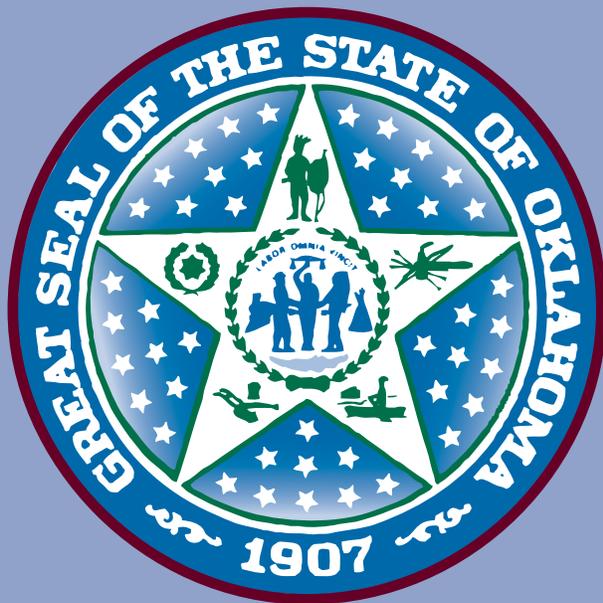


Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators™

Oklahoma General Education Test™

STUDY GUIDE

074 Oklahoma General Education Test



Oklahoma Commission
for Teacher Preparation

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STUDY GUIDE INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS FOR OKLAHOMA EDUCATORS

The first two sections of the study guide are available in a separate PDF file. Click the link below to view or print these sections.

[Study Guide Introduction and General Information About the Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators](#)



FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- Test Competencies
 - Practice Test Questions and Answers
 - Writing Assignment Scoring
-

INTRODUCTION

This section includes a list of the test competencies, as well as a set of practice selected-response (multiple-choice) questions and a practice writing assignment for the OGET.

Test Competencies

The test competencies are broad, conceptual statements that reflect the general education knowledge and skills an entry-level educator needs to teach effectively in Oklahoma public schools. The list of test competencies for the OGET represents the **only** source of information about what the test will cover and therefore should be reviewed carefully.

The descriptive statements that follow the competencies are included to provide examples of possible content covered by each competency. These descriptive statements are neither exhaustive nor exclusionary.

Practice Test Questions

The practice selected-response questions and practice writing assignment included in this section are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in the OGET. The practice test questions represent the various types of questions you may expect to see on an actual test; however, they are **not** designed to provide diagnostic information to help you identify specific areas of individual strengths and weaknesses or to predict your performance on the test as a whole.

To help you prepare for the OGET, each practice selected-response question in this section is preceded by the competency it measures and followed by a brief explanation of the correct response. On the actual test, the competencies, correct responses, and explanations will **not** be given.

A sample response is provided immediately following the practice writing assignment. The sample response in this guide is for illustrative purposes only. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

A description of the process that is used for scoring the writing assignment is provided in addition to the OGET performance characteristics and score scale.

When you are finished with the practice test questions, you may wish to go back and review the entire list of test competencies and descriptive statements.

TEST COMPETENCIES: OGET

SUBAREAS:

- I. Critical Thinking Skills: Reading and Communications
- II. Communication Skills
- III. Critical Thinking Skills: Mathematics
- IV. Computation Skills
- V. Liberal Studies: Science, Art and Literature, Social Sciences
- VI. Critical Thinking Skills: Writing

SUBAREA I—CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS: READING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Competency 0001

Identify a writer's point of view and intended meaning.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Identify the statement that best expresses the main idea of a paragraph or passage.

Recognize ideas that support, illustrate, or elaborate the main idea of a paragraph or passage.

Use the content, word choice, and phrasing of a passage to determine a writer's opinions or point of view (e.g., belief, position on an issue).

Competency 0002

Analyze the relationship among ideas in written material.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Identify the sequence of events or steps presented in technical, scientific, or research material.

Identify cause-effect relationships from information in a passage.

Analyze relationships between ideas in opposition (e.g., pro and con).

Identify a solution to a problem presented in a passage.

Draw conclusions inductively and deductively from information stated or implied in a passage.

Competency 0003

Use critical reasoning skills to evaluate written material.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Draw valid conclusions using information from written communications.

Recognize the stated or implied assumptions on which the validity of an argument depends.

Determine the relevance or importance of particular facts, examples, or graphic data to a writer's argument.

Use inductive and deductive reasoning to recognize fallacies in the logic of a writer's argument.

Evaluate the validity of analogies used in written material.

Distinguish between fact and opinion in written material.

Assess the credibility, objectivity, or bias of the writer or source of written material.

Competency 0004

Recognize the roles of purpose and audience in written communication.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Recognize a writer's stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to persuade, to describe).

Evaluate the appropriateness of written material for a specific purpose or audience.

Recognize the likely effect on an audience of a writer's choice of a particular word or words (e.g., to evoke sympathy, to undermine an opposing point of view).

Competency 0005

Recognize unity, focus, and development in writing.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Recognize unnecessary shifts in point of view (e.g., shifts from first to third person) or distracting details that impair the development of the main idea in a piece of writing.

Recognize revisions that improve the unity and focus of a piece of writing.

Recognize examples of well-developed writing.

SUBAREA II—COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Competency 0006

Recognize effective organization in writing.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Recognize methods of paragraph organization.

Reorganize sentences to improve cohesion and the effective sequence of ideas.

Recognize the appropriate use of transitional words or phrases to convey text structure (e.g., however, therefore).

Competency 0007

Recognize sentences that effectively communicate intended messages.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Recognize ineffective repetition and inefficiency in sentence construction.

Identify effective placement of modifiers, parallel structure, and use of negatives in sentence formation.

Recognize imprecise and inappropriate word choices.

Competency 0008

Recognize standard conventions of formal written English usage in the United States.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Recognize the standard use of verb forms.

Recognize the standard use of pronouns.

Recognize the standard formation and use of adverbs, adjectives, comparatives and superlatives, and plural and possessive forms of nouns.

Recognize standard punctuation.

Identify sentence fragments and run-on sentences (e.g., fused sentences, comma splices).

Identify standard subject-verb agreement.

SUBAREA III—CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS: MATHEMATICS

Competency 0009

Solve problems involving data interpretation and analysis.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Interpret information from line graphs, bar graphs, histograms, pictographs, and pie charts.

Interpret data from tables.

Recognize appropriate representations of various data in graphic form.

Competency 0010

Apply mathematical reasoning skills to analyze patterns and solve problems.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Draw conclusions using inductive reasoning.

Draw conclusions using deductive reasoning.

Competency 0011

Solve applied problems using a combination of mathematical skills (including word problems involving one and two variables).

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Apply combinations of algebraic skills to solve problems.

Apply combinations of mathematical skills to solve a series of related problems.

Identify the algebraic equivalent of a stated relationship.

Identify the proper equation or expression to solve word problems involving one and two variables.

SUBAREA IV—COMPUTATION SKILLS

Competency 0012

Solve word problems involving integers, fractions, decimals, and units of measurement.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Solve word problems involving integers, fractions, and decimals (including percentages).

Solve word problems involving ratio and proportions.

Solve word problems involving units of measurement and conversions (including scientific notation).

Competency 0013

Graph and solve algebraic equations with one and two variables.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Graph numbers or number relationships.

Find the value of the unknown in a given one-variable equation.

Express one variable in terms of a second variable in two-variable equations.

Competency 0014

Solve problems involving geometric figures.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Solve problems involving two-dimensional geometric figures (e.g., perimeter and area problems).

Solve problems involving three-dimensional geometric figures (e.g., volume and surface area problems).

SUBAREA V—LIBERAL STUDIES: SCIENCE, ART AND LITERATURE, SOCIAL SCIENCES

Competency 0015

Understand and analyze major scientific principles, concepts, and theories, and apply skills, principles, and procedures associated with scientific inquiry.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Analyze the nature of scientific thought and inquiry.

Use an appropriate illustration or physical model to represent a scientific theory or concept.

Relate major scientific principles, concepts, or theories to everyday phenomena.

Apply scientific methods and principles to assess real-world questions or problems.

Competency 0016

Understand and analyze the historical development and cultural contexts of science and technology and the impact of science on society.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Analyze the historical development and impact of key scientific ideas and discoveries.

Evaluate factors that have promoted or hindered developments in science and technology.

Assess the implications of recent developments in science and technology.

Competency 0017

Understand, interpret, and compare representations from the visual and performing arts from different periods and cultures, and understand the relationship of works of art to their social and historical contexts.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Identify and evaluate major historical and contemporary developments and movements in the arts.

Interpret and compare representations of works of art from different periods and cultures in terms of form, subject, theme, mood, or technique.

Analyze ways in which the content of a given work of art reflects or influences a specific social or historical context.

Competency 0018

Understand, interpret, and compare examples of literature from different periods and cultures, and understand the relationship of works of literature to their social and historical contexts.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Identify and evaluate major historical and contemporary developments and movements in world literature.

Interpret and compare works of literature from different periods and cultures in terms of form, subject, theme, mood, or technique.

Analyze ways in which the content of a given work of literature reflects or influences a specific social or historical context.

Competency 0019

Understand and analyze the major political, social, economic, scientific, and cultural developments that shaped the course of history.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate an understanding of the principal characteristics and important cultural values of the major civilizations of Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

Evaluate the influence of varied ideas, movements, and historical developments on Western religious, artistic, scientific, and political ideas and beliefs (e.g., the Renaissance, the Reformation, the French Revolution).

Analyze the major causes of varied historical developments (e.g., the Industrial Revolution, Colonialism) and evaluate their impact on the politics and culture of the modern world.

Demonstrate knowledge of the major political movements of the twentieth century and analyze their influence on contemporary societies.

Demonstrate an understanding of significant individuals, movements, ideas, and conflicts that have shaped U.S. history and culture (e.g., the Civil War, the New Deal).

Competency 0020

Understand and analyze the concepts of freedom, diversity, and tolerance, their historical development, and their influence in human history.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate an understanding of the democratic principles embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

Analyze ways in which the evolution of democracy reflects a specific social or historical context.

Evaluate movements that have influenced the concepts of freedom, diversity, and tolerance.

SUBAREA VI—CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS: WRITING

Competency 0021

Prepare an organized, developed composition in edited English in response to instructions regarding content, purpose, and audience.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate the ability to prepare a unified and focused piece of writing on a given topic using language and style appropriate to a specified audience, purpose, and occasion.

Demonstrate the ability to take a position on a contemporary social or political issue and defend that position with reasoned arguments and supporting examples.

Demonstrate the ability to use effective sentence structure and apply the standards of edited English.

Demonstrate the ability to spell, capitalize, and punctuate according to the standards of edited English.

SAMPLE MATHEMATICS DEFINITIONS AND FORMULAS

Definitions

=	is equal to	\leq	is less than or equal to	\overline{AB}	line segment AB
\neq	is not equal to	π	≈ 3.14	\overleftrightarrow{AB}	line AB
>	is greater than	\sphericalangle	angle	AB	length of \overline{AB}
<	is less than	\perp	right angle	$\frac{a}{b}$ or $a : b$	ratio of a to b
\geq	is greater than or equal to				

Abbreviations for Units of Measurement

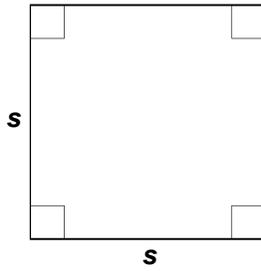
U.S. Standard		SI System	
Distance	in. inch ft. foot mi. mile	Distance	m meter km kilometer cm centimeter mm millimeter
Volume	gal. gallon qt. quart oz. fluid ounce	Volume	L liter mL milliliter cc cubic centimeter
Weight	lb. pound oz. ounce	Mass	g gram kg kilogram mg milligram
Temperature	$^{\circ}\text{F}$ degree Fahrenheit	Temperature	$^{\circ}\text{C}$ degree Celsius K Kelvin
Speed	mph miles per hour		

Conversions for Units of Measurement

U.S. Standard		SI System	
Length	12 inches = 1 foot 3 feet = 1 yard 5280 feet = 1 mile	Length	10 millimeters = 1 centimeter 100 centimeters = 1 meter 1000 meters = 1 kilometer
Volume (liquid)	8 ounces = 1 cup 2 cups = 1 pint 2 pints = 1 quart 4 quarts = 1 gallon	Volume	1000 milliliters = 1 liter 1000 liters = 1 kiloliter
Weight	16 ounces = 1 pound 2000 pounds = 1 ton	Weight	1000 milligrams = 1 gram 1000 grams = 1 kilogram
	Time		60 seconds = 1 minute 60 minutes = 1 hour 24 hours = 1 day

Geometric Figures

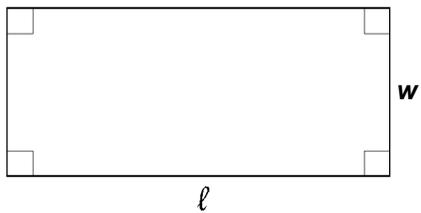
Square



$$\text{Area} = s^2$$

$$\text{Perimeter} = 4s$$

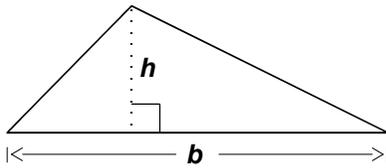
Rectangle



$$\text{Area} = lw$$

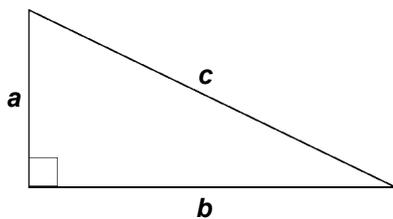
$$\text{Perimeter} = 2l + 2w$$

Triangle



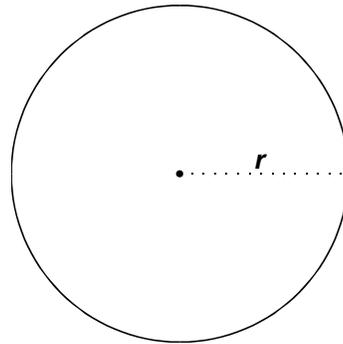
$$\text{Area} = \frac{1}{2}bh$$

Right triangle



$$\text{Pythagorean formula: } c^2 = a^2 + b^2$$

Circle

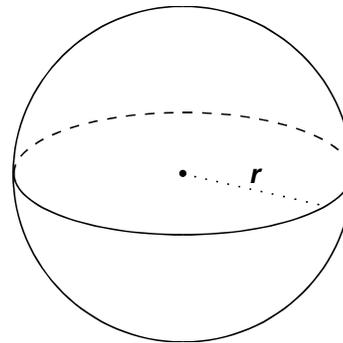


$$\text{Area} = \pi r^2$$

$$\text{Circumference} = 2\pi r$$

$$\text{Diameter} = 2r$$

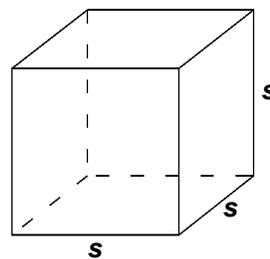
Sphere



$$\text{Surface area} = 4\pi r^2$$

$$\text{Volume} = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$$

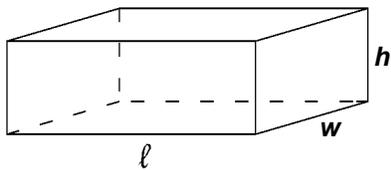
Cube



$$\text{Surface area} = 6s^2$$

$$\text{Volume} = s^3$$

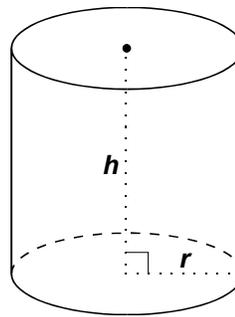
Rectangular solid



$$\text{Surface area} = 2lw + 2lh + 2wh$$

$$\text{Volume} = lwh$$

Right circular cylinder



$$\text{Surface area} = 2\pi rh + 2\pi r^2$$

$$\text{Volume} = \pi r^2 h$$

End of Definitions and Formulas

PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OGET

Practice Selected-Response Questions

Read the passage below adapted from "Single Room, Earth View" by Sally Ride from *Prentice Hall Literature*. Then answer the four questions that follow.

Single Room, Earth View

- 1 Everyone I've met has a glittering, if vague, mental image of space travel. And naturally enough, people want to hear about it from an astronaut: "How did it feel . . . ?" "What did it look like . . . ?" "Were you scared?" Sometimes, the questions come from reporters, their pens poised and their tape recorders silently reeling in the words; sometimes, it's wide-eyed, ten-year-old girls who want answers. I find a way to answer all of them, but it's not easy.
- 2 Imagine trying to describe an airplane ride to someone who has never flown. An articulate traveler could describe the sights but would find it much harder to explain the difference in perspective provided by the new view from a greater distance, along with the feelings, impressions, and insights that go with the new perspective. And the difference is enormous: space flight moves the traveler another giant step farther away. Eight and one-half thunderous minutes after launch, an astronaut is orbiting high above the earth, suddenly able to watch typhoons form, volcanoes smolder, and meteors streak through the atmosphere below.
- 3 While flying over the Hawaiian Islands, several astronauts have marveled that the islands look just as they do on a map. When people first hear that, they wonder what should be so surprising about Hawaii looking the way it does in the atlas. Yet, to the astronauts, it is an absolutely startling sensation: the islands really *do* look as if that part of the world has been carpeted with a big page torn out of a Rand-McNally atlas, and all we can do is try to convey the surreal quality of that scene.
- 4 In orbit, racing along at five miles per second, the space shuttle circles the earth once every 90 minutes. I found that at this speed, unless I kept my nose pressed to the window, it was almost impossible to keep track of where we were at any given moment—the world below simply changes too fast. If I turned my concentration away for too long, even just to change film in a camera, I could miss an entire landmass. It's embarrassing to float up to a window, glance outside, and then have to ask a crewmate, "What continent is this?"
- 5 We could see smoke rising from fires that dotted the entire east coast of Africa, and in the same orbit only moments later, ice floes jostling for position in the Antarctic. We could see the Ganges River dumping its murky, sediment-laden water into the Indian Ocean and watch ominous hurricane clouds expanding and rising like biscuits in the oven of the Caribbean.
- 6 Mountain ranges, volcanoes, and river deltas appeared in salt-and-flour relief, all leading me to assume the role of a novice geologist. In such moments, it was easy to imagine the dynamic upheavals that created jutting mountain ranges and the internal wrenchings that created rifts and seas. I also became an instant believer in plate tectonics; India really *is* crashing into Asia, and Saudi Arabia and Egypt really *are* pulling apart, making the Red Sea wider. Even though their respective motion is really no more than mere inches a year, the view from overhead makes theory come alive.

7 As the shuttle races the sun around the earth, we pass from day to night and back again during a single orbit—hurtling into darkness, then bursting into daylight. The sun's appearance unleashes spectacular blue and orange bands along the horizon, a clockwork miracle that astronauts witness every 90 minutes. But I really can't describe a sunrise in orbit. The drama set against the black backdrop of space and the magic of the materializing colors can't be captured in an astronomer's equations or an astronaut's photographs.

8 I once heard someone (not an astronaut) suggest that it's possible to imagine what spaceflight is like by simply extrapolating

from the sensations you experience on an airplane. All you have to do, he said, is mentally raise the airplane 200 miles, mentally eliminate the air noise and the turbulence, and you get an accurate mental picture of a trip in the space shuttle.

9 Not true. And while it's natural to try to liken space flight to familiar experiences, it can't be brought "down to Earth"—not in the final sense. The environment is different, the perspective is different. Part of the fascination with space travel is the element of the unknown—the conviction that it's different from earthbound experiences. And it is.

Competency 0001

Identify a writer's point of view and intended meaning.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?
 - A. Space flight is not fully comprehensible to anyone who has not experienced it directly.
 - B. Information gathered on space flights raises many fascinating questions about the relationship between the earth and the rest of the universe.
 - C. Space flight is in many respects similar to flying in an airplane for the first time.
 - D. Information gathered on space flights has been a key element in recent advances in geologic and geographic knowledge.

Correct Response: A. The main idea of a written passage is the central point that an author intends to communicate to readers. Although the main idea of this passage is not directly stated, it can be inferred from the passage as a whole. In the opening paragraph, the author notes that it is never easy to answer questions about space travel, and the remainder of the selection shows why this is so. Of the answer choices provided, choice A best states the author's central point that it is extremely difficult to describe the sensations that an astronaut experiences in space because space flight is fundamentally unlike any other human activity.

Competency 0004

Recognize the roles of purpose and audience in written communication.

2. Information included in paragraphs 4 through 6 is primarily intended to:
 - A. point out similarities and differences between space travel and airplane travel.
 - B. describe some of the challenges facing astronauts while in orbit.
 - C. provide examples of how space flight has increased scientists' knowledge of various phenomena.
 - D. illustrate astronauts' unique perspective as they orbit the earth.

Correct Response: D. In reading paragraphs 4 through 6 of this selection, it should become clear that the author's goal is to provide readers with information about what astronauts see and experience as they orbit the earth. The author does this by providing examples of what she herself saw and felt while in space. Her illustrations indicate that space flight gives astronauts a unique vantage point that has no earthbound counterpart (answer choice D).

Competency 0002

Analyze the relationship among ideas in written material.

3. From the information in the selection, the most valid conclusion is that:
- A. a central objective of many space flights is to test the validity of geological theories.
 - B. it is difficult to simulate perfectly the sensory experiences of space flight.
 - C. responding to public demands for information is the most difficult aspect of space travel for many astronauts.
 - D. astronauts tend to view their technical preparation for space travel as inadequate.

Correct Response: B. A conclusion is any observation that follows reasonably from information stated or implied in a passage. In the closing paragraphs of the selection, the author explains how the sensations an astronaut experiences in space are fundamentally different from those experienced in ordinary air travel. Yet air travel is probably the closest most people will get to the experience of space flight. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that simulating the sensory experiences of space flight is extremely difficult (answer choice B).

Competency 0003

Use critical reasoning skills to evaluate written material.

4. Which of the following best establishes the author's credibility?
- A. her personal experience with space flight
 - B. her even-handed approach to controversies involving space travel
 - C. her extensive contact with news media and the general public
 - D. her willingness to discuss her own limitations as well as her strengths

Correct Response: A. Determining what authority a writer has for making various statements in a passage requires the use of critical reasoning skills. One way that writers establish their credibility is by providing reliable evidence about the topic they are discussing. The author, Sally Ride, is one of a select group of people who has actually experienced space flight, which makes her observations particularly believable about what one sees and feels while traveling through space. Therefore, answer choice A is the best response.

Read the passage below, adapted from *A People and a Nation: A History of the United States* by Mary Beth Norton, et al. Then answer the three questions that follow.

¹During the 1890s, a severe depression, frightening labor violence, political upheaval, and foreign entanglements had shaken the nation. ²Although many of the promises of technology had been fulfilled, great numbers of Americans continued to suffer from poverty and disease. ³Later, of course, with returning prosperity, unemployment would decline and output would soar as the nation's mills resumed full production. ⁴In the minds of many, industrialists had become the nation's new monsters, controlling markets, wages, and prices in order to maximize their profits. ⁵Using politics to enrich themselves, government seemed corroded by bosses and their henchmen.

⁶From this malaise emerged a broad, complex spirit of reform, so many-sided that it is hard to identify the movement's unifying characteristics. ⁷By the 1910s, many reformers were calling themselves progressives, and a new political party

by that name had formed to embody their principles. ⁸Since that time, historians have used the term *progressivism* to refer to the reform spirit in general, while disagreeing over the movement's precise meaning and its membership.

⁹Befitting their name, progressives had strong faith in the ability of humankind to create a better world. ¹⁰They often used such phrases as "humanity's universal growth" and "the upward spiral of human development." ¹¹Government, purged of corruption and favoritism to make it the servant of the people became the instrument of progress. ¹²During the Progressive Era, a new activism infused the presidency, as well as Congress and state and local governments. ¹³More than ever before, Americans looked to government as an agent that could and should intervene in social and economic relations to protect the common good.

Competency 0005

Recognize unity, focus, and development in writing.

5. Which change would best focus attention on the main idea of the first paragraph?
- A. After Part 1, add the sentence, "The late nineteenth century also witnessed the birth of the modern city."
 - B. Delete Part 3.
 - C. After Part 4, add the sentence, "The growing power of big business certainly resulted in both costs and benefits for the nation."
 - D. Delete Part 4.

Correct Response: B. To achieve unity and focus in their writing, writers must avoid irrelevant details that distract the reader from the main idea being developed in a passage. The main point of the first paragraph is that various economic and political developments of the 1890s increased social distress and fueled popular discontent with established authority. Deleting Part 3 eliminates distracting information that shifts attention from the upheavals of the 1890s to the economic prosperity of a later period. Therefore, answer choice B is the best response.

Competency 0007

Recognize sentences that effectively communicate intended messages.

6. Which part contains an error in the use of a modifier?
- A. Part 2
 - B. Part 5
 - C. Part 12
 - D. Part 13

Correct Response: B. To communicate messages effectively, writers should be familiar with the correct use of modifiers. A modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that describes or limits the meaning of another word, phrase, or clause. As Part 5 illustrates, the incorrect use of modifiers creates ambiguity. In this sentence, the participial phrase "using politics to enrich themselves" should either immediately precede or immediately follow the words that it modifies, "bosses and their henchmen." In the passage, however, the phrase appears to modify the word "government." A writer might correct the problem by revising the sentence to read "Government seemed corroded by bosses and their henchmen, who used politics to enrich themselves." Therefore, answer choice B is the best response.

Competency 0008

Recognize standard conventions of formal written English usage in the United States.

7. Which change is needed in the passage?
- A. Part 7: Delete the comma after the word "progressives."
 - B. Part 8: Add a comma after the word "*progressivism*."
 - C. Part 9: Delete the comma after the word "name."
 - D. Part 11: Add a comma after the word "people."

Correct Response: D. Among the conventions of formal written English are rules governing the use of punctuation. To answer this question correctly, you must identify an error in the use of commas. Part 11 requires an additional comma following the modifying phrase "purged of corruption and favoritism to make it the servant of the people" (answer choice D). This correction clarifies the meaning of the sentence by separating the modifying phrase from the independent clause "Government . . . became the instrument of progress."

**Read the passage below, about modern print and electronic news journalism.
Then answer the four questions that follow.**

News is whatever a writer or editor chooses to report, and all journalists have much from which they can choose. Indeed, there are considerably more stories available to the media than appear in newspapers and magazines, or on radio or television. In making their selections, editors and writers must consider a number of factors. These include the medium in which the journalist is working, the audience for the news, and the timeliness and importance of the topic or event being covered. What becomes news is further determined by general editorial policies, competition with other media, and costs.

Not all news stories can be presented because media outlets have limits on the space or time available for news coverage. Programming schedules limit the length of radio and television news coverage. The size of the "news hole" in newspapers and the amount of editorial space in magazines are determined in large part by advertising revenue. How much money advertisers are willing to pay for an advertisement is in turn determined by ratings and circulation. The more viewers a news program has, the more it can charge advertisers; similarly, the more readers a newspaper or magazine has, the more advertisers can expect to pay.

Within these limits, editors must select and prioritize available stories. These choices are strongly influenced by the type of news outlet in which the editor is working. Daily newspapers are generally more concerned about something that has just happened than is the case with monthly magazines. Given a choice between equally important developments, television news programs are more likely to feature stories that provide good visual imagery than stories for which there is little film to show. Weekly or monthly magazines, on the other hand, strive for greater depth and complexity in their news coverage.

Of the other factors influencing the news selection process, timeliness is particularly significant. To many journalists, news is reporting on current

events and issues. Thus, writers and editors look for stories with a "news peg"—some aspect of the story that tells readers why it is important to them now. Information that is less timely receives a lower priority, and may not be presented at all if time or space get filled up. These choices also reflect editors' perceptions of their audience. They must decide which of the available news stories will most interest their intended readers or viewers. This creates a particular problem for the editors of daily newspapers and broadcast news programs because their audience tends to be much more diverse than the readership of monthly magazines.

News is also shaped by what is available. To a large extent, that is a product of what is happening in the world, the daily events and developments that reporters cover on their beats. But news is also generated by public relations firms and interest groups. No writer or editor has time to investigate all possible sources of news. Many stories appear because someone other than the writer or editor considers them important and provides the information to the news outlet.

As they sift through available news stories, editors must keep in mind the editorial guidelines of their publication or broadcast company. All media outlets have self-censoring policies concerning what information is appropriate and acceptable. Editors also stay apprised of the news that competing news media are offering. Ignoring a story that everyone else considers important is generally not good business. Finally, all news media have budgets. The costs of gathering the news can be high, and some stories may not be pursued because the expense is simply too great.

Selecting the news—determining what is newsworthy—is thus a complex process. Numerous considerations shape the choices made by journalists and editor. And each will make different decisions about what is today's news.

Competency 0001

Identify a writer's point of view and intended meaning.

8. Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the selection?
- A. Editors play a more influential role than journalists in the news selection process.
 - B. In general, timeliness is the most important determinant of what is news.
 - C. Print and electronic editors take fundamentally different approaches to the news selection process.
 - D. Journalists and editors must balance a variety of factors when determining what is news.

Correct Response: D. The main idea of a written passage is the central point that an author intends to communicate to readers. Although the main idea of this passage is not directly stated, it can be inferred from the passage as a whole. Throughout the passage, the author examines various factors influencing journalistic decisions about what news should be presented to the public. Of the answer choices provided, choice A best states the author's central point that journalists and editors must consider a variety of factors when determining what is most newsworthy.

Competency 0002

Analyze the relationship among ideas in written material.

9. According to information presented in the selection, there is a cause-and-effect relationship between:
- A. the intended audience for a story and whether an editor considers the story newsworthy.
 - B. the advertising rates charged by a media organization and a story's likely appeal to viewers, listeners, or readers.
 - C. the cost of publishing or broadcasting a story and the importance of that story to readers, listeners, and viewers.
 - D. the stories that competing media are presenting at a given moment and the timeliness of a story.

Correct Response: A. Writers often want to explain why things happen as they do. In this selection, the author is most concerned about the factors that might cause an editor to print or air one story while rejecting another. One of the more important influencing editorial decisions about a story's newsworthiness is the story's intended audience (answer choice A).

Competency 0003

Use critical reasoning skills to evaluate written material.

10. Information presented in the selection best supports which of the following conclusions?
- A. Competition among major media has expanded the definition of what is considered news.
 - B. The more cost-effective a media organization's news selection process, the larger its audience is likely to be.
 - C. Editors are not always able to present the stories that they would most like to air or print.
 - D. Advertisers have far too much influence over editorial decisions about what is newsworthy.

Correct Response: C. A conclusion is any observation that follows reasonably from information stated or implied in a passage. Given limitations on space and the many factors that must be considered when deciding what is newsworthy, it is reasonable to conclude that editors are not always able to present the stories that they would most like to air or print (answer choice C). There are doubtless instances in which editors must pass over stories they deem important because the stories might offend advertisers or are likely to have little appeal to their intended audience.

Competency 0004

Recognize the roles of purpose and audience in written communication.

11. Which of the following titles, if substituted for the existing title, would best match the author's main purpose in this selection?
- A. "So Many Things to Say, So Few Ways to Say It"
 - B. "Who Actually Controls the News"
 - C. "So Much That Is Newsworthy, So Much That Is Not"
 - D. "How the News Becomes the News"

Correct Response: D. Nearly all writers have a purpose for writing that is expressed or implied in what they write. In this selection, the writers' main purpose is to describe various considerations that influence the news selection process. Of the answer choices provided, choice D is the best response because the ways in which editors balance those considerations determines "How the News Becomes the News."

Competency 0009

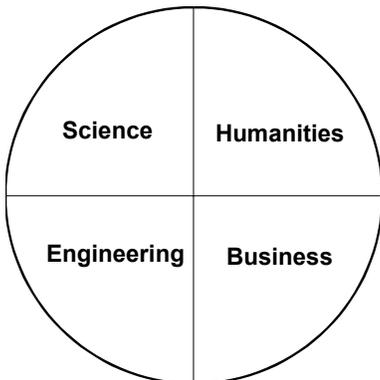
Solve problems involving data interpretation and analysis.

12. Use the table below to answer the question that follows.

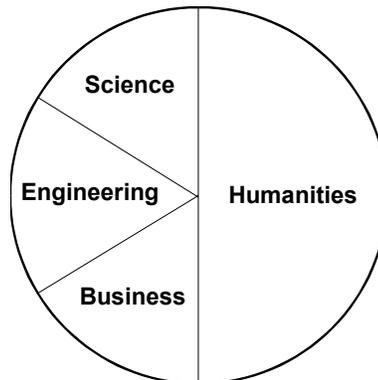
Major Area of Study	Number of Students
Humanities	12,000
Business	6,000
Engineering	4,000
Science	2,000

The table above shows the distribution of students' major areas of study in a particular college. Which of the following pie charts could be used to represent this data? Note that angles in the pie charts are drawn to approximate scale.

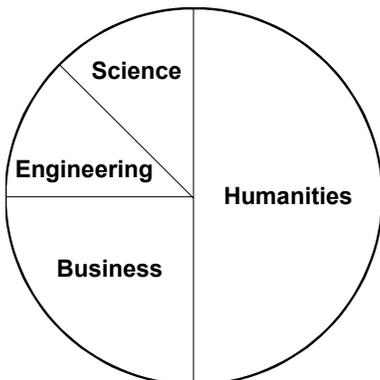
A.



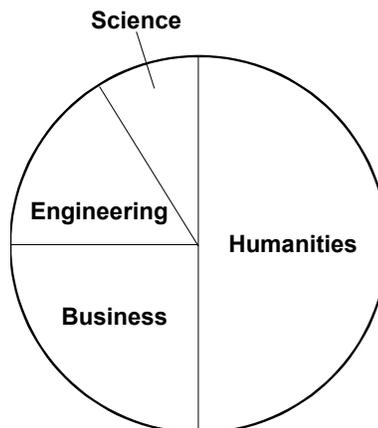
B.



C.



D.

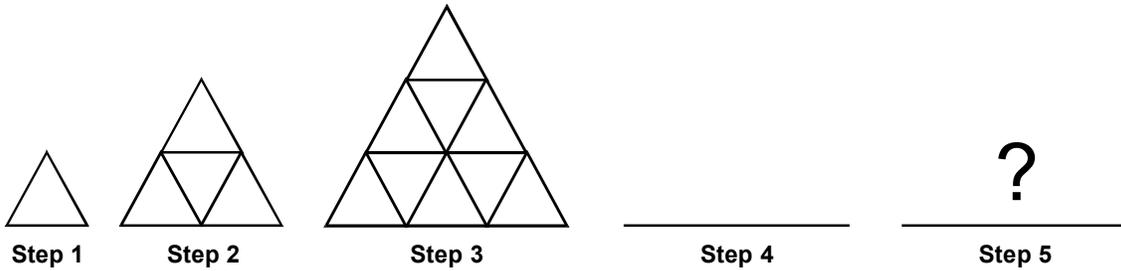


Correct Response: D. A pie chart, or circle graph, represents data in the form of a circle divided into a number of wedges. The entire circle represents a set of data, and each wedge represents a category within the data. The relative size of each wedge represents the relative size, or magnitude, of the category it represents. In this problem, the entire circle can be represented as the equation $12,000 + 6,000 + 4,000 + 2,000 = 24,000$. Therefore, the humanities wedge should occupy $\frac{12,000}{24,000} = \frac{1}{2}$ of the circle, the business wedge should occupy $\frac{6,000}{24,000} = \frac{1}{4}$ of the circle, the engineering wedge should occupy $\frac{4,000}{24,000} = \frac{1}{6}$ of the circle, and the science wedge should occupy $\frac{2,000}{24,000} = \frac{1}{12}$ of the circle (answer choice D).

Competency 0010

Apply mathematical reasoning skills to analyze patterns and solve problems.

13. Use the diagram below to answer the question that follows.



If the sequence above continues in the same pattern, how many small triangles would be needed to make the figure that would occur in **Step 5**?

- A. 16
- B. 25
- C. 36
- D. 49

Correct Response: B. Inductive reasoning is used to make general predictions based on a limited number of examples. In the diagram above, three triangles are added to the first triangle to produce Step 2. Five more triangles are added to produce Step 3. To continue this pattern, seven triangles must be added to create Step 4, and nine triangles must be added to create Step 5. This would give Step 5 a total of $1 + 3 + 5 + 7 + 9$, or 25, triangles (answer choice B).

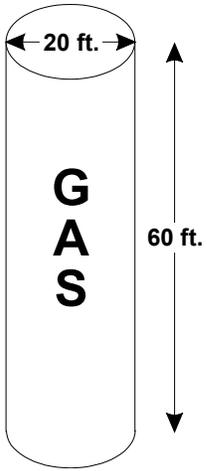
Competency 0010

Apply mathematical reasoning skills to analyze patterns and solve problems.

14. When a student is questioned about his school, he replies that there are at least as many freshmen as there are juniors and at least as many juniors as there are sophomores. If the student is correct, which of the following statements must be true?
- A. There are just as many sophomores as there are freshmen.
 - B. There are at least as many sophomores as there are freshmen.
 - C. There are at least as many freshmen as there are sophomores.
 - D. There are more freshmen than there are sophomores.

Correct Response: C. This problem in deductive reasoning can be simplified by restating the given information in mathematical terms. The statement "There are at least as many freshmen as there are juniors" can be restated as $f \geq j$ (f is greater than or equal to j). The statement "There are at least as many juniors as there are sophomores" can be restated as $j \geq s$. These two statements can be combined to produce the mathematical statement $f \geq j \geq s$. This combined statement implies $f \geq s$, "There are at least as many freshmen as there are sophomores" (answer choice C).

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.



A company has a right cylindrical storage tank for storing natural gas. The tank measures 20 feet wide by 60 feet high.

Competency 0011

Solve applied problems using a combination of mathematical skills (including word problems involving one and two variables).

15. The company estimates that it will cost \$2.00 per square foot to paint the tank. Which of the following expressions could be used to determine the total cost to paint the top and the side of the tank?
- A. $(1200\pi + 100\pi)(2.00)$
- B. $\frac{1200\pi + 100\pi}{2.00}$
- C. $(1200\pi + 200\pi)(2.00)$
- D. $\frac{1200\pi + 200\pi}{2.00}$

Correct Response: A. Solving this problem requires determining the surface area of the storage tank in square feet and multiplying that figure by the cost per square foot to paint the tank. According to the definitions and formulas given (see page 2-8), the surface area of a right circular cylinder can be expressed as $2\pi rh + 2\pi r^2$, where r represents the radius and h represents the height. The first term, $2\pi rh$, represents the surface area of the side and the second term, $2\pi r^2$, represents the sum of the surface areas of the top and bottom. Since the company does not need to paint the bottom, the second term can be reduced to πr^2 . Therefore, the surface area to be painted is $2\pi rh + \pi r^2$. Next, substitute 10 feet (the radius, which is half the diameter) for r and 60 feet for h . This enables you to determine that the surface area equals $(2)\pi(10)(60) + \pi(10)^2$, or $1200\pi + 100\pi$. Finally, multiply by \$2.00 per square foot. The resulting equation is $(1200\pi + 100\pi)(2.00)$ (answer choice A).

Competency 0011

Solve applied problems using a combination of mathematical skills (including word problems involving one and two variables).

16. If the gas stored inside a tank is worth \$0.75 per cubic foot, which of the following expressions represents the total value of the gas when the tank is full?
- A. $\frac{6000\pi}{0.75}$
- B. $0.75(6000\pi)$
- C. $\frac{24,000\pi}{0.75}$
- D. $0.75(24,000\pi)$

Correct Response: B. Solving this problem involves determining the volume of the storage tank in cubic feet and multiplying that figure by the value of each cubic foot of gas. According to the definitions and formulas given (see page 2-8), the volume of a right circular cylinder is $\pi r^2 h$, where r represents the radius and h represents the height. To find the volume of the tank, first substitute 10 feet for r (half the diameter) and 60 feet for h . The volume can then be expressed as $\pi (10)^2 (60) = 6000\pi$. Finally, multiply this volume by the cost per cubic foot (\$0.75). The resulting equation is answer choice B.

Competency 0012

Solve word problems involving integers, fractions, decimals, and units of measurement.

17. A store owner buys a computer for \$620. If she sells the computer for 40% more than she paid for it, what is the computer's final price?
- A. \$635.00
 - B. \$660.00
 - C. \$775.00
 - D. \$868.00

Correct Response: D. Solving this problem requires adding 40% to the purchase price to find the selling price of the computer. To find 40% of \$620.00, multiply 620 by 0.4. The product, 248, represents \$248.00, the increase in the price of the computer. Therefore, the final price is \$620.00 + \$248.00, or \$868.00 (answer choice D). Another way of arriving at the same result in one step would be to multiply the original price by 140% or 1.4.

Competency 0013

Graph and solve algebraic equations with one and two variables.

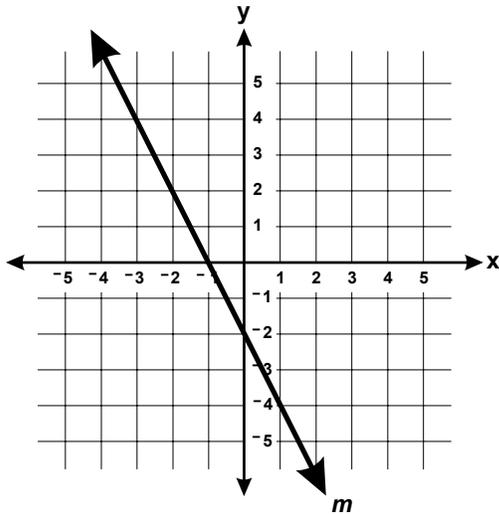
18. If $6b + 20 = a$, and $4b + 30 = a$, then $b =$
- A. -5
 - B. -1
 - C. 1
 - D. 5

Correct Response: D. The type of problem presented here uses a system of linear equations. It can be solved by a series of steps in which the same operation is performed on both sides of the equation, progressively reducing the equation to its simplest form. First, reduce the two equations to a single equation: if $6b + 20 = a$ and $4b + 30 = a$, then $6b + 20 = 4b + 30$. Next, subtract $4b$ from both sides of the equation, reducing the equation to $2b + 20 = 30$. Then, subtract 20 from both sides of the equation, further simplifying it to yield $2b = 10$. Finally, divide both sides of the equation by 2 to find the value of b , which is 5 (answer choice D).

Competency 0013

Graph and solve algebraic equations with one and two variables.

19. Use the graph below to answer the question that follows.



Which point lies on line m ?

- A. $(-1, 1)$
- B. $(1, -4)$
- C. $(-3, -4)$
- D. $(2, -2)$

Correct Response: B. Answering this question requires an understanding of line graphs. The graph in this problem consists of two number lines, or axes, labeled x (the horizontal axis) and y (the vertical axis). The point at which these two axes intersect is called the origin. Any point on the graph can be described by two numbers called an ordered pair. The first number indicates the point's position relative to the x axis. The second number represents the point's position relative to the y axis. The origin is the beginning of the numbering of both axes and is therefore assigned the coordinates $(0, 0)$. Points to the right of the origin have a positive value of x . Points to the left of the origin have a negative value of x . Points above the origin have a positive value of y . Points below the origin have a negative value of y . To answer the question, take each ordered pair and determine whether it falls on line m . The point $(1, -4)$ lies one unit to the right of the origin and 4 units below the origin. This point lies on line m ; therefore, answer choice B is the best response.

Competency 0014

Solve problems involving geometric figures.

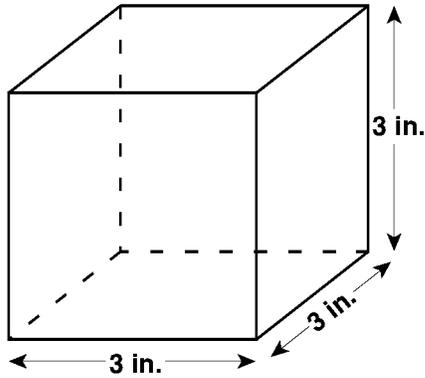
20. A circular area rug has a circumference of 26π inches. What is the radius of the rug?
- A. $\sqrt{26}$ inches
 - B. 13 inches
 - C. 26 inches
 - D. 39 inches

Correct Response: B. This problem requires finding the radius of a circle, which can be determined by using the formula for the circumference of a circle. According to the definitions and formulas given (see page 2-8), circumference = $2\pi r$, where r represents the circle's radius. The problem states that the circle's circumference is 26π . Therefore, 26π can be substituted for the word *circumference* in the formula $26\pi = 2\pi r$. To find the value of r , solve the equation by dividing each side by 2π . The resulting equation is $13 = r$. The radius of the circle is 13 inches (answer choice B).

Competency 0014

Solve problems involving geometric figures.

21. Use the diagram below to answer the question that follows.



A company makes boxes that have the shape of a cube measuring 3 inches on each edge. What is the surface area of each box?

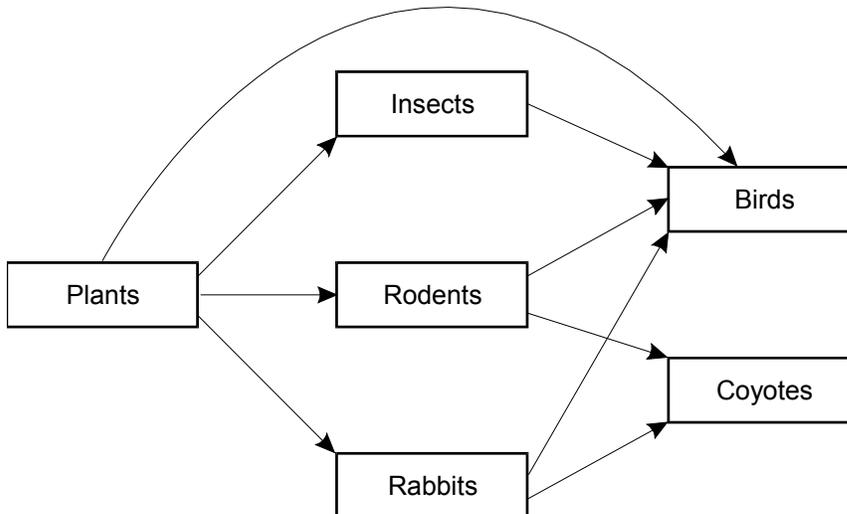
- A. 9 square inches
- B. 27 square inches
- C. 54 square inches
- D. 81 square inches

Correct Response: C. This problem involves finding the surface area of a cube. Each of a cube's 6 faces is a square, and the 6 squares are identical. According to the formula for the surface area of a cube, as found in the definitions and formulas given (see page 2-8), surface area = $6s^2$, where s represents the length of an edge. In the problem above, the cube has edges that measure 3 inches. This value can be substituted for s in the formula, surface area = $(6)(3^2)$. Since 3^2 represents 3×3 , or 9, the surface area of the cube is 6×9 , or 54 square inches (answer choice C).

Competency 0015

Understand and analyze major scientific principles, concepts, and theories, and apply skills, principles, and procedures associated with scientific inquiry.

22. Use the diagram below to answer the question that follows.



The diagram above represents a simplified food web in a grassland community. Which of the following events would likely have the greatest effect on the entire food web?

- A. The coyotes are removed from the area by humans.
- B. A contagious disease kills off a majority of the rabbit population.
- C. High rainfall results in lush growth and seed production by the plants.
- D. An insect species experiences a sudden increase in population size.

Correct Response: C. This question requires an understanding of the concept of a food web, the system of interrelationships among predators and prey in a particular ecological community. In the food web represented by the diagram, all of the animal groups depend on plants for their nourishment, either by feeding directly on plants or by consuming other animals that feed on plants. Thus, the change that would have the greatest effect on the entire community would be a change that either increases or reduces the plant population (answer choice C).

Competency 0015

Understand and analyze major scientific principles, concepts, and theories, and apply skills, principles, and procedures associated with scientific inquiry.

23. A chemist is planning an experiment to test the effectiveness of a new chemical designed to inhibit the growth of algae in fish tanks. The chemist plans to set up four fish tanks—a control tank and three experimental tanks. The water in the control tank will not contain any of the new chemical. Each of the experimental tanks will have a different concentration of the chemical added to its water. To ensure valid results, it will be most essential for the experimental design to include which of the following features?
- A. All of the fish tanks should be exposed to identical conditions except for the chemical concentration.
 - B. There should be one control tank for each of the experimental tanks.
 - C. The tests for each of the chemical concentrations should be performed at different times so that the same fish tank can be used for each concentration.
 - D. Data regarding algal growth should be collected at the same time each day.

Correct Response: A. Answering this question requires a knowledge of experimental design principles. In an ideal experiment, all variables but one are held constant. The variable that is not held constant, but is instead purposely manipulated, is called the independent variable. Since only the independent variable is allowed to change, any differences observed in the experimental subjects are assumed to result from the changes in this variable. In the problem above, the independent variable is chemical concentration. To ensure that any changes observed during the experiment can be attributed only to changes in chemical concentration, all other conditions within the experimental tanks should be identical (answer choice A).

Competency 0016

Understand and analyze the historical development and cultural contexts of science and technology and the impact of science on society.

24. Which of the following statements best describes the social impact in seventeenth-century Europe of Galileo's evidence that the sun, not the earth, is at the center of the solar system?
- A. It stimulated curiosity about the earth itself and prompted expanded exploration of unknown regions.
 - B. It upset prevailing religious beliefs and interpretations about humankind's place in the universe.
 - C. It prompted other scientists to make detailed observations of the planets and stars for the first time.
 - D. It led to increased public interest in government support of scientific research projects.

Correct Response: B. During Galileo's lifetime, most people in Europe believed that the earth was the center of the universe and that human beings were at the center of a divine plan. Galileo's evidence that the earth was one of a number of planets that traveled around the sun not only raised questions about the earth's physical position, it also challenged religious beliefs concerning the origins of the earth and the heavens and the place of humankind in the scheme of creation (answer choice B).

Competency 0017

Understand, interpret, and compare representations from the visual and performing arts from different periods and cultures, and understand the relationship of works of art to their social and historical contexts.

25. Use the works of art below to answer the question that follows.



Bust of a Woman
by Auguste Rodin



A Princess of the House of Aragon
by Francesco de Laurana

A comparison of these two works suggests that Rodin was more interested than Laurana in giving his work a quality of:

- A. individualism.
- B. idealism.
- C. piety.
- D. simplicity.

Correct Response: A. This question compares two works of sculpture from different periods, each a bust of a young woman. In carving the marble *Princess of the House of Aragon*, the fifteenth-century Italian sculptor Francesco de Laurana reduced details to a minimum and used smooth, elegantly simple forms to invoke a sense of cool dignity, serenity, and elegance. The princess, with her eyes cast modestly downward, becomes as much an ideal image of royalty as a portrait of a particular individual. Auguste Rodin, who worked in France during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, used malleable clay to portray a young woman with her head cocked flirtatiously to one side, smiling slightly and wearing an elaborate hat and a cloak tied at the neck. The image has a vivid immediacy, suggesting the liveliness and charm of its subject's unique personality. Therefore, answer choice A is the best response.

Competency 0018

Understand, interpret, and compare examples of literature from different periods and cultures, and understand the relationship of works of literature to their social and historical contexts.

26. In contrast to earlier dramatic works of the Western tradition, European and American plays of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries are generally characterized by:
- A. religious and philosophical themes.
 - B. a focus on the problems of ordinary people.
 - C. multiple, complex plot lines.
 - D. an optimistic portrayal of the human condition.

Correct Response: B. This question requires an understanding of broad developments in literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During this period, European dramatists such as Henrik Ibsen and Anton Chekhov introduced a type of drama characterized by realistic treatment of themes drawn from the lives of middle-class people. This movement, which was extended to working-class subjects in the work of twentieth-century American playwrights such as Clifford Odets and Arthur Miller, departed from the tradition of classic tragedy and high comedy represented by Shakespeare, Racine, Molière, and Dryden, whose plays generally focus on royal and aristocratic characters. Therefore, answer choice B is the best response.

Competency 0019

Understand and analyze the major political, social, economic, scientific, and cultural developments that shaped the course of history.

27. Which of the following developments distinguished early modern Europe after the Renaissance from Europe during the Middle Ages?
- A. new methods of industrial production
 - B. a halt to armed conflicts between states
 - C. a new interest in human life and worldly matters
 - D. the introduction and spread of democratic ideas

Correct Response: C. During the European Middle Ages, life for most western Europeans revolved around the Catholic Church. The ideas and beliefs of the ancient Greek and Roman world were put aside in favor of a personal search for religious salvation. Beginning in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, some Europeans began to look again at the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. As they did, they gained a renewed belief in the dignity and worth of the individual human being and a new concern for all aspects of human life. This departure from the medieval preoccupation with life after death redirected Europeans' attention to the world around them. Therefore, answer choice C is the best response.

Competency 0019

Understand and analyze the major political, social, economic, scientific, and cultural developments that shaped the course of history.

28. Which of the following was a major cause of the American Revolution?
- A. British efforts to deny American colonists due process of law and other rights of English citizens
 - B. attempts by the British to force colonial militia to participate in conflicts against France and Spain
 - C. British attempts to tax American colonists to pay for the rising costs of administering the empire
 - D. efforts of British merchants to monopolize the sale of goods in the American colonies

Correct Response: C. As a consequence of Britain's victory in the French and Indian War (1754–1763), Britain nearly doubled the size of its North American possessions. The war itself had been extremely costly, and British authorities soon realized that defending these new territories would enlarge an already burdensome national debt if some means were not found to raise additional revenue. One way they attempted to do so was by taxing American colonists (answer choice C). This proved to be a serious mistake. Most Americans believed Parliament had no right to tax them, and their resistance to the Stamp Act and other revenue-raising initiatives was a major cause of the American Revolution.

Competency 0020

Understand and analyze the concepts of freedom, diversity, and tolerance, their historical development, and their influence in human history.

29. Which of the following best states the principle of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence?
- A. Government is created by competing social groups to preserve public order.
 - B. Government is created by visionary leaders to maintain national pride and prestige.
 - C. Government is created by the governed to secure their natural rights.
 - D. Government is created by enlightened elites to help those who cannot help themselves.

Correct Response: C. Thomas Jefferson and the other committee members appointed to prepare the Declaration of Independence believed in the Enlightenment concept of natural rights. According to this theory, people were born with certain inherent rights such as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These political leaders further believed that government derived its power from the consent of those subject to its authority and that whenever government refused to respect the natural rights of the people it governed, the people were justified in creating a new government that did so. Therefore, answer choice C is the best response.

Sample OGET Constructed-Response Assignment Directions

Sample directions for Section Two of the OGET (the writing assignment) are shown in the box below. You may want to familiarize yourself with the directions, as similar versions will be used for the actual test administration.

DIRECTIONS FOR SECTION TWO

Section Two of the test consists of a writing assignment. You are asked to prepare a written response of up to four pages. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and revise what you have written for the assignment.

Please read the directions to the assignment and respond as directed.

Read the assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write. You may use any blank space provided following the writing assignment in the test booklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. ***However, your final response must be written in your written response booklet.***

Your written response will be scored on the basis of how effectively it communicates a whole message to the specified audience for the stated purpose. You will be assessed on your ability to express, organize, and support opinions and ideas rather than on the position you express. Pay particular attention to the seven characteristics listed below when preparing your writing sample. These seven characteristics will be used as the basis for scoring your writing sample.

- **APPROPRIATENESS**—the extent to which you address the topic and use language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
- **UNITY AND FOCUS**—the clarity with which you state and maintain your main idea or point of view.
- **DEVELOPMENT**—the amount, depth, and specificity of your supporting details.
- **ORGANIZATION**—the clarity of your writing and the logical sequence of your ideas.
- **SENTENCE STRUCTURE**—the effectiveness of your sentence structure and the extent to which your writing is free of errors in sentence structure.
- **USAGE**—the extent to which your writing is free of errors in usage and shows care and precision in word choice.
- **MECHANICAL CONVENTIONS**—your ability to spell common words and to use the conventions of capitalization and punctuation.

The final version of your written response should conform to the standards of edited English. Your response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic and use multiple paragraphs. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes that you think will improve your written response before completing the writing assignment.

Practice Writing Assignment

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Read the passage below on mandatory national service, and then follow the instructions for writing your essay.

Should all young men and women between the ages of 18 and 25 be required to perform one year of military or civilian service? Proponents assert that such a requirement would provide young people with socially useful roles, while the larger society would benefit from their skills and energy and from the encouragement of social responsibility among all citizens. Opponents of mandatory national service, on the other hand, argue that such a program would constitute an unacceptable infringement on personal freedom, that it would be just as likely to breed resentment as idealism, and that it would require creation of a cumbersome and expensive federal bureaucracy.

Your purpose is to write an essay, to be read by a classroom instructor, in which you take a position on whether or not young men and women between the ages of 18 and 25 should be required to perform one year of military or civilian service. Be sure to defend your position with logical arguments and appropriate examples.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*The constructed-response item is written to assess understanding in Subarea VI, Critical Thinking Skills—Writing, which consists of the competency listed below.*

Prepare an organized, developed composition in edited English in response to instructions regarding content, purpose, and audience.

A Very Good Response to the Practice Writing Assignment

While there are good arguments both for and against mandatory national service, I believe there are at least three important benefits of requiring young men and women between the ages of 18 and 25 to perform one year of military or civilian service: restoring the idea of citizenship, providing young people with valuable work and life experience, and helping young Americans learn to live in a democratic society.

Before and during World War II, the idea of citizenship was an important part of American life. Along with that idea came the responsibility to vote and to participate in the process of making our communities better places to live. John Kennedy revived the idea of citizenship in the 1960s when he called upon Americans to "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." In recent years, however, the idea of citizenship seems to have faded away. Requiring young people to devote a year of their lives to their country or their community would restore the concept that our society depends upon the contributions of all of its citizens.

Also, young people participating in a national service program would gain valuable work experience. They would learn the discipline necessary to come to work on time, every day. They would learn to work with others as part of a team. They would learn new skills and develop the ability to solve real world problems. And they would gain the satisfaction of accomplishing something significant for the benefit of others.

Perhaps most important, mandatory national service would help young people better understand the true meaning of democracy. Whether they served their country in the armed forces, in an environmental conservation project, or at a community shelter for the homeless, young men and women would meet people from all different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. As a result, participation in national service could help break down geographic, gender, and racial barriers.

Requiring every young American to devote a year to national service would not be without its problems. Starting up such a program would be expensive. For some people, national service would disrupt education or career plans. It would be important to make sure that national service involved real work and not make-work.

But the advantages of mandatory national service—reviving the idea of citizenship, providing valuable life experiences, and helping young people learn to work positively in a democratic society—would outweigh any disadvantages. For the young people of America, for the communities they would serve, and for our country as a whole, national service would be a valuable investment in our future.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT SCORING

Written responses for the OGET are scored using a four-point scoring scale. This scale has been validated by a committee of Oklahoma educators who reviewed the writing assignments, the scoring scale, and examples of written responses at each score point. The scoring scale for the OGET is provided on the following page.

Written responses are scored by multiple scorers according to standardized procedures during scoring sessions held immediately after each administration of the CEOE. Scorers with relevant professional backgrounds are oriented to these procedures before the scoring session and are carefully monitored during the scoring sessions.

A written response is designated unscorable ("U") if it is illegible, not written to the assigned topic, written in a language other than English, or of insufficient length to score. A written response is designated blank ("B") if the written response form is blank.

OGET Performance Characteristics

Scorers judge the overall effectiveness of each OGET written response by focusing on a set of performance characteristics that have been defined as important aspects of the written response.

The performance characteristics for the OGET written response are listed below.

APPROPRIATENESS	The extent to which the candidate addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
UNITY AND FOCUS	The clarity with which the candidate states and maintains his/her main idea or point of view.
DEVELOPMENT	The amount, depth, and specificity of supporting details presented by the candidate.
ORGANIZATION	The clarity of the candidate's writing and the logical sequence of his/her ideas.
SENTENCE STRUCTURE	The effectiveness of the candidate's sentence structure and the extent to which the candidate's writing is free of errors in sentence structure.
USAGE	The extent to which the candidate's writing is free of errors in usage and shows care and precision in word choice.
MECHANICAL CONVENTIONS	The candidate's ability to spell common words and to use the conventions of capitalization and punctuation.

OGET Scoring Scale

SCORE POINT	SCORE POINT DESCRIPTION
4	<p>The "4" response is a well-formed writing sample that effectively communicates a whole message to a specified audience.</p> <p>The writer maintains unity of a developed topic throughout the writing sample and establishes a focus by clearly stating a purpose. The writer exhibits control in the development of ideas and clearly specifies supporting detail. Sentence structure is effective and free of errors. Choice of words is precise and usage is careful. The writer shows mastery of mechanical conventions such as spelling and punctuation.</p>
3	<p>The "3" response is an adequately formed writing sample that attempts to communicate a message to a specified audience.</p> <p>The focus and the purpose of the writing sample may be clear; however, the writer's attempts to develop supporting details may not be fully realized. The writer's organization of ideas may be ambiguous, incomplete, or partially ineffective. Sentence structure within paragraphs is adequate, but minor errors in sentence structure, usage, and word choice are evident. There may also be errors in the use of mechanical conventions such as spelling and punctuation.</p>
2	<p>The "2" response is a partially developed writing sample in which the characteristics of effective written communication are only partially formed.</p> <p>The statement of purpose is not clear, and, although a main idea or topic may be announced, focus on the main idea is not sustained. Ideas may be developed by the use of specific supporting detail, and the writer may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but development and organization are largely incomplete or unclear. Paragraphs contain poorly structured sentences with noticeable and distracting errors. The writer exhibits imprecision in usage and word choice and a lack of control of mechanical conventions such as spelling and punctuation.</p>
1	<p>The "1" response is an inadequately formed writing sample that fails to communicate a complete message.</p> <p>The writer attempts to address the topic, but language and style may be inappropriate for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. There is often no clear statement of a main idea, and the writer's efforts to present supporting detail are confused. There is little or no organization or effective sequence of ideas. Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. Usage and word choice are imprecise. The writer makes many errors in the use of mechanical conventions such as spelling and punctuation.</p>
U	<p>The response is unscorable because it is illegible, not written to the assigned topic, written in a language other than English, or of insufficient length to score.</p>
B	<p>The written response form is blank.</p>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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- 2-11 Ride, Sally. "Single Room, Earth View." As appears in Babusci, R., et al., *Prentice Hall Liberture Gold*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1989, pp. 517–520. Reprinted with permission.
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- 2-17 Norton, Mary Beth, et al. "During the 1890's a severe depression." *A People and a Nation: A History of the United States*. ©1986 by Houghton Mifflin Company.
- 2-41 Auguste Rodin, *Bust of a Woman*, c. 1865, terra cotta and tinted plaster. As appears in J. Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1975. p. 647. Reprinted with permission.
- 2-41 Francesco de Laurana, *A Princess of the House of Aragon*, 1472–75. Marble. As appears in J. Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1975, p. 633. Reprinted with permission.

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