

OVERVIEW AND STUDY GUIDE

PARAPROFESSIONALS' ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCIES

The Paraprofessionals' Assessment of Competencies is designed to provide a means by which instructional paraprofessionals can meet the requirements of the United States department of Education, as enumerated in the "No Child Left Behind" legislation signed into law by President Bush on January 8, 2002.

There are three criteria enumerated by the legislation; a paraprofessional assigned to a Title I program must meet one of these criteria. The deadline is September 1, 2002, for instructional paraprofessionals hired on or after January 8, 2002. The deadline is January 8, 2006, for instructional paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002.

This assessment will be recognized by eleven school districts in this area: Alvin, Clear Creek, Danbury, Dickinson, Friendswood, Galveston, Hitchcock, La Marque, La Porte, Santa Fe, and Texas City.

The assessment has three sections:

- *Section 1: 35 questions about what to do in the classroom and how to work with students, parents, and other campus educators*
- *Section 2: 45 questions about academic skills in reading, Language, and math*
- *Section 3: A writing sample*

Sections 1 and 2 (a total of 80 questions) are all multiple-choice questions, with three choices for each question.

Section 3 requires a written response to one of two writing prompts. This section will be evaluated as "Clearly acceptable", "Acceptable", or "Unacceptable".

Successful completion of the assessment will be a combination of the number of objective questions answered correctly and the ability to respond to the writing prompt.

- *An evaluation of "Clearly acceptable" on the writing section will be combined with a minimum of 60% of the objective questions right (48 questions) for demonstration of competency.*
- *An evaluation of "Acceptable" on the writing section will be combined with a minimum of 70% of the objective questions right (56 questions) for demonstration of competency.*
- *An evaluation of "Unacceptable" on the writing section will not result in the demonstration of competency.*

Once a successful score is reached (i.e., “Acceptable” or “Clearly acceptable” on the writing sample or 60% or 70% on the objective questions), that score will always stand for that section of the assessment. If there is an unsuccessful score on either part, only that part will need to be retaken.

There will be three opportunities to gain a score demonstrating competency.

Attached to this overview is a brief review of the types of questions that will appear on the assessment. At the end of the review (which contains sample questions that are very similar to those in the assessment), there is an answer key. You are encouraged to review your responses.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Human Resources office or the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in your district.

Section 1:

A. Situations involving what to do in the classroom and/or how to deal with students and parents and other educators

This section contains descriptions of classroom situations that involve students, parents, and/or other educators. The respondent needs to read the description and respond to the question with the best answer for that situation. It is important that the respondent reads the scenario carefully, noting especially the grade level of the student described. Most responses reflect the specific age/grade of the student described.

Example 1:

Mr. Smith is working with a class of kindergarten students. He reads them a story about puppies and kittens. Which of the following classroom activities would be the best to encourage his kindergarten students to express their feelings about the story?

- A. asking each child to draw a picture of their favorite pet*
- B. showing students a picture of his pets and asking the students to tell about the picture*
- C. giving students hand puppets of puppies and kittens and asking them to use the puppets to tell about the story*

Example 2:

Children in a prekindergarten bilingual classroom are having trouble understanding the meaning of “on” and “off”. The teacher could best help them understand these concepts by

- A. writing the words in English and in Spanish and giving them to the students on flashcards*
- B. setting up an obstacle course in the classroom, having the students move through the course, and saying “on” or off as the students climb on or crawl under tables*
- C. asking the students often what the meaning of the two words is*

Example 3:

Two third-grade students are counting the money the class has donated to buy food baskets for the needy at Thanksgiving. As they count, Tom says to Jane, "Look, this quarter is twice as big as this dime. That means it is worth twice as much." The aide could use this situation to help foster Tom's understanding of the value of money by

- A. encouraging Tom to recount the money until he gets the right total amount*
- B. telling Tom that the size of money does not reflect the value, since a dime is worth more than a nickel and it is smaller than a nickel*
- C. setting up a classroom "shopping center" with the cost of items displayed and having Tom shop in the center using some of the donated coins*

Example 4:

Which of the following would best help a second-grade student new to the school become comfortable in the classroom?

- A. putting his seat in the front of the room*
- B. pairing him with another student to help "learn the ropes"*
- C. introducing him to the other students and showing them on a map the town from which he moved*

Example 5:

Which of the following general guidelines should a first-grade aide follow when helping a student select a book to read for pleasure?

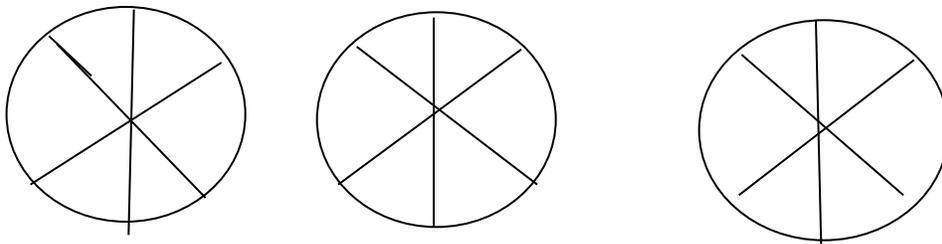
- A. Suggest a book with regular and irregular sight words that the student has already memorized*
- B. Suggest a book with challenging words so he could develop his reading skills*
- C. Suggest a book with phonetically-regular words that he has never read before so he could apply his decoding skills to increase his vocabulary*

Example 6:

Samuel, a fifth-grade student, has had problems with the following math problem:

Mrs. Jones wants to bring pizza for a party for her students. There are 19 students in the class and each student will need one piece of pizza. Mrs. Jones asks Samuel to tell her how many pizzas are needed, since she plans to cut the pizzas to give 6 pieces per pizza.

Mrs. Jones suggests that he draw a picture to help him. Samuel draws the following diagram:



$$3 \times 6 = 18$$

$$19 - 18 = 1$$

Three pizzas needed.
one student left over. (Maybe she'll be absent).

Samuel's solution (despite the humor) suggests that he has trouble with the following:

- A. *doing the math needed correctly*
- B. *interpreting the answer in terms of the requirements of the problem*
- C. *choosing the correct mathematical operation(s)*

Example 7:

A sixth-grade social studies teacher has been studying about different kinds of cultures around the world. Which of the following activities would be most effective in promoting students' understanding and appreciation of different cultures?

- A. reading folk tales from the different lands*
- B. making and eating food from different cultures*
- C. writing to pen-pals in other lands and discussing some of the unusual things they learn about each culture from the letters they receive*

Example 8:

A fifth-grade student, Howard Z., receives special education services because of a brain injury sustained several years earlier. When the fifth-grade teacher, Mrs. Cogburn, develops lesson plans for her class, it is important for her to plan activities that

- A. are in compliance with Howard's individualized education plan (IEP)*
- B. focus on areas where Mrs. Cogburn believes Howard needs help with his developmental problems*
- C. are exactly the same for Howard as for the other students in the classroom*

Read the following scenario and answer the question that follows it:

Mary Beth Wainwright is an aide in an eighth-grade English classroom. She has been asked by the teacher (John Ellison) to work with five students who are having difficulty in English and whose grades are failing or near failing. Ms. Wainwright takes the students aside and talks with them. The following is an excerpt from that conversation:

Ms. Wainwright: Your grades are very poor. If you received a grade right now, all of you would be failing English and probably not be promoted to high school next year. Mr. Ellison wants me to try to help you pass. If I am to help you, I need to know what your problems are. Lisa, why aren't you doing your homework?

Lisa: I don't know. I just don't like English.

Ms. Wainwright: I see. Joshua, what is your excuse?

Joshua: I don't have time to read all this stuff.

Ms. Wainwright: This isn't "stuff". It's great literature. Juanita, I noticed this is the first year you have poor grades. What has happened to you?

Juanita: I don't understand what's happening in class.

Ms. Wainwright: Why don't you ask questions? Steven, you have been acting up in class, trying to be the class clown. You certainly have the ability to do this work well. Why aren't you?

Steven: (no answer; he just glares at Ms. Wainwright and then looks down at the desk.)

Example 9:

Ms. Wainwright's conversation with the students would probably have the following result:

- A. They would change their behavior, since they knew Ms. Wainwright was going to work with them.*
- B. They would not change their behavior and would resent Ms. Wainwright for talking about them in front of other students.*
- C. They would change their behavior, since they wouldn't want to have another conversation like this one.*

Example 10:

Following this conversation, Ms. Wainwright calls Juanita in for another meeting. At that meeting Ms. Wainwright learns that Juanita has been in an English-as-a-Second-Language class every year until this one. This is the first time she has been in an English class with non-LEP students. In an attempt to help Juanita, what would be an appropriate response by Ms. Wainwright?

- A. Tell Juanita that she will be reassigned to the ESL classroom for the remainder of the school year.*
- B. Tell Juanita that Mr. Ellison and the other teachers will grade Juanita on an easier scale than the other students.*
- C. Ask Juanita to meet with her during her study period so they can work together on the English assignment.*

Example 11:

Ms. Wainwright wonders why Steven has become the class clown. She talks about his behavior with another aide during lunch the following day in the lounge. Ms. Wainwright should be aware that discussion of a student's academic grades or behavior should occur only with

- I. other aides who know the student*
- II. the school guidance counselor*
- III. the student's teacher*
- IV. parent volunteers who work with the same class*

- A. I and II*
- B. II and III*
- C. III and IV*

Example 12:

Ms. Wainwright decides also to meet individually with Joshua. During that meeting, it becomes obvious that the reason Joshua “doesn’t have time to read all this stuff” is that he is involved in a lot of extra-curricular activities. He is a member of the band, he volunteers in his church, and he mows yards to earn money to save for a car. As a result, Ms. Wainwright suggests that Joshua

- *make a list of what he really wants to accomplish during the school year, both in and out of school*
- *identify the “plusses” and “minuses” of each of these items*
- *list various ways he can think of to deal with the “time crunch” he finds himself in*

Which of the following is a benefit of this process?

- A. *Joshua will have experience working with a problem-solving strategy that can be applied to other problems he may encounter*
- B. *Joshua will immediately be able to identify what he needs to do to obtain all of his goals*
- C. *Joshua will learn that this means that problem-solving, while risky, is successful*

Example 13:

A teacher in a first-grade classroom brings a potato to school and puts it in a glass of water, holding only the bottom in the water by putting toothpicks in the sides of the potato and balancing those toothpicks on the rim of the glass. After several weeks the students notice that the potato has begun to grow roots in the water and “leaves” out of the eyes above the water.

This activity is being used in the classroom to encourage students to

- A. *observe the world in a controlled manner*
- B. *organize data in a systematic manner*
- C. *arrange events in a logical order*

Read the worksheet below completed by a fourth-grade student and answer the question that follows it.

Name: MARGARET J. Date: OCT. 10

Read the story below and answer the questions following it:

The Summer Vacation

Linda and Michael packed their clothes for the summer vacation with excitement. They were going to go to Florida to visit their grandparents who lived about an hour away from Disneyland. For weeks they had been planning what rides they would take while they visited the amusement park. They had heard about the ride through the African kingdom, the bamboo shoot through the rapids, and, especially, about the boat trip to the pirates' cove.

They took a Southwest Airlines flight to Florida and were thrilled to see their grandparents, Mamaw and Papaw. The ride to their grandparents' house took about two hours, but they were entertained the entire time by talking about their year at school and their new puppy that they had left behind at home.

Once they arrived, they unpacked and went to find their grandparents. They were only going to be there for a week, but they knew they would have a lot of fun anyway. They ate dinner, watched TV, and went to bed, anticipating the next day.

After breakfast, Mamaw and Papaw told them about the plans they had made. On Tuesday, they were going to go to the beach and swim in the ocean. On Wednesday, there was going to be a birthday party for Linda, who would be 9 years old. On Thursday, Mamaw and Papaw had invited four of their neighbors' children to spend the day at a picnic. On Friday, they would go to a new Disney movie that had just opened and eat dinner at the new Riverbend café in town.

Linda and Michael looked at each other and said to their grandparents, "That's swell! Lets get started."

1. How do Linda and Michael feel when they land in Florida? Why?

Excited. They're on vacation and saw their grandparents.

2. What do they want to do the most in Florida?

Go to Disneyland

3. What do Mamaw and Papaw have planned for their vacation?

Go to beach and swim, birthday party, picnic, go to Disney Movie

4. How do Linda and Michael feel about their grandparents' plans? What in the story tells you this?

They like them. They said, "That's swell!"

Example 14:

What could the teacher or aide do to help Margaret understand this story better?

- A. Have her write down everything that happened in the story in her own words.
- B. Ask her if she has ever wanted anything she did not get and how she felt about that; then have her read the story again.
- C. Have her tell the story to another student and discuss the ending with that student.

Example 15:

Which of the following activities represents the most advanced level of play for a prekindergarten classroom:

- A. One student ties a scarf around her waist and another student, seeing it, does the same with another scarf.*
- B. Two students set a table with play dishes.*
- C. One student drops a doll and breaks the doll's arm; another student gets a doctor's kit and puts a sling on the doll's arm.*

B. Situations using the Educators' Code of Ethics

This section has questions about the State Board for Educator Certification Educators' Code of Ethics.

*A copy of the Code of Ethics can be found at
<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/pd/pd.htm>
Then, click on Code of Ethics/Summary
Then, click on Rules §247.2*

A copy can also be found as Appendix A at the back of this review guide.

Example 16:

Which of the following statements by an educator would be considered unethical according to the Educators' Code of Ethics?

- A. To a colleague in another district: "if you get me those Astros' tickets at a discount, I'll give you my free tickets to the State Basketball finals in Austin."*
- B. To a parent: "The District has adopted a mission statement that includes the statement "All students can learn. But that is hard for me to believe, given the abilities of my students."*
- C. To a police officer: I believe that Mary Jones has been assaulted by her father."*

Example 17:

All of the following activities by an educator are ethical except

- A. Taking a date to a bar for a drink at 6:00 p.m.*
- B. Telling a parent that his child should get more sleep at night because he keeps falling asleep in class.*
- C. Eliminating a student from an extra-curricular activity because she is overweight.*

Example 18:

Which of the following activities violates the Educators' Code of Ethics?

- A. Telling a personal friend that a parent's complaint that a fellow colleague doesn't know the subject he is teaching is true since that teacher never obtained a teaching degree in that field.*
- B. Encouraging a personal friend to move into the educator's district since the schools in the district meet the needs of all students-both the gifted and the handicapped.*
- C. Encouraging a student to search the web for additional resources to support his opinion in a research paper.*

Section 2:

A. Items that deal with reading passages

These items require the respondent to read passages or advertisements and answer questions about those passages. Responses involve identifying the main idea of the passage, distinguishing fact from opinion, reading for details, drawing conclusions, and making predictions.

Other items will include reading an entry in a dictionary or an index and answering questions about those entries.

In countries all over the world, children and their families observe certain customs or traditions. A custom is the way in which a group of people celebrates a particular holiday or share a common interest. Where people live has a great deal to do with the customs they practice and the way they participate in their society.

Ethiopia, a country located in East Africa, has a rich cultural history and many interesting cultural groups. One group, the Amhara, lives in northern Ethiopia. In their culture, as in our own, there are some special holidays in which children take part. In August, these Ethiopian children celebrate a holiday called Buhe. It is a very old holiday that is celebrated during the rainy season. In the past it was celebrated by giving out bread. In fact, Buhe means “dough” in the Amhara language. In rural towns groups of boys stroll from house to house entertaining people with special songs. The day ends with a bonfire.

The Ethiopian New Year, known to the Amhara as Maskal, is celebrated on September 11. The people view the holiday as a festival to welcome the new season. Usually girls decorate wooden poles with daisies. Everyone then circles the poles and sings special Maskal songs. Children wear traditional white clothing and endanger themselves and others by running from house to house carrying burning torches. At each home adults give the children small gifts.

In Ethiopia, as in many other countries, celebrating holidays and playing games teach children about their cultural heritage. Customs help children appreciate where they live. Customs also help pass on traditions to future generations.

Example 19:

Which of these is a FACT expressed in the passage?

- A. Ethiopia has professional basketball teams.*
- B. It rains a lot in Ethiopia.*
- C. During Maskal, children receive small gifts.*

Example 20:

Decorating wooden poles with daisies is an example of

- A. a game*
- B. a custom*
- C. a dance*

Example 21:

Why are customs important to future generations?

- A. Customs are for children.*
- B. Observing customs helps pass on traditions.*
- C. Participating in customs helps celebrate holidays and special occasions*

Example 22:

The main idea of this passage is

- A. The Ethiopian New Year is a special time for Ethiopian children.*
- B. Various customs in Ethiopia teach children about their cultural heritage.*
- C. Entertainment in Ethiopia involves song and dance.*

Example 23:

Which is an OPINION expressed in this passage:

- A. Children endanger themselves and others by carrying burning torches.*
- B. Customs help children appreciate where they live.*
- C. The holiday of Buhe ends with a special song and a bonfire.*

Example 24:

One conclusion that can be drawn from this passage is the following:

- A. Parents don't protect their children since they let them carry burning torches.*
- B. Ethiopians were not affected by the September 11 events in New York since they celebrate Maskal on that date.*
- C. Children enjoy holidays in Ethiopia.*

Example 25:

Adapted from an index:

Loftus, Geoffrey, 122
longitudinal fissure, 43
long-term memory, 122-129, 134, 152
 cellular basis of, 117-120
 consolidation of, 124-127
 loss of, 129
 recall of, 121-124
 storage of, 113-117, 120-121, 124-127
 declarative memory and, 124
 procedural memory and, 122-123
 reaching for, 128-129
 of visual information, 152
long-term potentiation (LTP), 118-119

On which page would you look to find a discussion of long-term memory and visual information?

- A. *pages 122-129*
- B. *page 152*
- C. *pages 134 and 152*

Example 26:

Adapted from a dictionary:

re' fuse - turn down
ref' use - garbage

These two words

- A. *are pronounced the same but mean different things*
- B. *are pronounced differently but are both nouns*
- C. *are pronounced the same and are both nouns*

Example 27:

Where could an educator find a set of synonyms for a particular word?

- A. a thesaurus*
- B. a table of contents*
- C. a biography*

Example 28:

The use of cooperative learning has benefited students of all ability levels.

Which of the following is the best definition of cooperative learning as used above?

- A. Students work in groups to enhance the learning of all students.*
- B. Students work together by copying each others' answers to check their own work.*
- C. Students in groups let the best students do the work for all.*

Example 29:

Adapted from a memorandum to staff:

It is time to prepare for the Halloween carnival. The first step is to decide when the carnival should occur. Although I am principal, I do not want to decide this alone. Do we want it on a Friday evening or on a Saturday afternoon? Please turn in your suggestions and reasons to my mailbox by 4 p.m. tomorrow. The next step is to decide what kinds of games we want to provide for the students. The third step is to get parent volunteers to assist at the carnival. The next step is to prepare invitations for the students. Finally, we can open the carnival. The last step is to arrange for cleanup.

According to this selection, what should occur just before preparing invitations for students?

- A. Deciding what kind of games should be provided for students.*
- B. Deciding when the carnival should occur.*
- C. Arranging for parent volunteers to assist at the carnival.*

Review the advertisement below and answer the eight questions that follow it.

Mark decided to procure a book as a birthday present for his older brother. Even though he didn't have much money, he wanted to buy a book that Andy would enjoy. While he was looking through the Saturday newspaper, he found the following ad.

THE BOOKWORM BOOKSTORE'S SUMMERTIME CLEARANCE SALE
USED BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

Reference Books

Yardley's Heritage Dictionary: \$11.50

- hardbound with slipcover

Everyday Encyclopedia: \$10.95 per volume

- 5 complete sets for sale
- must buy all volumes in set

Himme's French-to-English Dictionary: \$8.00

- perfect for travelers
- includes pronunciation guide

Relaxing Reading

Celebrity biographies (paperbacks only): \$5.00 each

- read about well-known sports figures, film stars, presidents, and artists

The Billy Jones Stories, Vols. I-IV: \$12.00 per set

- John Wilson's fictional tales bring the Old West to life

Numerous other titles, including mysteries, adventures, and science fiction

Children's Books

Picture books (easy readers): \$2.00 each

- simple reading for beginners
- titles include *Sammy and Stella*, *Summer Horses* and *Kimber's House*

The Elmtown Girls adventure series:
\$10.95 each or 4 for \$10.00

- follow Jenny, Kim, and Sarah as they search for clues and avoid danger
- appropriate for ages 9-15

Looking at the Earth: \$8.00 each

- great for learning geography and understanding how different ecosystems work together

Fix-it-Yourself

Car Repairs Today magazines:

\$1.00 each or 10 for \$5.00

- full of helpful hints for the at-home mechanic
- detailed illustrations to help you understand even complicated repairs

Lorilee's Meals for Families book sets:

\$10.00 each or \$20.00 per set

- breakfast, lunch, and dinner volumes available
- recipes for all levels of cooks, from beginner to expert

Build Your Own... book sets:

\$5.00 each or \$12.00 per set

- bike rack, doghouse, CD cabinet, and bookshelf volumes available
- each volume has a full list of supplies and estimated cost for each project

Rare Find
*Obscure antique books
from the turn of the century
and earlier*

**New shipment of books just arrived • Must clear shelves
Saturday & Sunday only • 9 A.M. – 9 P.M.
Free hot dogs on Saturday • Free ice cream on Sunday
Cash or personal checks only, please**

*154 River Street, next door to Bob's Diner
For directions or more information, call 555-1432*

TWO DAYS ONLY – DON'T MISS IT!

Example 30:

This ad was probably placed in the newspaper in order to

- A. make people aware of the cookbooks*
- B. tell people about the new music section*
- C. persuade people to go to the sale*

Example 31:

If Mark goes to the Bookworm on Saturday, he will receive

- A. a free book*
- B. a free hot dog*
- C. 50% off his purchases*

Example 32:

The characters in The Elmtown Girls books are most likely amateur

- A. campers*
- B. investigators*
- C. musicians*

Example 33:

The ad mentioned Bob's Diner in order to

- A. help people find their way to the bookstore*
- B. tell people about the great food at Bob's Diner*
- C. show that the bookstore is downtown*

Example 34:

If Mark's brother likes to read about cowboys, the best book for him would be

- A. Looking at the Earth*
- B. Summer Horses*
- C. The Billy Jones Stories*

Example 35:

The ad tries to appeal to the reader's desire to

- A. help others*
- B. get something free*
- C. be like everyone else*

Example 36:

You can tell from the ad that the Bookworm

- A. is usually closed on the first Sunday of the month*
- B. has lower prices than other stores that sell used books*
- C. carries a variety of books and magazines*

Example 37:

You can tell from the passage that Mark

- A. doesn't read the newspaper very often*
- B. wants to get the most he can for the money he has*
- C. has been to the Bookworm Bookstore before*

B. Items that deal with English grammar and usage

These items require the reader to identify errors in written passages. The errors can be spelling, capitalization, punctuation, English usage, or sentence formation. There is only one type of error in each passage. None of the passages have "There are no errors" as one of the multiple-choice selections.

Hint: *To complete these items, read the question first so that you know what you are looking for when you read the passage. Then read the passage, knowing exactly what error is in the passage.*

A copy of the most common rules of English grammar, a list of commonly misspelled words, and a glossary of words often misused is included as Appendix B of this review document.

Adapted from a letter to a friend:

(1) Dear Mary,

I am so happy that you have finally achieved your goal of attending Central Junior College. (2) I know that you will be really busy with your studies in February, so I will not ask you to create a separate Valentine Day decoration for the annual party. (3) In fact, I will try to accommodate your busy schedule by ordering the food from the caterer. (4) Please let me know if you have any special requests for this special day.

Example 38:

In which part of this communication is there an error in spelling?

- A. Part (1)*
- B. Part (2)*
- C. Part (3)*

Adapted from a memo to the staff.

TO: All Staff Members

FRM: James Madison, Principal

RE: Thanksgiving Baskets

(1) I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the contributions you made to the spanish club's drive for canned goods for the Thanksgiving baskets they will distribute this afternoon. (2) There are many families that will have a good dinner tomorrow because of your generosity. (3) It is great to work with a faculty that is so committed to the betterment of our community. (4) Thanks again..

Example 39:

In which part of this communication is there an error in capitalization?

- A. Part (1)*
- B. Part (2)*
- C. Part (3)*

Adapted from a letter to a newspaper:

(1) I read your article about the success that the boys had in their athletic endeavors this year. (2) It's great that they did so well. (3) Are you aware, however, that the girls' basketball team won even more games than the boys did. (4) Why didn't their success result in front-page coverage too?

Example 40:

In which part of this communication is there an error in punctuation?

- A. Part (1)*
- B. Part (2)*
- C. Part (3)*

Adapted from a discipline not sent to an assistant principal:

(1) During this period, John Jones was roaming around in the classroom bothering the other students who were trying to do their work. (2) After several attempts to get him to sit down and begin his own work, I asked him "Why are you out of your seat?" (3) He refused to answer my question and continued to walk around the classroom. (4) I have called his mother several times about his refusal to abide by class rules. I do not know what else to do except to send him to your office.

Example 41:

In which part of this communication is there an error in punctuation?

- A. Part (1)*
- B. Part (2)*
- C. Part (3)*

Adapted from a note to a colleague:

(1) I am about to loose my mind. (2) John Jones will not sit down in class, and the assistant principal is not in his office. (3) Since I am giving a test, would you be willing to let him come to your room for about 20 minutes? (4) I know my students would appreciate the opportunity to get their test done in quiet.

Example 42:

In which part of this communication is there an error in usage?

- A. Part (1)*
- B. Part (2)*
- C. Part (3)*

Adapted from a memo to the members of a department:

(1) I am going to be on a school-sponsored trip with many of my students for three days. (2) I know that textbooks will need to be collected, but I am sure that my absence will not be to difficult for you. (3) I have great confidences that you can get the job done well ahead of the deadline. (4) Thank for being such a great group.

Example 43:

In which part of this communication is there an error in usage?

- A. Part (2)*
- B. Part (3)*
- C. Part (4)*

C. Items that deal with mathematics

*In this part of the assessment, respondents are asked to select the correct answer for a math problem. These problems involve operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division), estimation, rounding, reading graphs and charts, and determining averages. A calculator may **not** be used to determine the correct answers*

Example 44:

Eliza is saving money to buy a radio that costs \$99.95. If she saves \$7.50 each week for 8 weeks, how much money will she have saved?

- A. \$39.95
- B. \$60.00
- C. \$67.50

Example 45:

This chart shows the number of movies seen last year by each student.

<i>Student</i>	<i>Number of Movies</i>
<i>Laura</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>David</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Carol</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Melissa</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Talisha</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Paul</i>	<i>3</i>

What was the mean (average) number of movies seen last year?

- A. 3.5
- B. 4.5
- C. 5.5

Example 46:

In May 1992 the depth of the water in the Edwards Underground Aquifer was 700.7 feet. Rounded to the nearest foot, how would this depth be expressed?

- A. 700 ft.
- B. 701 ft.
- C. 710 ft.

Example 47:

Mario can run 2 miles in 14 minutes. At this rate, how long will it take him to run 5 miles?

- A. 35 minutes*
- B. 45 minutes*
- C. 70 minutes*

Example 48:

George has 9 red, 6 green, 3 yellow, and 2 black jellybeans in a bag. What is the probability that when he selects a jellybean from the bag without looking that it will be green or black?

- A. $\frac{2}{5}$*
- B. $\frac{1}{2}$*
- C. $\frac{2}{3}$*

Example 49:

The low temperatures for the first 4 days in December were 45°F , 48°F , 48°F , and 59°F . What is the mean (average) of these temperatures?

- A. 45°F*
- B. 48°F*
- C. 50°F*

Example 50:

The amount of soda in a can would most likely be expressed in

- A. kilometers*
- B. centimeters*
- C. milliliters*

Example 51:

Tom used 18 yards of string for his kite. How many feet of string did he use?

- A. 6 ft.*
- B. 54 ft.*
- C. 216 ft.*

Example 52:

The chart shows the number of movie tickets sold before 5:00 p.m. last Saturday.

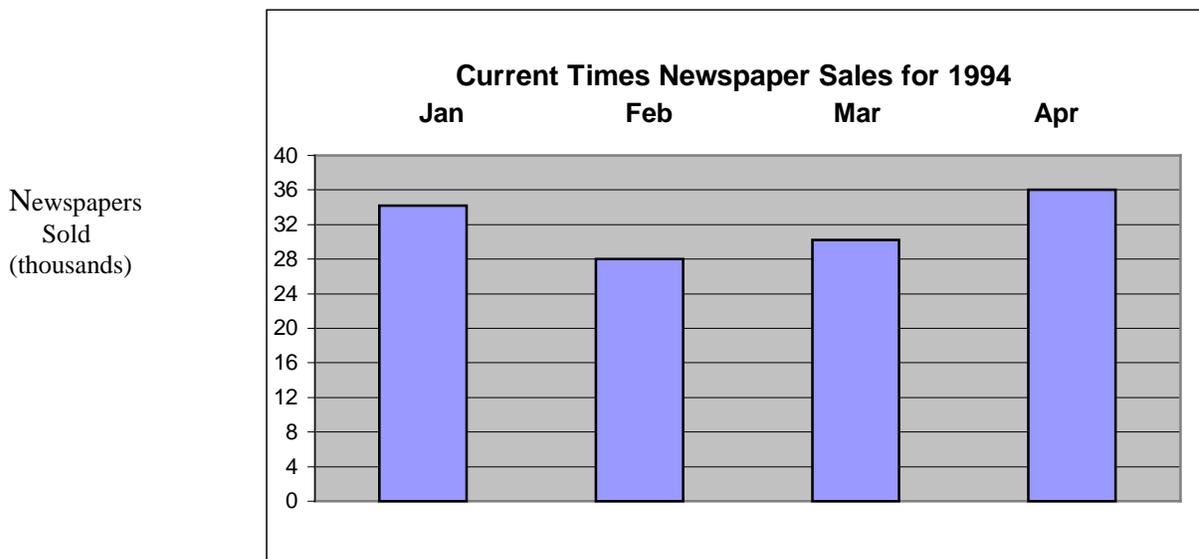
Time	Number of Tickets
11:00 – 11:59	102
12:00 – 12:59	87
1:00 – 1:59	56
2:00 – 2:59	82
3:00 – 3:59	65
4:00 – 4:59	74

What was the total number of tickers sold before 2:00 p.m.?

- A. 245
- B. 221
- C. 189

Example 53:

The graph shows the number of Current Times newspapers sold during the first 4 months of 1994.



How many more newspapers were sold in April than in February?

- A. 36,000
- B. 12,000
- C. 8,000

Example 54:

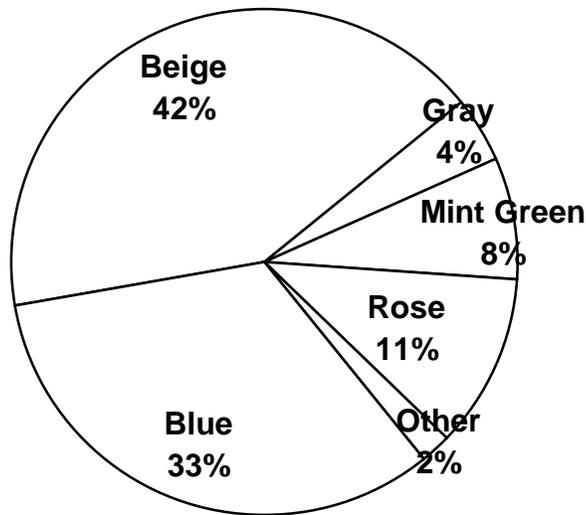
A train is traveling at an average speed of 78 miles per hour. At this rate of speed, which is the best estimate of how long it will take the train to travel 883 miles?

- A. 6 hr.
- B. 8 hr.
- C. 11 hr.

Example 55:

The graph shows which carpet colors were the most popular last month at Carpet World.

Last Month's Carpet Sales



Which 2 carpet colors combined accounted for exactly $\frac{1}{2}$ of last month's carpet sales?

- A. Gray and Mint Green
- B. Mint Green and Beige
- C. Blue and Gray

Example 56:

Mary Jane bought 3 sweaters and a package of socks at a department store. Each sweater cost \$38.99, and the socks cost \$22.75. Which is the best estimate of the total cost of these items, not including tax?

- A. \$60
- B. \$110
- C. \$140

Example 57:

Jonathan wants to buy 3 shirts that range in price from \$29.50 to \$34.99, plus 8% sales tax. Which is the most reasonable estimate of the total cost of the three shirts, before tax is added?

- A. More than \$120*
- B. Between \$105 and \$120*
- C. Between \$85 and \$105*

Example 58:

Miss Clarke drove 4058 miles on business last month and 3897 miles this month. What are the total miles that she drove on business these 2 months?

- A. 7845*
- B. 7945*
- C. 7955*

Example 59:

A football stadium has a maximum capacity of 5500 people. If 3984 people are already in the stadium, how many more people can enter the stadium before the maximum capacity is reached?

- A. 1516*
- B. 1526*
- C. 1616*

Example 60:

A piece of construction paper is 15 inches wide. If Mary cuts the paper into strips 2 ½ inches wide, how many strips will she have?

- A. 5*
- B. 6*
- C. 7*

Example 61:

Judy's grocery bill totals \$87.45. If she gives the cashier a \$100 bill how much change should she receive?

- A. \$12.45*
- B. \$12.55*
- C. \$12.65*

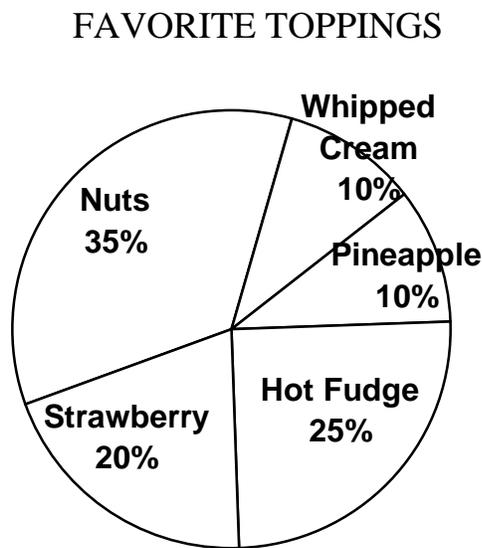
Example 62:

A basketball team needed to raise \$500.00 to finance their trip to the state tournament. They have had 3 car washes to raise money. They raised \$85.50 from the first car wash, \$76.00 from the second, and \$91.00 from the third. How much more money does the team need?

- A. \$242.50
- B. \$247.50
- C. \$252.50

Example 63:

The owner of an ice-cream shop surveyed customers about their favorite ice-cream toppings. The graph shows the results:



If the store has 200 customers on a certain day, which is the best prediction of the number who will want hot fudge on their ice cream?

- A. 50
- B. 70
- C. 140

Example 64:

Samuel has been making 2 out of every 3 free throws in his basketball game this season. How many free throws can he expect to make out of his next 18 tries?

- A. 4
- B. 8
- C. 12

Example 65:

Monica was playing “castle” with a deck of cards. She puts two cards at the top of her building, four cards in the next lowest row and six cards in the third row from the top. If she continues with this pattern, how many cards will there be in the sixth row?

- A. 10*
- B. 12*
- C. 14*

Section 3: Writing Sample

This final section of the assessment asks you to respond to a writing prompt with a writing sample of 150 – 200 words. The emphasis of this assessment is for your response to be clear, well-organized, and logical. The sample must demonstrate that there is support for the topic and that you have maintained your focus on the topic. It is important that there is enough support for your position that the reader has no difficulty in determining your views.

*The sample will **not** be judged on mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, etc.) unless the failure to use the mechanics properly interferes so much with the response that the reader cannot tell what you mean in your response.*

The reader will also not count the words. You will be given lined paper to write your final draft. You may outline your ideas in your test booklet, and you may write a rough draft in your test booklet. However, the final response must be written on the lined paper provided.

You will be given two prompts. You will select only one of the prompts to write about.

Hint: We recommend strongly you begin with this section, although it is the last one in your test booklet. Choose your topic, outline your ideas, write your rough draft. Then, go back to the beginning of Section 1 and answer the multiple-choice questions on the test. Then, reread your rough draft, making any corrections and changes you need to for strength and clarity. Finally, write your final copy on the lined paper provided.

Example of a writing prompt:

A student you have known for a number of years, both in school and in the community, has asked you to write a recommendation for her. She is applying to work as a counselor in a summer camp where attending students will be given opportunities to work on computers, to play sports and games, and to have fun reading and acting out stories in the library.

You are very proud of this student for her superior academic record. She has completed her junior year in high school and has earned straight A's on her report cards. She is a member of the National Honor Society and has worked in Central High School for two years tutoring students who need additional assistance in math. Although some of the students she has tutored have been very difficult, she has never lost her patience with them and always has a smile and a pleasant greeting. She is also a "computer whiz," having designed some simple games on her home computer. She has not participated on any of the high school varsity athletic teams, but she loves to play tennis, to walk in the neighborhood, and to play with her younger brothers and sisters.

Write the letter of recommendation she will include with her application and the other materials she needs to submit to the summer camp.

APPENDIX A
EDUCATORS' CODE OF ETHICS

TITLE 19
PART 7
CHAPTER 247
RULE §247.2

EDUCATION
STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION
EDUCATORS' CODE OF ETHICS
Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

(a) Professional responsibility. The Texas educator should strive to create an atmosphere that will nurture to fulfillment the potential of each student. The educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, and school officials, parents, and members of the community. In conscientiously conducting his or her affairs, the educator shall exemplify the highest standards of professional commitment.

(b) Principle I: Professional ethical conduct. The Texas educator shall maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty.

(1) Standard 1. The educator shall not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school district or educational institution and shall clearly distinguish those views from personal attitudes and opinions.

(2) Standard 2. The educator shall honestly account for all funds committed to his or her charge and shall conduct financial business with integrity.

(3) Standard 3. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

(4) Standard 4. The educator shall accept no gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment.

(5) Standard 5. The educator shall not offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain special advantage.

(6) Standard 6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

(c) Principle II: Professional practices and performance. The Texas educator, after qualifying in a manner established by law or regulation, shall assume responsibilities for professional administrative or teaching practices and professional performance and shall demonstrate competence.

(1) Standard 1. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications and shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment.

(2) Standard 2. The educator shall not deliberately or recklessly impair his or her mental or physical health or ignore social prudence, thereby affecting his or her ability to perform the duties of his or her professional assignment.

(3) Standard 3. The educator shall organize instruction that seeks to accomplish objectives related to learning.

(4) Standard 4. The educator shall continue professional growth.

(5) Standard 5. The educator shall comply with written local school board policies, state regulations, and other applicable state and federal laws.

(d) Principle III: Ethical conduct toward professional colleagues. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

(1) Standard 1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

(2) Standard 2. The educator shall not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.

(3) Standard 3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding dismissal, evaluation, and employment processes.

(4) Standard 4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.

(5) Standard 5. The educator shall not discriminate against, coerce, or harass a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.

(6) Standard 6. The educator shall not intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of any professional right or privilege.

(7) Standard 7. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

(8) Standard 8. The educator shall have the academic freedom to teach as a professional privilege, and no educator shall interfere with such privilege except as required by state and/or federal laws.

(e) Principle IV: Ethical conduct toward students. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, should measure success by progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen.

(1) Standard 1. The educator shall deal considerately and justly with each student and shall seek to resolve problems including discipline according to law and school board policy.

(2) Standard 2. The educator shall not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.

(3) Standard 3. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

(4) Standard 4. The educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.

(5) Standard 5. The educator shall not deliberately distort facts.

(6) Standard 6. The educator shall not unfairly exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.

(7) Standard 7. The educator shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning or deny the student access to varying points of view.

(f) Principle V: Ethical conduct toward parents and community. The Texas educator, in fulfilling citizenship responsibilities in the community, should cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

(1) Standard 1. The educator shall make reasonable effort to communicate to parents information that lawfully should be revealed in the interest of the student.

(2) Standard 2. The educator shall endeavor to understand community cultures and relate the home environment of students to the school.

(3) Standard 3. The educator shall manifest a positive role in school-public relations.

Source Note: The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022.

APPENDIX B

Some of the most commonly misspelled words

sophomore (not sophmore)
playwrite (not playwright)
excellent (not excellant)
exhibit (not exhibit)
recommendation (not reccommendation or reccommendation)
separate (not seperate)
achieved (not acheived)
college (not colege)
accommodate (not accomodate or accomodate)
receive (not recieve)
February (not Febuary)
a lot (not alot)

Some of the most common errors found in capitalization (or failure to capitalize).

- *Failure to capitalize the complete name of a school or building (i.e., Central high School instead of **C**entral **H**igh **S**chool)*
- *Names of languages (**E**nglish, **F**rench, **S**panish should be capitalized)*
- *Names of subjects should not be capitalized unless they are followed by a number or are the names of foreign languages (i.e., algebra should not be capitalized, but **A**lgebra **I**I should be; biology should not be capitalized, but **B**iology **I**I should be)*
- *Names of governmental entities should be capitalized (i.e., **S**enate, **C**ongress)*
- *General geographic terms (such as lake, river, mountain) should be capitalized if they are part of a proper name (i.e., **L**ake **M**ichigan, **G**ulf of **M**exico, **R**ocky **M**ountains)*
- *Proper names are capitalized (of people, places, and things)*
- *Failure to capitalize the first word of a direct quotation (i.e., **J**uilius **C**aesar's last words before he died were, "**Y**ou too, **B**rutus?")*

Some of the most common errors in punctuation

Failure to end a question with a question mark:

Yes: Would that be a good idea?

No: Would that be a good idea.

Failure to put a comma (,) before a direct quotation:

Yes: John said, "There is no such thing as a free lunch."

No: John said "There is no such thing as a free lunch."

Some of the common rules of English grammar

Be sure that there are no "run on" sentences in your writing.

Yes: The most common error is the failure to put a punctuation mark between parts of a sentence that should be separated; there is a run on without the mark.

No: The most common error is the failure to put a punctuation mark between parts of a sentence that should be separated there is a run on without the mark.

Be sure that there is both a subject and a verb in every sentence.

*Yes: The most exciting time during the vacation was taking a boat to the base of Niagara Falls. **Sounds** like thunder **were** all around.*

*No: The most exciting time during the vacation was taking a boat to the base of Niagara Falls. **Sounds** like thunder.*

Be sure that the subject and the verb in the sentence agree.

Yes: The players on the football team were all sophomore students.

No: The players on the football team was all sophomore students.

(Note: The subject of the sentence is players, not team.)

Be sure that a pronoun in the sentence (a word such as his, her, their) agrees with the noun that it stands for.

*Yes: If **a parent** wants to accompany her child on the field trip, **she** must advise the teacher at least two days in advance of the activity.*

*No: If **a parent** wants to accompany her child on the field trip, **they** must advise the teacher at least two days in advance of the activity.*

Some of the most commonly misused (similar) words

to, too, and two

their, there, they're

for, fore, four

past, pass

it's, its

principal, principle

affect, effect

lose, loose

red, read

bow, bough

advise, advice

ANSWER KEY

- | | | | |
|-----|----|-----|---|
| 1. | C | 34. | C |
| 2. | B | 35. | B |
| 3. | C | 36. | C |
| 4. | B | 37. | B |
| 5. | A. | 38. | A |
| 6. | B | 39. | A |
| 7. | C | 40. | C |
| 8. | A | 41. | B |
| 9. | B | 42. | A |
| 10. | C | 43. | A |
| 11. | B | 44. | B |
| 12. | A | 45. | B |
| 13. | A | 46. | B |
| 14. | B | 47. | A |
| 15. | C | 48. | A |
| 16. | A | 49. | C |
| 17. | C | 50. | C |
| 18. | A | 51. | B |
| 19. | C | 52. | A |
| 20. | B | 53. | C |
| 21. | B | 54. | C |
| 22. | B | 55. | B |
| 23. | A | 56. | C |
| 24. | C | 57. | C |
| 25. | B | 58. | C |
| 26. | B | 59. | A |
| 27. | A | 60. | B |
| 28. | A | 61. | B |
| 29. | C | 62. | B |
| 30. | C | 63. | A |
| 31. | B | 64. | C |
| 32. | B | 65. | B |
| 33. | A | | |

Writing Sample: See attached

Dear Summer Camp Director:

It is my pleasure to recommend Mary Albright for a position as a counselor in your summer camp. I have had the pleasure to know Mary both as a student in Central High School and as a tutor of other students. She consistently excels in everything she undertakes.

First, Mary has a superior academic record. She will be a senior next year, and she has maintained a straight A record throughout her high school courses. She is a member of the National Honor Society and, in fact, will become president next year. She has worked closely with several students, helping to prepare them to be successful on the TAAS test. Although some of the students have been very difficult to work with, she has never lost her patience. I remember one particular incident where a student walked out of the room, angry that he could not work a math problem. Mary worked all that night to develop a math game to teach the concept. It worked, and the student, whom she greeted with a smile the next day, finally understood how to divide fractions!

Next, Mary is very comfortable working with computers. She has designed some simple computer games that she has used with her younger brothers and sisters. They are now as interested in computers as she is. She has also worked in the town's library after school showing students how to access the Internet on the computers.

Finally, Mary has a lot of patience with younger children. She has three brothers and sisters (ages 5, 8, and 11). As I have indicated, she works with them on the computer. She also plays games with them, takes them on hikes and picnics, and is trying to teach them how to play tennis. She doesn't mind repeating herself when she is teaching others-no matter how long it takes for them to grasp an idea. And her attitude is always sunny and pleasant.

I believe that Mary would make an excellent counselor in your summer camp, since she is an excellent academic role model for others, is successful working with computers, and has interesting ideas on how to make learning fun with the patience to carry out those ideas. I recommend her to you enthusiastically as a summer camp counselor.

Identify recipient of letter

Begin by telling the purpose of your letter. Tell how you know about the applicant. Make a general summary statement about her qualifications.

Start with an opening transition (First) to begin organizing your response. Continue with your first reason for your recommendation (Academic success). Give at least two facts to support your reason. (NHS member, helping students on TAAS) Elaborate by describing an incident that shows her resourcefulness and desire to help others.

Continue with a transition to your next reason. (Next). Give two facts to support this reason. (Computer ability) (Computer games with her siblings; work in the town's library)

Continue with the last transition (Finally). Give your last reason (patience). Again, give two facts to support this reason (playing with her brothers and sisters and working with others).

Summarize your letter by referring to the reason you are writing it; review again the three reasons (academic role model, successful with computers, patient and creative). End by restating your recommendation.

