensed in Nebraska. Anecdotally, the NSEA has shared the following examples: 1) that some applicants need \$15,000 - \$18,000 in additional coursework to become licensed here, 2) that one new professor at UNK’s teacher education program, who held a teacher certification in another state, applying for a Nebraska license to teach K-12 was

told that to be eligible for a certificate she would need to take the college course she currently teaches, and 3) a former Teacher of the Year from Kansas with more than 15 years of experience could not get certified to teach in Nebraska due to similar issues.¹¹²

A review of education requirements across the country illustrates great disparities in terms of course requirements for teachers seeking a Nebraska license. Generally speaking, the requirements can be broken down into states that have education requirements, those that generally require one state-specific course, those that don't have education requirements, and those that don't have requirements provided the teacher is coming from a member state of the NASDTEC Agreement (of which Nebraska is a party). For the purpose of this analysis, it is assumed that the teacher seeking the Nebraska license has a valid license in another state, is currently or has recently taught, and has subject matter coursework in the endorsement area. Safety trainings were not considered coursework in this breakdown.¹¹³

Nebraska joins 13 other states in requiring coursework: California, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Wisconsin.¹¹⁴ Applicants in Nebraska, like most of the other states, submit transcripts for review with their application. The NDE can, at their discretion, choose to send the transcripts for review by a certification officer at one of the teacher education programs in the state to assist with this analysis.¹¹⁵

Seven states have required state-specific course requirements, which is generally just one course related to its history or constitution. These are Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming. Connecticut and Vermont waive any course requirements if the applicant is coming from a member state of the NASDTEC Agreement. The remaining 27 states have no course requirements for licensed teachers seeking license in its state.¹¹⁶

Human Relations & Special Education Training Requirements

Nebraska requires certificated teachers to have completed human relations and special education training requirements.¹¹⁷ For applicants that attended a teacher education program in Nebraska, these training requirements are met.¹¹⁸ For those attending teacher education programs out-of-state, and those applicants seeking a Nebraska license, their transcripts will be reviewed for equivocal courses to fulfill the requirements.¹¹⁹

In 2003, LB685, in its broad revisions of teacher certification in the state, redefined human relations training and special education training the definitions of which both stating “training means course work or employment experiences.”¹²⁰ In his opening to the bill on General File, Senator Raikes highlighted the ability to use employment experience to meet both of these requirements, as well as basic skills competency.¹²¹ These provisions of statute have not been revised since LB685 was enacted.¹²²

In addition to taking a specific approved course or an educational course dealing with diversity in the classroom, human relations training can be met “by submitting a written, verified, narrative of your K-12 employment experience which provided you with the opportunity to acquire the” following six skills:¹²³

1. An awareness and understanding of the values, lifestyles, contributions, and history of a pluralistic society
2. The ability to recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, including but not limited to sexism, racism, prejudice, and discrimination, and an awareness of the impact such biases have on interpersonal relations
3. The ability to translate knowledge of human relations into attitudes, skills, and techniques which result in favorable experiences for students
4. The ability to recognize the ways in which dehumanizing biases may be reflected in instructional materials
5. Respect for human dignity and individual rights; and
6. The ability to relate effectively to other individuals and to groups in a pluralistic society other than the teacher's own.¹²⁴

As previously mentioned, applicants lacking human relations training can be issued a temporary teaching certificate valid for 180 days.¹²⁵

A narrative can also be submitted based upon employment experience in a classroom to meet the special education training requirement. This training requirement is not required for the temporary teaching certificate nor the provisional permit (which, while not addressed in this report, will be researched in the future).¹²⁶

In terms of comparison to other states requirements, these components may be required by any of 13 other states in requiring coursework for license in their state.¹²⁷

Praxis Subject Assessments

As mentioned in the previous chapter, applicants must complete the required coursework and pass any required subject assessments to earn their endorsement(s). The Board has chosen Praxis Subject Assessments for this requirement,¹²⁸ which “measure general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge.”¹²⁹ According to ETS, “Praxis Subject Assessments range from one hour to four hours long and include selected-response questions, essay or constructed-response questions, or a combination of both question types. The number of questions and length of each test varies depending on the test.”¹³⁰

The Board currently requires a Praxis subject assessment for 40 of the 68 endorsements.¹³¹ The fee for the Praxis subject assessment exams range from \$50-\$209, with some exam bundle options available.¹³² Nebraska joins 40 other states that use the Praxis Subject Assessment exams to test content knowledge.¹³³

While anecdotally the subject assessment exams are much less controversial and much less passable than the Praxis Core exams, the NSEA reports that there is still exploration to be done on each exam related to the endorsement it supports. For example, music teachers are required to take an exam that focuses heavily on theory versus application.¹³⁴

Background Check

Applicants for the first issuance of a certificate that have not held continuous residence in Nebraska for the immediate past five years are required to submit fingerprints as part of their

application.¹³⁵ As previously mentioned, a conditional teaching permit may be granted for up to one year while awaiting a criminal background check.¹³⁶ The fee for fingerprinting is \$50.¹³⁷

Nebraska statute further requires applicants be of “moral, mental, and physical fitness for teaching, all in accordance with sound educational practices.”¹³⁸ Personal and professional fitness is ascertained by the answering of a series of questions on the application as prescribed by the Board.¹³⁹

All states except seven (Illinois, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Virginia) require background checks as part of the teacher licensure process. These seven put the responsibility on a hiring district during the employment process.¹⁴⁰

Reciprocity

Only eight states (Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, and Oklahoma) offer full reciprocity for out-of-state teachers.¹⁴¹ As reported by The Council of State Governments, “Thirty-three states offer licensure incentives for out-of-state teachers who have various levels of successful teaching experience. However, [there are] intricacies of each state’s statutes and policies.” Nebraska is not one such state.¹⁴² Previous sections of this report have examined some of the various requirements for teachers certified in another state when applying for a Nebraska teaching certificate, which included a comparison of Nebraska to other states in the Union.

Recent efforts by the Legislature have attempted to expand reciprocity opportunities for teachers wishing to work in Nebraska. In 2021, Senator Sander’s bill was enacted to guarantee reciprocity by means of a two-year preliminary permit to military spouses that have been licensed for at least one year. The bill explicitly states that applicants for this permit shall not be required to meet the human relations training requirement.¹⁴³

In this same session, Senator Vargas’ bill was amended into an Education Committee priority bill and enacted. It guarantees reciprocity via a two-year temporary certificate to applicants that have completed a teacher education program and possess a teaching certificate in good standing from another state. It further allows the Commissioner to grant a temporary teaching certificate to an applicant that has earned at least a bachelor’s degree, satisfactorily demonstrated basic skills competency and passed any appropriate subject area examinations as required by the Board for endorsement. This bill does not explicitly refer to the human relations training requirement.¹⁴⁴

The Board has not yet adopted any new rules or regulations related to these two pieces of legislation.



Appendix A

October 15, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to explain why it is believed that the initial teaching certificates are effective. The initial teaching certificate is the entry level teaching certificate and is largely for those who have recently completed a teacher preparation program from a standard institution of higher education and are new to the profession.

The initial teaching certificate is issued for five years and can be renewed.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions on this certificate type. I can be reached at 402-471-0738 or at clayton.waddle@nebraska.gov.

Sincerely,

Clayton L. Waddle, Ed.D.
Director – Educator Certification



Appendix B

October 15, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to explain why it is believed that standard teaching certificates are effective. The standard teaching certificate is viewed at the intermediate teaching certificate and is issued to someone who has held or is eligible to hold an initial teaching certificate along with two half-time or more consecutive years of verified teaching experience. The standard teaching certificate is largely for those who have completed a teacher preparation program from a standard institution of higher education and have verified teaching experience.

The standard teaching certificate is issued for five years and can be renewed.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions on this certificate type. I can be reached at 402-471-0738 or at clayton.waddle@nebraska.gov.

Sincerely,

Clayton L. Waddle, Ed.D.
Director – Educator Certification



Appendix C

October 15, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to explain why it is believed that professional teaching certificates are effective. The professional teaching certificate is viewed at the highest level of teaching certificate. The professional teaching certificate is issued to someone who has held or is eligible to hold a standard teaching certificate, taught have two half-time or more consecutive years of verified teaching experience and within the last ten years earned a qualifying Master's (or higher) degree. The professional teaching certificate is largely for those who have completed a teacher preparation program from a standard institution of higher education, have verified teaching experience and have earned an advanced degree

The professional teaching certificate is issued for ten years and can be renewed.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions on this certificate type. I can be reached at 402-471-0738 or at clayton.waddle@nebraska.gov.

Sincerely,

Clayton L. Waddle, Ed.D.
Director – Educator Certification



Appendix D

October 15, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to explain why it is believed that temporary teaching certificates are effective. The temporary teaching certificate is available for any applicant who is applying for a teaching certificate or permit and has not completed the human relations training as defined by the Legislature. Since all Nebraska standard institutions of higher education provide human relations training as part of their education program that all students have to complete, this temporary certificate is only needed from individuals who did not attend a Nebraska standard institution of higher education or who are applying for a teaching permit that does not require the completion of a teacher preparation program.

These certificates are issued for 180 days and are not renewable.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions on this certificate type. I can be reached at 402-471-0738 or at clayton.waddle@nebraska.gov.

Sincerely,

Clayton L. Waddle, Ed.D.
Director, Educator Certification

Appendix E

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Computer Delivery

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

The screenshot shows a computer-delivered test interface. At the top left is the ETS PRAXIS logo. In the center, it says "Question 1 of 94". On the top right, there are navigation buttons: "Review" (with a magnifying glass 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 these buttons is a "Show Time" button. The main content area contains the following text:

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

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

- Ideas
- Voice
- Conventions
- Organization

At the bottom of the question area, there is a grey instruction box that says: "Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response."

Sample Test Questions

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

Directions: Each statement or passage in this test is followed by a question or questions based on its content. After reading a statement or passage, choose the best answer to each question from among the choices given. Answer all questions following a statement or passage on the basis of what is *stated* or *implied* in that statement or passage; you are not expected to have any previous knowledge of the topics treated in the statements and passages. Remember, try to answer every question.

1. Marguerite Duras' achievement as a filmmaker was marked by refusal to become a professional of the cinema, with all that this implies in terms of prestige, influence, financial backing, and even know-how. Although she made many films, she said that she knows very little about the technology of cinema and that she had no reason to learn any more: "I want to remain where I am, on the first grounds of cinema, in the primitive zones."

The passage is primarily concerned with

- (A) condemning critics' failure to appreciate the work of a particular filmmaker
- (B) describing the attitude of a particular filmmaker
- (C) analyzing the style of a particular filmmaker
- (D) criticizing the technical shortcomings of a particular filmmaker
- (E) discussing the content of the works of a particular filmmaker

Questions 2-3 refer to the following passage.

One promising energy source is sophisticated development of the basic windmills that have ground grain, drained land, and pumped water for centuries.

- Line 5 Coupled with advanced storage batteries, very large windmills might satisfy total energy needs for rural areas, towns, and even small cities in locales where strong and prevalent winds can be counted on. Wind power has several advantages. First, no new technology is really required. Second, the energy source is inexhaustible and one hundred percent clean. Third, relatively little capital investment is needed to install or operate windmills.

- 10 But wind power has major disadvantages, too. Most obviously, it will work only in limited geographical areas. Less obviously, large-scale deployment of huge windmills might have unforeseen atmospheric and environmental effects. And forests of giant windmills might turn into ugly eyesores. Finally, the amount of electricity that could be generated by wind power would simply be insufficient to meet major nationwide energy needs.

- 15 However, a network of sea-based windmills, placed on deep-ocean buoys and driven by the same prevailing winds that once powered sailing vessels all over the world, could provide a substantial fraction of the world's electrical energy—especially if the buoy-based windmills could be linked to land by loss-free superconducting power transmission cables.

2. The passage states that sea-based windmills could provide energy effectively if
 - (A) they were constructed in shallow water
 - (B) they were located near major urban ports
 - (C) they were placed on stationary platforms
 - (D) the power they generated could be transferred efficiently to shore
 - (E) the power they generated could be stored in advanced high-capacity batteries

3. Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage?
- (A) A series of interrelated events is arranged chronologically.
 - (B) A controversial theory is proposed and then persuasively defended.
 - (C) An unforeseen problem is described and several examples are provided.
 - (D) A criticism is summarized, evaluated, and then dismissed.
 - (E) A problematical issue is discussed and a partial solution suggested.
4. Jazz is the most original aesthetic form to emerge from the United States, but it has not always been the most popular. After the big-band era of the 1930s, most jazz was played in small rooms that held about a hundred people. The sound systems were usually bad, and the players were considered to be small-time entertainers. If the music was strong enough, however, the audience would quiet down or shout approval when something especially swinging was played. Unlike in the more polished venues found recently, the participation of listeners was not forbidden, and people were not expected to keep absolutely quiet until a song ended.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

- (A) describe the critical response to jazz just after the big-band era
- (B) discuss how jazz performers have been affected by their audiences
- (C) indicate how audience response to jazz has changed over time
- (D) recount the author's experiences of listening to jazz as a young person
- (E) outline the historical origins of jazz in the early part of the twentieth century

Question 5 refers to the following passage.

When Michelangelo began painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he had five painters assisting him in the techniques of fresco, in which he was relatively unskilled.

Line 5 Finding their work inadequate, he dismissed them and resolved to accomplish the whole task by himself. Vasari, his friend and biographer, tells us that Michelangelo worked through four years "with the utmost solicitude, labor, and study."

10 Creativity such as Michelangelo's is self-nourishing: Vasari states that Michelangelo "became more and more kindled by his fervor in the work." I believe that this interplay of
15 creativity and effort is what constitutes genius—and what made Michelangelo a great artist.

5. In order to evaluate the validity of the author's claim regarding Michelangelo (lines 14-17), it would be most helpful to know which of the following?
- (A) How often Vasari and Michelangelo met to work on Michelangelo's biography
 - (B) How Vasari characterized other great painters
 - (C) Whether others would corroborate Vasari's descriptions of Michelangelo
 - (D) Whether Michelangelo was skilled at fresco painting when he finished the Sistine ceiling
 - (E) Whether Michelangelo created all of his major works without assistants

6. In 1888, just as its hospital was nearing completion, what was to become the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine ran out of funds; the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on which the parent university had been depending for money, was experiencing financial difficulty. The railroad's financial troubles proved a stroke of luck for the cause of women's rights. When the directors did open the school in 1893, it was because five women had raised more than \$500,000 through a multicity campaign. They had insisted, as a condition of this endowment, that Hopkins be the first school of medicine in the nation to admit men and women on equal terms.

Which of the following is an unstated assumption made by the author of the passage?

- (A) Even if it had not experienced financial difficulties, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad would not have furnished Johns Hopkins University with additional funds.
- (B) The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine would have excluded women if the fund-raisers had not insisted that the school admit women.
- (C) In 1888 Johns Hopkins University was suffering from a shortage of funds in all its schools.
- (D) The establishment of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine would spur the development of other schools of medicine.
- (E) The women fund-raisers themselves wished to be trained as doctors.

7. Recently, increasing attention has been called to the fact that the four freedoms of universities—the freedom to determine who may teach, what will be taught, how it will be taught, and who may study what is taught—are being threatened by the many regulations imposed on universities by the federal government.

Surprisingly, much of this criticism of governmental regulation has come from the universities themselves. After all, universities eagerly accepted the money that was made available for research and scholarships by the National Defense Education Act, which was a governmental response to the launching of Sputnik I in 1957 by the Soviet Union. As its name implies, the National Defense Education Act was concerned with a governmental goal, the national defense. Moreover, the federal government made it clear from the very beginning that it intended to control how such money was spent. Similarly, universities actively supported the Higher Education Act of 1965, which was part of a governmental attempt to end discrimination—a goal that can accurately be described as political.

Clearly, any attempt by the federal government to limit the four freedoms of universities is undesirable. But it is also important to remember that the federal government became involved in university education because it was seeking admirable goals, goals that were also sought by universities.

The author would be LEAST likely to agree with which of the following statements about governmental regulation and universities?

- (A) Universities are better able to define their four freedoms than is the federal government.
- (B) Universities are going to continue to criticize governmental regulation in the near future.
- (C) The federal government should consult with university personnel before imposing new regulations.
- (D) The federal government passed the National Defense Education Act in order to attain a desirable goal.
- (E) The federal government should limit the four freedoms of universities if the goal it seeks is a desirable one.

Questions 8-9 refer to the following passage.

Lyndon Johnson's father once told him that he did not belong in politics unless he could walk into a roomful of people and tell immediately who was for him and who was against him. In fact, even the shrewd Johnson had not quite such uncanny power, but his liking for this story tells us something useful about him: he set much store by instinct. No wonder, then, that it would be to his instincts—honed in the Texas hill country, sharpened in a life of politics, confirmed in a long and respected congressional career—that he would often turn while in the White House.

This reliance on instinct enabled Johnson to put on the presidency like a suit of comfortable old clothes. John Kennedy, on the other hand, came to it with a historical, nearly theoretical view of what was required of a strong President—he knew exactly what Woodrow Wilson had said about the office and he had read Corwin and Neustadt. With eager confidence, Kennedy acquired a presidential suit off the rack and put on a little weight to make himself fit it.

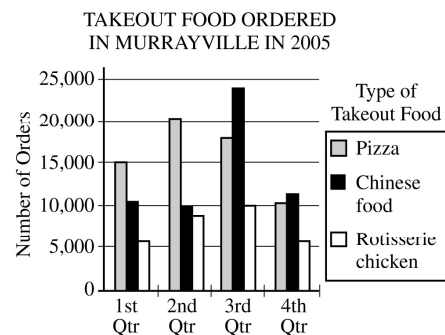
8. Which of the following words, if substituted for the word “uncanny” in line 6, would introduce the LEAST change in the meaning of the sentence?
- (A) legendary
(B) subtle
(C) invisible
(D) persuasive
(E) supernatural
9. In the passage, the author is primarily concerned with
- (A) explaining an event
(B) making a comparison
(C) listing facts
(D) retelling a story
(E) refuting an argument

10. Alice Fletcher, the Margaret Mead of her day, assisted several American Indian nations that were threatened with removal from their land to the Indian Territory. She helped them in petitioning Congress for legal titles to their farms. When no response came from Washington, she went there herself to present their case.

According to the statement above, Alice Fletcher attempted to

- (A) imitate the studies of Margaret Mead
(B) obtain property rights for American Indians
(C) protect the integrity of the Indian Territory
(D) become a member of the United States Congress
(E) persuade Washington to expand the Indian Territory

11.



Which conclusion about takeout food ordered in Murrayville in 2005 is best supported by the data presented in the graph above?

- (A) Chinese food was the most ordered takeout food for each quarter.
(B) During the second quarter, fewer orders were placed for Chinese food than for rotisserie chicken.
(C) During the fourth quarter, an approximately equal number of orders were placed for pizza and for Chinese food.
(D) During each quarter, more orders were placed for pizza than for either Chinese food or rotisserie chicken.
(E) More orders were placed for pizza during the second half of the year than were placed during the first half of the year.

Questions 12-17 refer to the following pair of passages.

Passage 1

When conducted properly, ecotourism—
responsible travel to natural areas that
conserves the environment and sustains the
well-being of local people—is less destructive
Line 5 than many other environmental uses. The
impacts of ecotourism can be managed to
realize a balance between preservation and
development; such balance can be achieved,
for example, by limiting both the size and
10 number of tours in a particular area and by
incorporating environmentally conscious
meals, lodging, waste management, and
wildlife viewing principles into the tours.
Further, by creating economic incentives for
15 impoverished villages or communities,
ecotourism can encourage local guardianship
of natural resources, habitats, and wildlife.

Passage 2

The environmental impacts of Lapa Rios (LR)
Eco Lodge in Costa Rica are clear and
20 unambiguous. First, the LR nature reserve and
adjacent forest areas have shown pronounced
forest regrowth since the beginning of
ecotourism in the region in the 1990s.
Second, the increasing number of tourists at
25 LR has not led to negative consequences,
because the company prepared for such
increases from the start: trails were designed
to handle a number of simultaneous tours with
dispersion, and trail policy rigorously limits the
30 number of tours per day per trail (to two) and
guests per tour (to eight).

12. The authors of the passages agree that

- (A) preservation is more important than development
- (B) measuring the success of ecotourism can be difficult
- (C) ecotourism is justifiably more expensive than regular tourism
- (D) ecotourism can have positive effects when it is done correctly
- (E) the responsibility of environmental stewardship falls on the local people

13. Which of the following statements best describes the relationship between the two passages?

- (A) Passage 1 describes the causes of an event, whereas Passage 2 focuses on the effects of the event.
- (B) Passage 1 addresses current policies, whereas Passage 2 considers future policies.
- (C) Passage 1 makes general arguments, whereas Passage 2 offers a specific argument.
- (D) Passage 1 introduces a problem for which a tentative solution is provided in Passage 2.
- (E) Passage 1 advances a claim that is refuted with a counterclaim in Passage 2.

14. Unlike the author of Passage 2, the author of Passage 1 mentions

- (A) the number of allowable tours
- (B) the unintended consequences of ecotourism
- (C) the economic impact on local residents
- (D) the environmental ramifications of ecotourism
- (E) preferred modes of travel through natural areas

15. Which of the following specific strategies mentioned by the author of Passage 1 is exemplified in Passage 2 ?

- (A) Limiting the size and number of tours
- (B) Recycling the waste produced by ecotourists
- (C) Increasing economic opportunities for communities
- (D) Incorporating environmentally conscious meals
- (E) Constructing environmentally friendly accommodations

The passage from the previous page is reproduced here for reference in answering questions 16-17.

Passage 1

When conducted properly, ecotourism—responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people—is less destructive than many other environmental uses. The impacts of ecotourism can be managed to realize a balance between preservation and development; such balance can be achieved, for example, by limiting both the size and number of tours in a particular area and by incorporating environmentally conscious meals, lodging, waste management, and wildlife viewing principles into the tours. Further, by creating economic incentives for impoverished villages or communities, ecotourism can encourage local guardianship of natural resources, habitats, and wildlife.

Passage 2

The environmental impacts of Lapa Rios (LR) Eco Lodge in Costa Rica are clear and unambiguous. First, the LR nature reserve and adjacent forest areas have shown pronounced forest regrowth since the beginning of ecotourism in the region in the 1990s. Second, the increasing number of tourists at LR has not led to negative consequences, because the company prepared for such increases from the start: trails were designed to handle a number of simultaneous tours with dispersion, and trail policy rigorously limits the number of tours per day per trail (to two) and guests per tour (to eight).

16. As used in line 19, “clear” most nearly means
- (A) pure
 - (B) obvious
 - (C) luminous
 - (D) serene
 - (E) bare
17. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the implied argument in Passage 2 regarding the impact of Lapa Rios Eco Lodge?
- (A) Lapa Rios Eco Lodge is the only lodge of its kind in Costa Rica.
 - (B) Other forms of tourism have flourished in Costa Rica since the 1990s.
 - (C) Wildlife use the Lapa Rios nature reserve and adjacent forest areas as habitat.
 - (D) The company that manages Lapa Rios Eco Lodge is not a Costa Rican company.
 - (E) Forest areas throughout Costa Rica have shown pronounced forest regrowth since the 1990s.
18. If it can be said that a single voice dominated the American theater from the 1980s through 2005, that voice definitely belonged to playwright August Wilson. Wilson, who has been dubbed “the American Shakespeare,” was a prolific writer with more than ten major plays, numerous theatrical commentaries, and other creative work to his credit. Yet it is not merely the number of his productions that marks Wilson’s dominance in modern drama, but his ability to put into words the ideas and experiences of everyday African Americans.
- The passage supports which of the following claims about August Wilson?
- Select all that apply.
- (A) He was greatly influenced by William Shakespeare.
 - (B) He was a highly productive writer who wrote in various genres.
 - (C) He successfully articulated the thoughts and experiences of a specific community.

Answers to Sample Questions

1. The correct answer is (B). This question tests your ability to recognize the main point emphasized about Marguerite Duras as a filmmaker. According to the passage, Duras refused to become involved with much of the fame, financial matters, and technology associated with the professional cinema. None of the choices except (B) describes the primary concern of the passage.

2. The correct answer is (D). This question tests your recognition of a supporting detail mentioned in the passage about how sea-based windmills could be used to harness wind power. Specifically, in the third paragraph the author mentions a means by which the energy production of a network of sea-based windmills could be utilized. None of the choices except (D) describes information mentioned in the passage.

3. The correct answer is (E). This question tests your ability to recognize how the passage is organized. (E) best describes how the three paragraphs in the passage are presented. "A problematical issue is discussed" summarizes the first two paragraphs, in which both the pros and cons of a complicated situation are examined. The suggestion of "a partial solution," which addresses some of the problems of using windmills to generate electricity, is made in the third paragraph. None of the choices except (E) accurately reflects how the information in the passage is presented.

4. The correct answer is (C). This question tests your understanding of the primary purpose of the passage. In this selection, the function of the passage is to convey how audiences since the big-band era have responded to jazz. The passage indicates that in the past the audience's response could be quiet or loud "when something especially swinging was played." This kind of audience engagement is then contrasted with what occurs in "the more polished venues found recently." None of the choices except (C) speaks directly about the change in audiences' responses to jazz.

5. The correct answer is (C). This question tests your ability to understand the author's main claim about Michelangelo and then assess what information bears most directly on the soundness of that argument. In making the comment about Michelangelo's greatness, the author relies on information Vasari has supplied. If Vasari's claims that Michelangelo worked with great care and was inspired by his work are not correct, the author's claim about Michelangelo may not be valid. It would therefore be useful to know the information represented by choice (C). None of the other choices would help evaluate the author's claim about Michelangelo.

6. The correct answer is (B). This question tests your ability to determine an underlying assumption the author makes about women being admitted to study medicine at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. The last sentence of the passage indicates that the fund-raisers had to insist that Johns Hopkins admit women; therefore, it can be inferred that the author believes the admission of women resulted directly from their insistence and would otherwise not have taken place. None of the other choices except (B) is an assumption underlying the passage.

7. The correct answer is (E). This question tests your ability first to recognize how the author views governmental regulation and universities and secondly to apply that information. In the first sentence of the third paragraph, the author expresses the opinion that all attempts by the government to limit the four freedoms of universities are undesirable. Given that position, the author would be least likely to agree with a statement that endorses the federal government's limiting university freedoms. None of the choices except (E) presents a statement with which the author would clearly disagree.

8. The correct answer is (E). This question tests your ability to understand the meaning of the word "uncanny" as it is used in the first paragraph. The "uncanny" power described in the first sentence is clearly not a power that people ordinarily have. Choice (E), "supernatural," is a synonym of "uncanny." None of the other choices means the same as "uncanny."

9. The correct answer is (B). This question tests your ability to recognize the main focus in the passage as it relates to Johnson and Kennedy. The passage is about the different approaches of Johnson and Kennedy to the presidency. In explaining how each approached the office and how each differed in this respect, the author is necessarily making a comparison. None of the choices except (B) describes the passage's primary concern.

10. The correct answer is (B). This question tests your ability to identify a paraphrase of the main idea of the passage. The passage states that Alice Fletcher helped American Indians secure legal title to their land so they would not be forced to abandon it. This idea is expressed in (B), "obtain property rights for American Indians." None of the other choices accurately describes what the passage indicates Alice Fletcher tried to do.

11. The correct answer is (C). This question tests your ability to analyze information presented through visual representations. Results for the fourth quarter show that orders for pizza and for Chinese food were about the same. None of the other choices represents conclusions that can be supported by the information depicted in the graphic.

12. The correct answer is (D). This question tests your ability to identify the relationship between ideas in two passages addressing similar topics. Both passages discuss ecotourism and its environmental impact when carried out effectively. According to the opening sentence of Passage 1, “When conducted properly, ecotourism . . . is less destructive than many other environmental uses.” Passage 2 illustrates this idea, showing that the authors of the two passages agree on the potential benefits of ecotourism. None of the other choices represents ideas on which the authors would clearly agree.

13. The correct answer is (C). This question tests your ability to recognize the relationship between two passages addressing similar topics. Passage 1 makes general claims about how ecotourism can be carried out effectively; Passage 2 cites the Lapa Rios Eco Lodge as a specific example of such ecotourism. None of the other choices describes how the two passages relate to each other.

14. The correct answer is (C). This question tests your ability to identify specific details in a passage and compare the approaches authors take to a topic. Only Passage 1 directly mentions the economic impact of ecotourism on local people. None of the other choices accurately describes the difference between the two passages.

15. The correct answer is (A). This question tests your ability to identify a concrete example in Passage 2 that illustrates a strategy mentioned in Passage 1. Specifically, Passage 2 refers to a policy that “rigorously limits the number of tours per day per trail (to two) and guests per tour (to eight).” This reference is an example of “limiting both the size and number of tours in a particular area,” which is mentioned in Passage 1. None of the other choices represents something for which a specific example is provided in Passage 2.

16. The correct answer is (B). This question tests your ability to identify the meanings of words as they are used in the context of a passage. In the sentence “The environmental impacts of Lapa Rios (LR) Eco Lodge in Costa Rica are clear and unambiguous,” “clear” means “apparent.” Choice (B), “obvious,” provides a synonym for “apparent” and is therefore the best answer. None of the other choices means the same as “clear” in this context.

17. The correct answer is (E). This question tests your ability to identify evidence that weakens an argument in a passage. To answer this question correctly, you first need to understand the implied argument in Passage 2 about the impact of the arrival of the Lapa Rios Eco Lodge in Costa Rica. Since the 1990s, with the arrival of the Lapa Rios Eco Lodge, the “LR nature reserve and adjacent forest areas have shown pronounced forest regrowth” in the region. The passage implies that the regrowth in the region of the LR Eco Lodge would have been less without the presence of the lodge and reserve. Which of the choices, if true, would most weaken this implied argument? Of the choices offered, (E) would most undermine this claim. If forest areas in general have shown “pronounced . . . regrowth” throughout Costa Rica, it would suggest that a reason other than the Lapa Rios Eco Lodge accounts for the regrowth. None of the other choices would so clearly undermine the argument about the role of the Lapa Rios Eco Lodge in the region’s forest regrowth.

18. The correct answers are (B) and (C). This question tests your ability to draw conclusions from material presented in a passage. The passage states that Wilson wrote not only several plays, but also “numerous theatrical commentaries, and other creative work.” These other types of creative works in addition to plays provide support for (B). The final sentence of the passage indicates that Wilson’s dominance was not just because of the quantity of work he produced, but also because of his ability to express the “ideas and experiences” of African Americans. This sentence supports (C) as being correct also. Choice (A) does not represent a claim that the passage supports.

Appendix F

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 shows a computer-delivered test interface. At the top left is the ETS PRAXIS Series logo. In the top center, it says "Question 1 of 94". At the top 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 these buttons is a "Show Time" button. The main content area contains the following text:

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

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

- Ideas
- Voice
- Conventions
- Organization

At the bottom of the question area, there is a grey box with the text: "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:

The screenshot shows a computer interface for an essay prompt. At the top, it says "Read the opinion stated below:" followed by a quote: "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." Below the quote, it asks the user to "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." The bottom half of the screen is a large empty text box for writing, with "Cut", "Paste", and "Undo" buttons on the right side.

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 generally 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:

Directions:

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.

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 owning for the right to do so. Both of the following sources address the ways in which artists create new works and how copyright

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: 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.

Appendix G

3. Practice with Sample Test Questions

Answer practice questions and find explanations for correct answers

Sample Test Questions

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

The screenshot displays a test interface with a light blue header. On the left is the PRAXIS logo. In the center, it says "Question 1 of 94". On the right, there are buttons for "Review", "Mark", "Help", "Back", and "Next", along with a "Show Time" button. The main content area contains a question about the primary purpose of including weekly quizzes, projects, and end-of-chapter tests in science instruction. Below the question are four radio button options. At the bottom of the question area, a grey box contains the instruction: "Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response."

ETS PRAXIS

Question 1 of 94

Show Time

Review Mark Help Back Next

While planning units for science instruction, a teacher includes weekly quizzes, a project, and end of chapter tests. Which of the following best describes the primary purpose for including such activities while planning instruction?

- To determine students' prior knowledge
- To monitor students' progress
- To forecast students' success rate in state tests
- To compare student achievement with that of previous classes

Answer the question above by clicking on the correct response.

NOTATIONS

\perp Perpendicular symbol

\llcorner Right angle symbol

\parallel Parallel lines symbol

FORMULAS

Circle of radius r

Area: $A = \pi r^2$

Circumference: $C = 2\pi r$

Rectangle with length ℓ and width w :

Area: $A = \ell w$

Triangle with base b and corresponding height h :

Area: $A = \frac{bh}{2}$

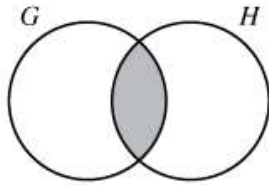
Rectangular box with length ℓ , width w , and height h :

Volume: $V = \ell wh$

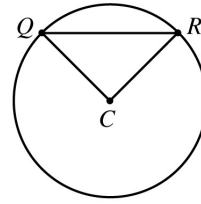
The sample questions that follow illustrate the kinds of questions on the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

Directions: Questions 1-12 below are followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case and then click on the oval to the left of your choice. For innovative question types, click on the box and type in the correct answer (questions 13-14) or click on one or more answers (question 15).

Remember, try to answer every question.



- In the Venn diagram above, circle G represents the integers 2 to 10, inclusive, and circle H represents the integers 6 to 12, inclusive. How many integers are represented by the shaded region?
 - Two
 - Three
 - Four
 - Five
 - Six



- In the figure above, C is the center of the circle. Which of the following must be true?
 - QC and RC have the same length.
 - QR and RC have the same length.
 - QC is perpendicular to QR .
 - QR is perpendicular to RC .
 - $\triangle QRC$ is equilateral.
- A soft drink company surveyed a random sample of 1,240 people between the ages of 18 and 24 and found that 5 out of 8 of those surveyed liked the company's new soft drink. Based on the results of the survey, if 200,000 people ages 18 to 24 were to try the new drink, which of the following statements would most likely be true?
 - Between 90,000 and 100,000 people would like the new drink.
 - Between 100,000 and 110,000 people would like the new drink.
 - Between 110,000 and 120,000 people would like the new drink.
 - Between 120,000 and 130,000 people would like the new drink.
 - Between 130,000 and 140,000 people would like the new drink.

Men	12
Women	18
Boys	10
Girls	8

4. The table above shows the distribution of men, women, boys, and girls in a group of 48 individuals. If one individual is to be selected at random from the group, what is the probability that the individual selected is a woman?
- (A) $\frac{1}{2}$
 (B) $\frac{3}{8}$
 (C) $\frac{1}{4}$
 (D) $\frac{2}{15}$
 (E) $\frac{1}{18}$
5. When 641.29 is divided by 10, which digit of the resulting number is in the tens place?
- (A) 1
 (B) 2
 (C) 4
 (D) 6
 (E) 9
6. If $x \neq 0$ and $y \neq 0$, which of the following is equivalent to $\frac{3}{2x} - \frac{1}{y}$?
- (A) $\frac{1}{xy}$
 (B) $\frac{3}{2xy}$
 (C) $\frac{3y - 2x}{2xy}$
 (D) $\frac{2}{2x - y}$
 (E) $\frac{3y - 2x}{2x - y}$
7. The numbers of absences in Mrs. Klein's class for each of the first 3 months of the year were 16, 12, and 17, respectively. If the average (arithmetic mean) number of absences for the first 4 months of the year was 14, how many absences were there in the fourth month?
- (A) 9
 (B) 10
 (C) 11
 (D) 12
 (E) 13
8. At a computer store on Monday last week, the price of a computer was x dollars. On Tuesday the price of the computer was reduced by 25% of Monday's price. On Wednesday the price of the computer was further reduced by 40% of Tuesday's price. Which of the following expressions represents the price, in dollars, of the computer on Wednesday?
- (A) $(0.35)x$
 (B) $(0.4)(0.25)x$
 (C) $(0.4)(0.75)x$
 (D) $(0.6)(0.25)x$
 (E) $(0.6)(0.75)x$
9. If $4x = 14 + 9y$ and $y = 2$, what is the value of x ?
- (A) 4
 (B) 5
 (C) 6
 (D) 7
 (E) 8

10. A student claimed, "Whenever you multiply two numbers, the product will always be greater than each of the two numbers you started with." Which of the following pairs of numbers is a counterexample to the student's claim?

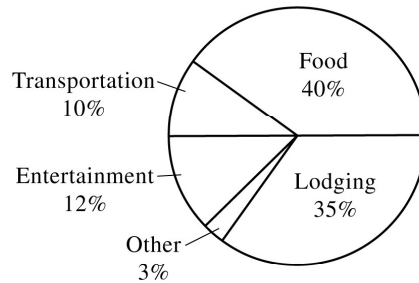
- (A) 4 and 5
- (B) 3 and 4.5
- (C) 2 and 3.5
- (D) 1.5 and 2
- (E) 0.5 and 2

$$-\frac{1}{4}, \underline{\quad}, \underline{\quad}, \frac{3}{8}$$

11. When placed into the blank spaces above in increasing order, which of the following pairs of numbers creates a list of numbers that is ordered from least to greatest?

- (A) $-\frac{1}{2}, 0$
- (B) $-\frac{1}{8}, \frac{1}{3}$
- (C) $-\frac{3}{8}, \frac{1}{4}$
- (D) $0, \frac{1}{2}$
- (E) $\frac{1}{3}, \frac{2}{5}$

CHANG FAMILY'S VACATION BUDGET



Total vacation budget = \$3,500

12. The circle graph above shows the distribution of the Chang family's vacation budget over five categories. According to the graph, for how many of the five categories is the dollar amount of the budget category greater than \$1,000 ?

- (A) One
- (B) Two
- (C) Three
- (D) Four
- (E) Five

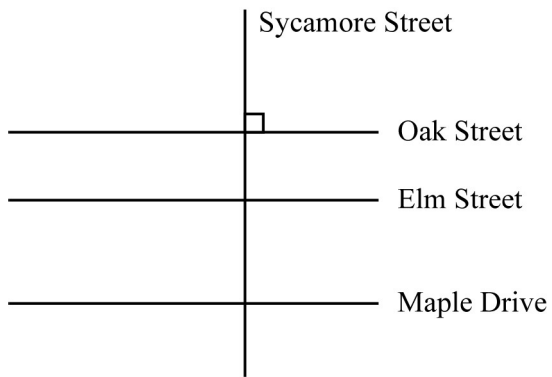
For the following question, enter your answer in the answer boxes.

13. Helen budgets $\frac{2}{5}$ of her monthly salary for food, and last month she spent $\frac{1}{10}$ of her monthly salary on produce. What fraction of her budget for food was spent on produce last month?

For the following question, enter your answer in the answer box.

14. A box of machine parts contains 6 times as many usable parts as defective parts. If there are exactly 882 parts in the box, how many of them are usable?

For the following question, select all the answer choices that apply.



15. In the diagram above, Oak Street is parallel to Elm Street, Elm Street is parallel to Maple Drive, and Sycamore Street is perpendicular to Oak Street. Which of the following statements must be true?

Indicate all such statements.

- [A] Oak Street is parallel to Maple Drive.
- [B] Elm Street and Sycamore Street form right angles.
- [C] Maple Drive and Sycamore Street form right angles.

Answers to Sample Questions

- The correct answer is (D). In the Venn diagram, the shaded region represents the integers that are in both G and H ; i.e., these integers are among the integers 2 through 10 and also among the integers 6 through 12, or 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, which amount to five integers. The answer, therefore, is choice (D).
- The correct answer is (A). Since C is the center of the circle, QC and RC are both radii of the circle and therefore have the same length. The answer, therefore, is choice (A).
- The correct answer is (D). Of the 200,000 people, the number of people that would like the new drink is approximately $\frac{5}{8} \times 200,000$, or 125,000. Since 125,000 is between 120,000 and 130,000, the answer is choice (D).
- The correct answer is (B). In the table provided, there are 48 individuals in the group, 18 of whom are women. The probability that the individual selected will be a woman is 18 out of 48, or $\frac{18}{48} = \frac{3}{8}$. The answer, therefore, is choice (B).
- The correct answer is (D). When dividing a number expressed as a decimal by 10, the decimal point is moved one place to the left, so 641.29 divided by 10 is 64.129. The tens place is the second place to the left of the decimal point. In the number 64.129, the digit 6 is in the tens place.

6	4	.	1	2	9
Tens	Ones		Tenths	Hundredths	Thousandths

The answer, therefore, is choice (D).

- The correct answer is (C). Recall that in order to subtract fractions with different denominators, a common denominator must first be determined. For example, consider the following evaluation of $\frac{3}{5} - \frac{1}{2}$, where each of the fractions $\frac{3}{5}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ are first expressed as fractions with common denominator 10.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{3}{5} - \frac{1}{2} &= \frac{3}{5} \times \frac{2}{2} - \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{5}{5} \\ &= \frac{6}{10} - \frac{5}{10} \\ &= \frac{6-5}{10} \\ &= \frac{1}{10} \end{aligned}$$

The same is true for rational expressions. To subtract rational expressions, each rational expression must first be expressed with a common denominator. In this case, a common denominator is $2xy$. Multiply each rational expression by an expression equal to 1 so that each rational expression will have the same common denominator $2xy$ as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{3}{2x} - \frac{1}{y} &= \frac{3}{2x} \times \frac{y}{y} - \frac{1}{y} \times \frac{2x}{2x} \\ &= \frac{3y}{2xy} - \frac{2x}{2xy} \\ &= \frac{3y-2x}{2xy} \end{aligned}$$

The answer, therefore, is choice (C).

- The correct answer is (C).

Solution Strategy 1:

For the average of a set of data, the sum of the data entries is equal to the product of the average and the number of entries.

Since

$$\text{Average} = \frac{\text{Sum of data entries}}{\text{Total number of entries}},$$

Sum of data entries = Average \times Total number of entries

Since the average of the absences for the first 4 months is 14, the number of absences for the first 4 months is $14 \times 4 = 56$. The number of absences in the fourth month is the number of absences in the first 4 months minus the number of absences in the first 3 months, or $56 - (16 + 12 + 17) = 11$. The answer, therefore, is choice (C).

Solution Strategy 2:

If x denotes the number of absences in the fourth month, the equation

$$\text{Average} = \frac{\text{Sum of data entries}}{\text{Total number of entries}}$$

becomes

$$14 = \frac{16 + 12 + 17 + x}{4},$$

which is equivalent to $14 \times 4 = 45 + x$ with solution $x = 4 \times 14 - 45$ or $x = 11$. The answer, therefore, is choice (C).

8. The correct answer is (E). The price on Monday was x dollars. A reduction of 25% means that the price on Tuesday is 75% of the price on Monday, or $(0.75)x$ dollars. The price on Tuesday is then reduced by 40%, so the price on Wednesday is 60% of $(0.75)x$ dollars, or $(0.6)(0.75)x$ dollars. The answer, therefore, is choice (E).

9. The correct answer is (E). Since $y = 2$, substituting the value 2 for y in the equation $4x = 14 + 9y$ gives the following equations.

$$4x = 14 + 9 \times 2$$

$$4x = 14 + 18$$

$$4x = 32$$

Dividing both sides of the equation $4x = 32$ by 4 gives the result $x = 8$. The answer, therefore, is choice (E).

10. The correct answer is (E). A counterexample is an example that does not support the claim in the statement. The product of 0.5 and 2 is 1, which is not greater than 2. For all the other pairs of numbers, the product is greater than each of the two numbers in the pair; so, all other pairs of numbers support the claim in the statement and are not counterexamples.

11. The correct answer is (B). The numbers to be placed in the blank spaces must be both greater than $-\frac{1}{4}$

and less than $\frac{3}{8}$. The first pair of numbers listed is $-\frac{1}{2}$ and 0. Although 0 is both greater than $-\frac{1}{4}$ and

less than $\frac{3}{8}$, $-\frac{1}{2}$ is less than $-\frac{1}{4}$, so this pair is not

the correct answer. The second pair of numbers listed is

$-\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$, both of which are greater than $-\frac{1}{4}$ and

less than $\frac{3}{8}$, so this pair is the correct answer. At least

one of the numbers in each of the other pairs is either less than $-\frac{1}{4}$ or greater than $\frac{3}{8}$. For example, in the

third pair of numbers, $-\frac{3}{8}$ is less than $-\frac{1}{4} = -\frac{2}{8}$; in

the fourth pair of numbers, $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{4}{8}$ is greater than $\frac{3}{8}$;

and in the fifth pair of numbers, $\frac{2}{5} = \frac{16}{40}$ is greater than $\frac{3}{8} = \frac{15}{40}$. The answer, therefore, is choice (B).

12. The correct answer is (B).

Solution Strategy 1:

To answer this question, compute the dollar amount for each of the five categories and compare each dollar amount to \$1,000.

Dollar amount for food = $\$3,500 \times 40\% = \$1,400$

Dollar amount for lodging = $\$3,500 \times 35\% = \$1,225$

Dollar amount for other = $\$3,500 \times 3\% = \105

Dollar amount for entertainment = $\$3,500 \times 12\% = \420

Dollar amount for transportation = $\$3,500 \times 10\% = \350

Of the five dollar amounts, only two are greater than \$1,000.

Solution Strategy 2:

An alternative solution method is to express \$1,000 as a percent of the total budget and determine how many of the percent values given in the circle graph are greater. That is, \$1,000 is

$$\left(\frac{1,000}{3,500}\right) \times 100\% \approx 28.6\% \text{ of } \$3,500. \text{ Of the five percent}$$

values in the circle graph, only two percent values are greater than 28.6%. The answer, therefore, is choice (B).

13. The correct answer is $\frac{1}{4}$. The fraction of the food

budget that Helen spent on produce is given by

$\frac{\text{budget for produce}}{\text{budget for food}}$, or equivalently,

$\frac{\text{budget for produce as a fraction of monthly salary}}{\text{budget for food as a fraction of monthly salary}}$.

This fraction is $\frac{\frac{1}{10}}{\frac{5}{2}}$, which is equivalent to

$\frac{1}{10} \div \frac{5}{2} = \frac{1}{10} \times \frac{2}{5} = \frac{2}{50} = \frac{1}{25}$. The answer, therefore, is $\frac{1}{25}$.

14. The correct answer is 756.

Solution Strategy 1:

Since the box contains 6 times as many usable parts as defective parts, the ratio of usable to defective parts is 6:1. The number of usable parts is

$\frac{6}{7}$ of the total number of parts in the box. Since

there are 882 parts in the box, the number of

usable parts is $\frac{6}{7} \times 882$, or 756. The answer,

therefore, is 756.

Solution Strategy 2:

Let d stand for the number of defective parts. The number of usable parts would be $6d$, and the total number of parts would be $d + 6d = 7d$. Since the total number of parts in the box is 882, we can write the equation $7d = 882$, which has the solution $d = 126$. The number of usable parts is $6d = 6(126) = 756$. The answer, therefore, is 756.

15. The correct answers are (A), (B), and (C).

Choice (A): Since Oak Street is parallel to Elm Street and Elm Street is parallel to Maple Drive, it follows that Oak Street is parallel to Maple Drive.

Choice (B): Since Sycamore Street is perpendicular to Oak Street and Oak Street is parallel to Elm Street, it follows that Sycamore Street is perpendicular to Elm Street, so Elm Street and Sycamore Street form right angles.

Choice (C): Since Sycamore Street is perpendicular to Oak Street and Oak Street is parallel to Maple Drive (as shown in choice (A)), it follows that Sycamore Street is perpendicular to Maple Drive, so Maple Drive and Sycamore Street form right angles.

ENDNOTES

¹ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-810(1). *See also*, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-814.01(2).

² Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-868.

³ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-808(1). *See also*, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-318(5); Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-866(1); Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-869; 92 NAC 21 (2014), *and* Nebraska Department of Labor (2019) *Licensed occupations in Nebraska*, p. 341 [concise summary of teacher certification requirements].

⁴ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-808(2).

⁵ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-814.02.

⁶ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-948.

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¹³ Neb. Const. art. VII, § 3.

¹⁴ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-313.

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²¹ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-317(2).

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²³ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-810(3). *See also*, Education survey: Standard Teaching Certificates (2021, October 18, 11:54:52). Retrieved December 17, 2021, from Nebraska Legislature: Occupational Board Reform Act: https://nebraskalegislature.gov/reports/committeesurvey_view.php; *and* Education survey: Postsecondary Teaching Permits (2020, September 23, 12:29:39). Retrieved December 17, 2021, from Nebraska Legislature: Occupational Board Reform Act: https://nebraskalegislature.gov/reports/committeesurvey_view.php.

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²⁸ Professional Practices Commission. (2021, December 15). *Updates for the 2021 Occupational Licensing Report* [E-mail to Education Committee staff].

²⁹ Professional Practices Commission, *supra* note 11.

³⁰ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-810(3).

³¹ Professional Practices Commission: Boards and commissions report. (2016). Retrieved December 17, 2021, from Nebraska Legislature: https://nebraskalegislature.gov/reports/bcsurvey_view.php?id=all&year=2016.

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³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ Professional Practices Commission, *supra* note 28.

³⁷ Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-808.

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⁴³ *Id.* *See also*, 92 NAC 21.002.21 (2021); *and* 92 NAC 27 (2003).

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⁶⁰ Nebraska Legislative Journal, 98th Leg., First Sess., at 2313 (2003).

⁶¹ LB685, 98th Leg., First Sess. §§ 7, 9 (2003, Neb.). *See also*, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-807(1) and Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-808 through 79-809.

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⁶³ 92 NAC 23.005.02 (1997). *See also*, 92 NAC 20.005.02 (2002).

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⁸⁶ *State requirements, supra* note 78.

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¹³⁹ 92 NAC 21 (2020).

¹⁴⁰ Morley, *supra* note 105.

¹⁴¹ *Teacher license reciprocity: Does the state have full reciprocity by statute for out-of-state teachers?* (2020, June). Education Commission of the States. Retrieved December 21, 2021, from <https://reports.ecs.org/comparisons/teacher-license-reciprocity-03>.

¹⁴² Morley, *supra* note 105.

¹⁴³ LB389, 107th, First Sess. (Neb. Mar. 25, 2021).

¹⁴⁴ Alternative Certification for Quality Teachers Act, S. LB528, 107th, First Sess. §§ 29-31 (Neb. May 20, 2021).