240 TUTORING

Praxis® ParaPro Ultimate Guide

Preparing to take the Praxis® ParaPro?

Awesome!

We will answer every question you have and tell you exactly what you need to study to pass the ParaPro.

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ParaPro Quick Facts

Overview:

The ParaPro assesses reading, writing, and math skills. It also assesses application of those skills in the classroom.

School paraprofessionals include teaching assistants, teaching aides, translators, and library and media center assistants.

Format:

The Praxis® ParaPro is a computer-administered test.

The question breakdown by content category is as follows:

Content Category	# of Questions
Reading	30
Math	30
Writing	30
Total	90

You will have 2.5 hours to complete the test.

Cost:

$55

Scoring:

The score range for the ParaPro is 420–480. Each state or school district sets its own passing score. For a list of passing scores by state, visit here: https://www.ets.org/parapro/state_requirements/.

Study time:

There is no set amount of time to study to pass the ParaPro exam. It depends on the strengths and weaknesses of the participant in relation to the skills covered on the test. The average amount of time needed to study is 2 months.

Plan a course of study by focusing on your weaknesses. The best way to do that is to review the 240 Tutoring materials.

What test-takers wish they'd known:

Several test takers have said that they wished that they had studied specific math and reading terms and specific grammar rules since they had been out of school for several years.

Here are some helpful tips:

- Test-takers tend to overestimate their ability to perform well. Many regret not putting more time and effort into preparing. Fortunately, it's easy to avoid this mistake by using test preparation materials.
- When answering the multiple-choice questions, you should read all possible answers before marking the correct one. You don't want to miss out on the best answer by not reading all of the responses!
- Always check your answer before moving to the next question. Many test-takers are surprised by how they're able to find overlooked errors in their work by using this strategy.

Information and screenshots obtained from the ETS website: https://www.ets.org/parapro/about/.

ParaPro:

Reading

Overview

There are about 30 Reading questions.

The Reading section has two types of questions:

- Reading Skills and Knowledge
- Application of Reading Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

So, let's start with Reading Skills and Knowledge.

Reading Skills and Knowledge

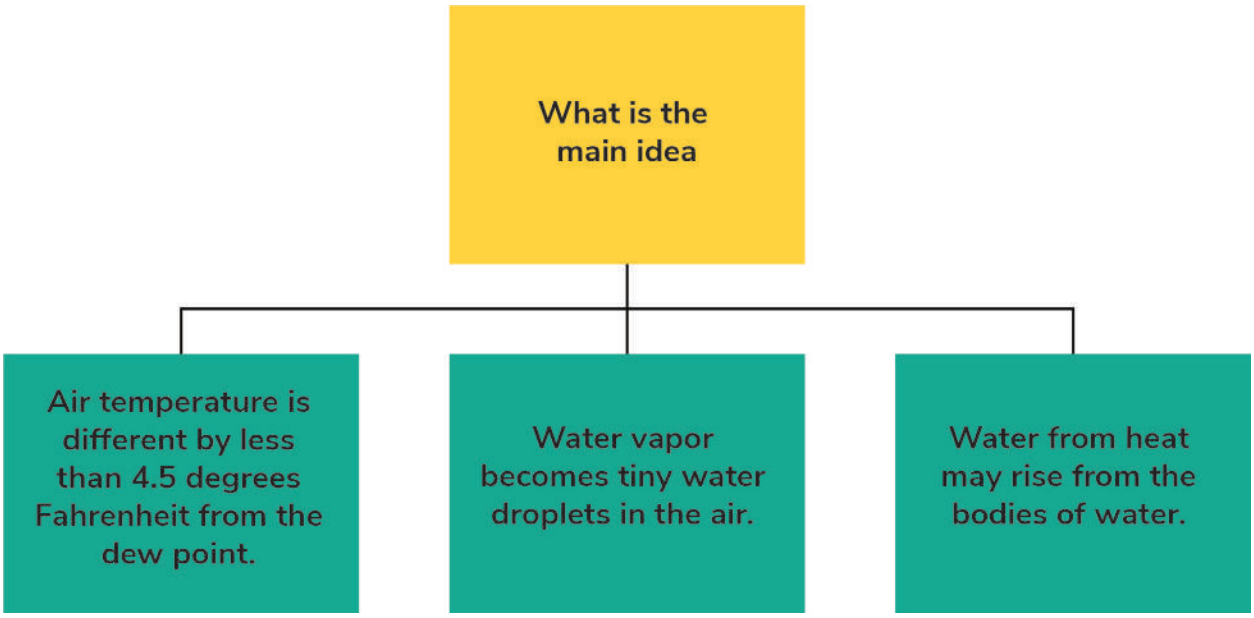
For this section, you will read short passages and answer questions about the main ideas, supporting details, and organization of the texts. You will also be required to figure out what specific words mean, make inferences, decipher between fact and opinion, and gather information from visuals like tables and charts.

Let's discuss some concepts that will more than likely appear on the test.

Main Idea

The main idea of a text is what it is all about. Usually, the main idea is written in general terms, and the supporting details are more specific. The best way to determine a main idea is to identify key details in a text. Then, figure out what these key details have in common. This will help you arrive at the main idea of a text.

Look at the example about fog below.



In the example above, the three key details (turquoise boxes) may appear in a text about fog. The main idea of this text may not be stated directly. You may need to determine what these three things have in common.

Fog is the topic, not the main idea. The key details are about the formation of fog; therefore, the main idea is how fog is formed. It is important to identify the key details in a text before identifying the main idea.

Main idea questions may be asked in a variety of ways. Take a look below:

- What is the second paragraph primarily concerned with?
- What is the purpose of the text?
- What is the selection all about?

Drawing Inferences

An inference is an educated guess. It is based on two things: details from the text and background knowledge.

When you are answering an inference question, you should be able to find details in the text to support your answer. Also, your background knowledge about the topic will come into play when answering the question. Look at the example below.

Benjamin Franklin would be considered a "jack of all trades" today. From politician to inventor to author, it seems that Franklin did it all. Since Franklin was born into a family with sixteen brothers and sisters, his father could send Franklin to school for only a couple of years. At the age of ten, Franklin's schooling was over and he began to work with his brother in a printing shop.

Question: How much schooling did Benjamin Franklin's brothers and sisters probably receive in comparison to Benjamin?

Details and Background Knowledge: The details support that Franklin's family was very large, so money was probably scarce, and you already know that his parents would have had to pay directly for his education during that time period.

Answer: The same as Benjamin or less.

In this example, there is evidence in the text to support the answer of Benjamin Franklin's siblings receiving very little education. Money was probably scarce with seventeen children in the family. Also, it isn't stated, but it cost money to go to school back then.

The words "inference" or "infer" may or may not be included in a test question, but there are other key words in inference questions, including "suggests" or "what would happen if."

Fact vs. Opinion

A fact can be proven true. An opinion is an expression of someone's feelings, and it cannot be proven. Facts may contain dates and/or statistics. Opinions may use descriptive words (terrible, beautiful) and/or comparative and superlative adjectives (best, worse).

On the ParaPro, the fact and opinion questions may look like this:

- Which sentence from the passage contains an opinion?
- Which sentence from the passage is a fact?

Application of Reading Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

This section tests your ability to assist students with reading activities.

Here are some concepts that you may see on the test.

Long and Short Vowels

You need to be able to help students read words containing long and short vowels. Long vowels sound like their names. Short vowels have special sounds. Let's take a look at words containing long and short vowels:

Short a	Long a
hat	plane

Short e	Long e
bed	beast

Short i	Long i
pig	time

Short o	Long o
mop	home

Short u	Long u
hug	cube

Also, take a look at the symbols that represent the short and long vowel sounds:

Short vowel	Long vowel
ă	ā
căt	flāme

Homonyms

Homonyms are sets of two or more words that sound alike but have different meanings.

Take a look at these examples of homonyms:

- heir and air
- knead and need
- lead and led

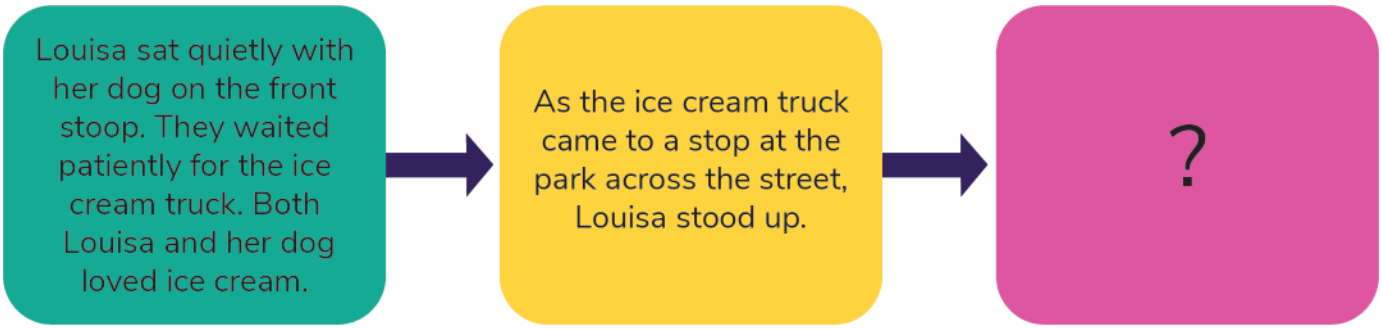
A question on the test may ask you to identify an instructional strategy that will help a student understand homonyms. Below is an example.

What would be an effective strategy the paraprofessional could use to help the student understand the word "heir"?

Making Predictions

A prediction is a guess about what will happen next in a sequence of events. The "guess" is supported by details in the passage. You will most likely see a prediction question after reading a fictional passage.

Let's practice making a prediction. Read the story below.



What do you think happens next? More than likely, Louisa and her dog walk to the park across the street and buy ice cream from the truck.

You may be asked questions that look like the ones below:

- Which response below shows the best understanding of the clues?
- What question would best help a student understand how to predict what will happen next in this passage?

Syllables

A syllable is a word or part of a word that contains only one vowel sound. The syllable can include consonants or consonant sounds; however, it must contain a vowel or vowel sound.

Understanding syllables can help you read and spell challenging words. You will need to know how to help students identify syllables. One way to do that is through clapping. Children find it easy to clap as they slowly say a word; it helps them "hear" the syllables in words.

Here is a word broken into syllables:

PROF / IT / A / BLE

Breaking words into syllables also helps students figure out what words mean. If there is a prefix or suffix in the word, a student may be able to apply his/her knowledge of that prefix or suffix to the overall word meaning.

And that's some basic info about the Reading section.

Now, let's look at a few practice questions in each area to see how these concepts might appear on the real test.

Reading: Practice Questions

Questions 1 and 2 are based on the following passage.

The age of exploration marked a new frontier for sea navigation. This epoch began in the 15th century when Portugal and Spain started to expand their commercial interests and trade routes across the oceans, resulting in the exchange of goods and sometimes even traditions. Sailors used new technologies to navigate across the world, including a device called the quadrant, a fan-shaped magnetic object that measured the altitude of stars, the moon, and the sun in order to determine the latitude of a ship. Another device was the compass, which used Earth's magnetic poles to point navigators north, south, east, or west. Timekeeping devices like hourglasses were important in calculating how far and how fast a ship had sailed. Early navigators also used maps, although these were not always accurate and were often written during the course of the exploration. These maps were then improved upon with new explorations. With these new technologies, the success of the age of exploration was unparalleled.

Question 1

The author's main purpose in this selection is:

A. to introduce the tools that made the age of exploration a success.
B. to explain the importance of the compass.
C. to discuss Spain's influence on exploration.
D. to describe the age of exploration.

Correct Answer: A. The majority of the passage is spent introducing tools of exploration, defining them, and stressing their importance.

Question 2

According to the information presented in the selection, it is reasonable to infer that which technology was least helpful to sailors during this period?

A. the compass
B. the quadrant
C. maps
D. all of the above choices were equally helpful

Correct Answer: C. The reader must infer this answer because it is not directly stated in the passage. However, the author does state that maps "were not always accurate and were often written during the course of the exploration." This information should help the reader realize that this option is the best answer choice, because if the maps weren't accurate, they weren't very helpful.

Questions 3 and 4 are based on the following passage.

A picture is worth a thousand words. When you go on vacation, it is often customary to send friends and family members photo postcards from the beautiful places you visit. The postcards not only let them know where you are and how you're doing, but they provide them with a keepsake from your vacation. Today, the ritual of sending postcards has been somewhat replaced by posting vacation pictures on Facebook, Instagram, and other social media sites. In a recent survey of vacationers, 75% said that they are more likely to post on Facebook than to send a postcard. Not long ago, however, it was not uncommon for people to amass many hundreds of postcards received from acquaintances. As these collections grew, a hunger for more postcards arose, and some people became amateur postcard collectors.

Question 3

Which of the following would be a synonym for the word "customary" as it is used in line 1 of the selection?

A. unusual
B. judicial
C. measure
D. common

Correct Answer: D. The words customary and common both means "of frequent occurrence; usual."

Question 4

The author probably uses the word "amass" in line 6 to mean:

A. purchase.
B. gradually gather.
C. achieve.
D. surrender.

Correct Answer: B. The author indicates people collect, or gather, postcards that they receive from friends and family.

Question 5

While reading, a student comes across the unknown word "sanitize." He notices in the sentence the words "dirty, " "but," and "now clean." He determines that “sanitize” must be the opposite of “dirty.” Which strategy did he use to define the unknown word?

A. defining meaning from structural clues and morphology
B. defining meaning using phonetic awareness
C. defining meaning from context clues
D. defining meaning using a homograph

Correct Answer: C. The student used other words in the sentence to create context and meaning for the unknown word.

Question 6

Mr. Blaschke wants to develop his students' fluency while reading. Which activity would best help him achieve this goal?

A. reviewing phonics and frequent morpheme pronunciations
B. creating a word wall to introduce students to new terms they may encounter in their reading
C. having students read unfamiliar excerpts in front of the class
D. reading short excerpts of poetry, demonstrating how to pause and add proper inflection

Correct Answer: D. By modeling how to pause and inflect while reading, Mr. Blaschke can demonstrate good fluency to his students through short reading passages.

Question 7

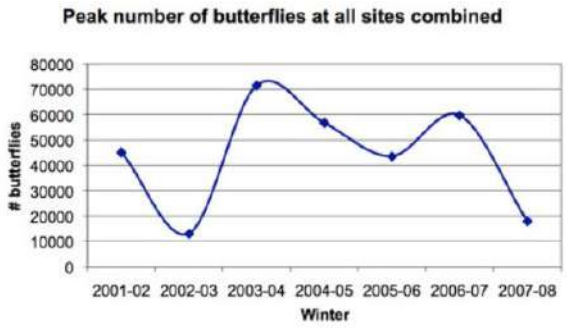
Which question stem would encourage students to relate their own lives to the reading?

A. Because the character said _____, I believe s/he will _____.
B. The main character did _____ because _____ happened first.
C. When ____ said _____, it reminded me of when I _____.
D. The word "_____" means _____. I know because in the text it says, "_____."

Correct Answer: C. This stem has students making connections between the text and their lives.

Question 8

Use the graph to answer the question.



Which conclusion about the peak number of butterflies is best supported by the data in the graph?

A. The number of monarch butterflies counted in 2007-08 was less than the number counted in 2002-03.
B. During the winters of 2001-02, more butterflies were counted than in the winters of 2005-06.
C. The second largest number of monarch butterflies counted occurred during the winters of 2006-07.
D. The least number of butterflies counted was recorded in 2005-06.

Correct Answer: C. The answer stems for this question are a bit tedious since you must analyze each answer until you reach the correct response. However, taking a quick glance over the chart itself and making some mental notes before looking at the question stems will assist you in quickly omitting incorrect responses. This is the only correct answer supplied.

Questions 9 and 10 are based on the following passage.

Earth's largest desert is actually a very frigid place covered with ice: Antarctica. In order for an area to be considered a desert, it must receive very little rainfall. More specifically, it must receive an average of less than 10 inches of precipitation—which can be rain, sleet, hail, or snow—on the ground every year. Antarctica, the coldest place on earth, has an average temperature that usually falls below the freezing point. And because cold air holds less moisture than warm air, the air in Antarctica does not hold much moisture at all. This is evident in the low precipitation statistics recorded for Antarctica. For example, the central part of Antarctica receives an average of less than two inches of snow every year. However, the coastline of Antarctica receives a little bit more—between seven and eight inches per year. Because Antarctica gets so little precipitation every year, it is considered a desert.

Question 9

According to the selection, a geographical area is considered a desert if:

A. it gets an average of less than 10 inches of precipitation on the ground per year.
B. it has temperatures consistently below freezing.
C. the air does not hold moisture.
D. it has temperatures consistently above 100 degrees.

Correct Answer: A. The author explicitly states the requirements for classification as a desert in lines 2-4 of the passage.

Question 10

The author probably uses the word "frigid" in line 1 to mean:

A. temperate.
B. chilly.
C. extremely cold.
D. blazing.

Correct Answer: C.The author adds the context clue "covered in ice" to help the reader because the reader's typical association with the word "desert" would be a place with high temperatures.

ParaPro:

Mathematics

Overview

There are about 30 Mathematics questions.

The Mathematics section has two types of questions:

- Mathematics Skills and Knowledge
- Application of Mathematics Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

Mathematics Skills and Knowledge questions include three categories:

- Number Sense and Basic Algebra
- Geometry and Measurement
- Data Analysis

So, let's start with Number Sense and Basic Algebra.

Number Sense and Basic Algebra

This section tests your knowledge of arithmetic and algebra.

Review the following tables and graphics for a refresher on basic math terms and concepts.

Meanings of Terms and Symbols

Term or Symbol	Meaning	Example
+	To add	6 + 7 = 13
-	To subtract	10 - 3 = 7
<	Less than	11 < 15
>	Greater than	103 > 99
≤	Less than or equal to	104.5501 ≤ 104.5502
≥	Greater than or equal to	552 ≥ 441
Sum	Answer from adding	14 + 15 = **29**
Difference	Answer from subtracting	229 - 74 = **155**
Product	Answer from multiplying	16 × 33 = **528**
Quotient	Answer from dividing	4,650 ÷ 62 = **75**
Numerator	Top number in a fraction	$\frac{2}{3}$
Denominator	Bottom bumber in a fraction	$\frac{2}{3}$

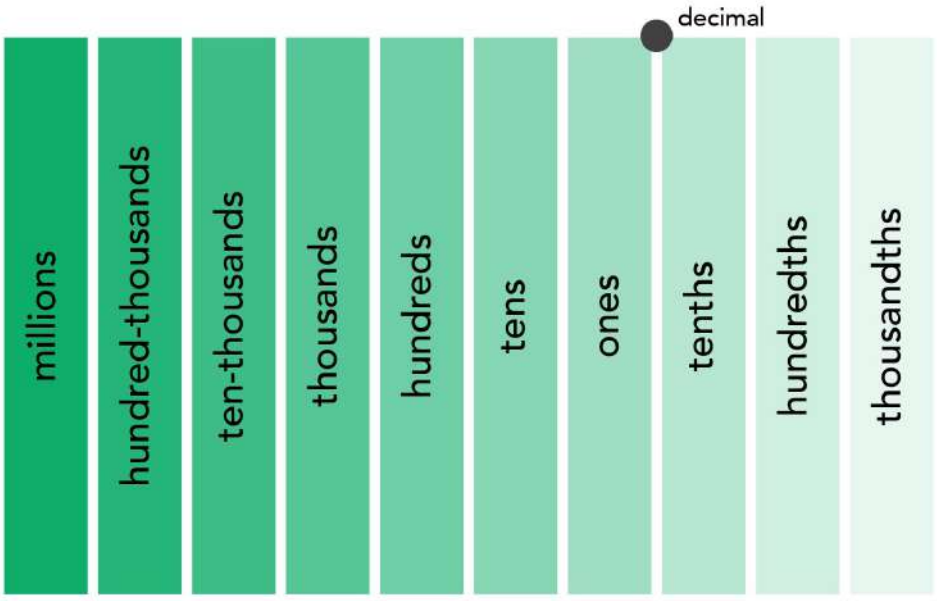
Recognizing Relationships and Values

Multiplication as Repeated Additon	5 × 5 is the same as 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5
Multiplication as Repeated Subtraction	9 ÷ 3 is the same as 9 - 3 - 3 - 3
Postion of Number in Relation to Other Numbers	0.5 is between 0.25 and 0.75
Equivalent Numbers	$3^2 = 9$
Place Value	4 is the tenths place in 905.4
Exponents	6^2
Order of Operations	parentheses, exponents, x/÷, +/-
Estimation	651 + 156 ≈ 800
What Comes Next in a Sequence	4, 8, 12, ...16.

Let's discuss some concepts that will more than likely appear on the test.

Place Value

Place value is the value a digit has based on its position in a number. Each digit in a number has a place value. Look at the diagram below:



On the test, the place value questions will directly ask you to identify the place value of a certain digit. Here's an example:

What is the place value of 8 in 1,892,019?

In this number, the digit 8 is in the hundred-thousands place.

Exponents

An exponent is the power of a number. The exponent tells you how many times to multiply a number by itself. Look at the example below.

$$20^4 = 20 \times 20 \times 20 \times 20$$

In this example, 20 is raised to the power of 4. 20 x 20 x 20 x 20 equals 160,000.

Order of Operations

On the test, you may come across a problem like this:

$$8 + (6 - 2)4 - 3 =$$

Do not work this problem from left to right! You will have to follow the order of operations. Here are the steps to solving this problem:

1. First, solve the subtraction problem within the parentheses: 6 - 2 = 4.
2. Then, multiply by 4: 4 x 4 = 16.
3. Next, add 8: 16 + 8 = 24.
4. Finally, subtract 3: 24 - 3 = 21.

Here's the order to follow when solving problems (and a fun mnemonic device to remember the order):

Please **E**xcuse **M**y **D**ear **A**unt **S**ally

P = Parentheses
E = Exponents
M/D = Multiply/Divide
A/S = Add/Subtract

You must work the operations in parentheses first. Then, solve the operations with exponents. Next, work multiplication and/or division operations. Finally, solve the addition and/or subtraction operations.

Note: Multiplication and division operations are considered equal, so you solve them from left to right. The same goes for addition and subtraction operations.

Geometry and Measurement

This section tests your ability to solve equations and real-world problems concerning shapes, time, and money. You will also be tested on graphing data.

Here are some concepts that you may see on the test.

Basic Geometrical Shapes

You can probably already identify a circle, triangle, square, and rectangle, but some shapes are harder to remember. Take a look at these:

Name	Description	Shape
Isosceles Triangle	two equal sides	
Right Triangle	has a right angle	
Pentagon	five equal sides	
Hexagon	six equal sides	
Octogon	eight equal sides	

Be prepared to identify these shapes on the test.

Area

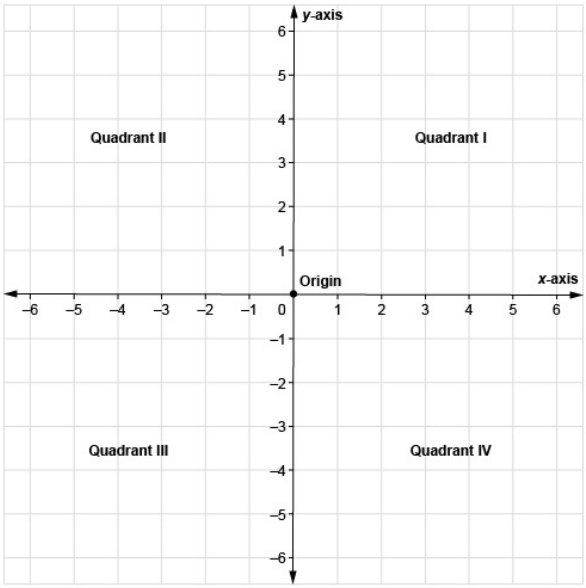
Area is the size of a surface. When calculating the area of a two-dimensional shape, like a circle, triangle, square, or rectangle, you will need to use a formula. Take a look below:

Shape	Area Formula
circle	πr^2, where r = radius
triangle	½ × base × height
square	a^2, where a = length of a side
rectangle	width × height

More than likely, area questions on the test will be presented in word problems.

Graphing Data on an XY-Coordinate Plane

You will definitely see a coordinate plane on the test. Take a look at the coordinate plane below. Pay special attention to the x-axis (horizontal) and the y-axis (vertical).

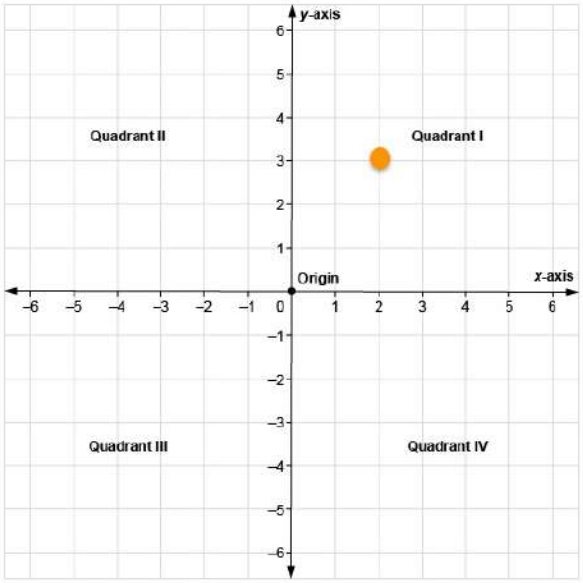


You will be asked to graph a point on the coordinate plane. A set of coordinates will be given to you, like this:

(2,3)

The first number, 2, represents the x-axis. The second number, 3, represents the y-axis. To graph a point, you always begin at the origin (0,0).

Let's graph the point at (2,3). Begin at the origin. Then, move along the x-axis two spots to the right. Now, move along the y-axis three spots up. Your point will look like this:



Data Analysis

This section tests your ability to understand and think critically about information from tables, charts, and graphs. You will also be asked to find the mean, median, and mode of a set of numbers.

Here are some concepts that you may see on the test.

Mean

Mean is the fancy word for average. To find the mean, or average, of a set of numbers, there is a really simple set of steps to follow:

1. Add all of the numbers together.
2. Divide the sum of those numbers by the number of values in the set.

Let's look at an example:

$$14, 88, 43, 25, 10, 33, 85, 26$$

$$14 + 88 + 43 + 25 + 10 + 33 + 85 + 26 = 324$$

$$324 \div 8 = 40.5$$

After adding all of the numbers together, we divide the sum by 8, because there are 8 numbers in the set. The mean, or average, of the data set is 40.5.

On the test, questions about the mean of numbers may be presented in word problems. Take a look at an example:

Kelly wants to know what her grade will be at the end of the year. Her grades are listed below. What will be her average?

89, 76, 100, 100, 92, 72, 83

Here are the steps to solving this problem:

$$89 + 76 + 100 + 100 + 92 + 72 + 83 = 612$$

$$612 \div 7 = 87.43$$

Median

The median is the middle value in a set of numbers. To find the median of a set of numbers, follow these steps:

Order the numbers from least to greatest.
Find the number in the middle.

If you have a data set with an odd amount of numbers, finding the middle value is super easy; however, if you have a data set with an even amount of numbers, there will be two values in the middle. In this case, find the mean, or average, of those two numbers. That average is the median.

Let's look at how this might appear on the test:

What is the median for the following set of numbers?

74, 39, 26, 89, 100, 24, 55, 87

First, we order the numbers from least to greatest. Then, we find the value in the middle. Since there are 8 numbers in this set, there are two values in the middle: 55 and 74. Find the mean, or average, of these numbers. The median is 64.5.

$$24, 26, 39, 55, 74, 87, 89, 100$$

$$55 + 74 = 129$$
$$129 \div 2 = 64.5$$

Mode

In a data set, the mode is the number or numbers that appear the most. Unlike the mean and median, the mode can have more than one answer. Look at an example:

Sally wants to know which bowling score she got the most often during the season. Find the mode.

117, 183, 173, 201, 117, 138, 129

In this data set, 117 appears twice, while the other numbers only appear once; therefore, 117 is the mode.

Application of Mathematics Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

This section tests your ability to assist students with mathematics activities.

You will need to know specific strategies for helping students understand math processes and solve problems. Here are some important strategies to remember:

- Use manipulatives to help demonstrate the math problems.
- Ask students for explanations when working problems.
- Use real-life situations in word problems.
- Use different concepts to work problems.

You will see questions on the test similar to this:

A paraprofessional is helping a student solve the following problem:

$$100 - 8(7 - 2) + 5$$

Because she solved the problem in the parentheses first, but then solved the rest of the problem from left to right. What should the student have done?

The student should have used the order of operations (PEMDAS) to solve the problem.

And that's some basic info about the Mathematics section.

Now, let's look at a few practice questions in each area to see how these concepts might appear on the real test.

Mathematics Practice Questions

Question 1

Tom wants to mentally calculate a 20% tip on his bill of $40. Which of the following is best for Tom to use in the mental calculation of the tip?

A. 40 × .02
B. 40 × (20/100)
C. 40 × (200/1000)
D. 40 × .1 × 2

Correct Answer: D. Tom can quickly find 10% of 40 and then double it. In this case the answer is $8 because 10% of 40 is 4 and 4 × 2 is 8.

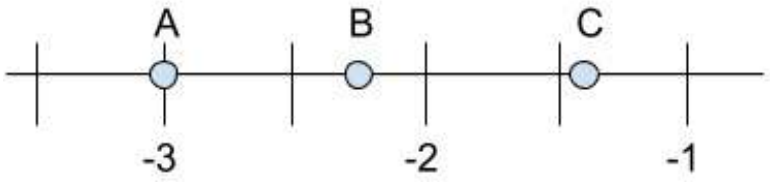
Question 2

After a lesson on rounding and estimation, a teacher tells students that the football concession stand has purchased 590 candy bars to sell for the 6 football home games this year. The teacher asks the students to estimate the average number of candy bars that will be sold at each home game. Which of the following would be the correct estimation?

A. 90
B. 98.3
C. 100
D. 105

Correct Answer: C. An estimate is finding an approximation of a value. Estimates are used to quickly find an answer that is close, but probably not precise. 590 can easily be rounded to 600 which is divisible by 6. This means that about 100 candy bars will be sold per game.

Question 3



Students were asked to name point B. Zoe wrote that B equals -2.4, Julio responded that it equals -2 ¼, Sage said that it equaled -3 ¾ and Kaitlyn said that Zoe and Julio were both correct because the numbers were equivalent. Which student was correct in their response?

A. Zoe
B. Julio
C. Sage
D. Kaitlyn

Correct Answer: B. Point B is between -2 and -3. It is halfway between -2 and -2 ½, which means it is located at -2 ¼.

Question 4

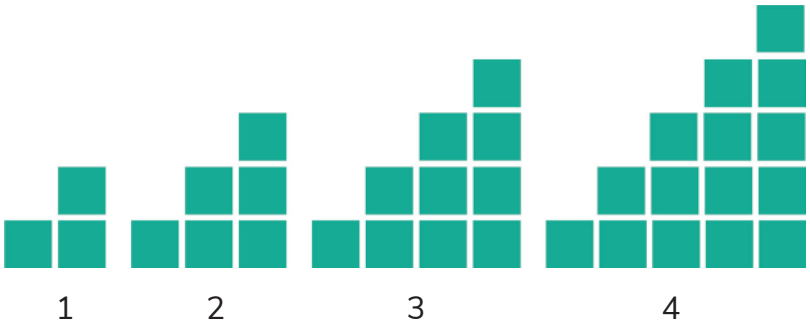
Which of the following has the least value?

A. 0.518
B. 0.5108
C. 0.0518
D. 0.5018

Correct Answer: C. This has the least value of the set. The tenths place has a 0 while the other numerals have a 5 in the tenths place.

Question 5

If the pattern below is continued, how many blocks will be in the 7th term?



A. 21
B. 28
C. 45
D. 36

Correct Answer: D. The first model is made with three blocks, 1 in column 1, and 2 in column 2; the second term is made of 1 block in column 1, 2 blocks in column 2, and 3 blocks in column 3. So, term #1 = 1 + 2 blocks; term #2 = 1 + 2 + 3 blocks; term #3 = 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 blocks. Each term, n, is the sum of the numbers from 1 to (n + 1); the sum of the consecutive integers from 1 to (n + 1).

So, the 7th term would be: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8, or 36 blocks. This is a small enough number that you could actually sketch the model and count the blocks.

Question 6

Tosha has 8 coins in her pocket. She has a mixture of pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters, but she has no more than 3 of any coin. What is the largest amount of money she could possibly have?

A. $1.11
B. $1.07
C. $1.23
D. $1.21

Correct Answer: A. To satisfy the prompt given, there must be at least one of each coin. She will need to have the most number of the coins with the greatest value: quarters and dimes. So that would be 3 quarters, 3 dimes, 1 nickel, and 1 penny. This totals $1.11.

Question 7

Danielle's third-period class began at 10:43 a.m. and ended at 11:38 a.m. How long was the class?

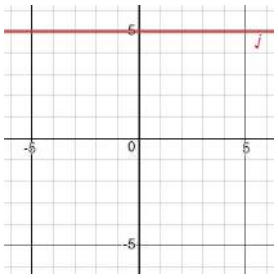
A. 55 minutes
B. 45 minutes
C. 1 hour, 5 minutes
D. 1 hour, 21 minutes

Correct Answer: A. One option to determine the length of the class period is to see how long it is from the start of class to the next full hour (from 10:43 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.), and then add the minutes part of the end time. In this case, 11:00 a.m. can be thought of as 10:60 a.m. so that subtraction with 10:43 is easy: 10 – 10 = 0, so 0 hours and 60 – 43 = 17, so it is 17 minutes until 11 a.m. Then, from 11:00 a.m. to 11:38 a.m. is 38 – 0 = 38 minutes. The total length of the class is 17 + 38 = 55 minutes.

Another option to determine the length of the class period would be to reason that if it were an hour long and started at 10:43 a.m., it would end at 11:43 a.m. But this class ends at 11:38 a.m., five minutes before 11:43 a.m. (43 – 38 = 5), and so this class is 5 minutes shorter than 1 hour, or 55 minutes long.

Question 8

Which ordered pair is between the x-axis and the line j?

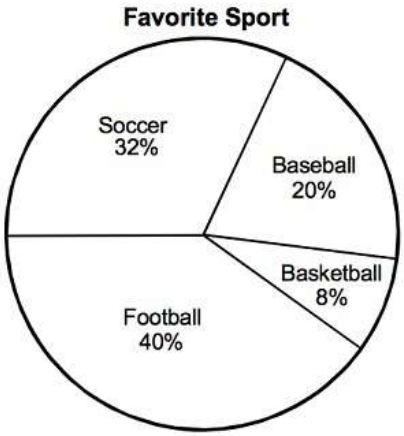


A. (-2, 5)
B. (2, 3)
C. (2, 8)
D. (-2, -1)

Correct Answer: B. Line j is a horizontal line through the point (0,5) on the y-axis. This is the graph of the equation y = 5. Only point (2,3), in quadrant I, is between the x-axis and line j.

Question 9

The circle graph shows the results of a survey of 150 students. How many students chose basketball as their favorite sport?



A. 8
B. 12
C. 16
D. 20

Correct Answer: B. 8% of students chose basketball as their favorite sport. To find how many students 8% represents, simply multiply 8% by 150. In decimal form, 8% is represented by .08 (100% is represented as 1). 150 * .08 = 12.

Question 10

What is the mean of the data set below?

15, 18, 19, 54, 74, 94, 67, 82, 48, 31, 15

A. 40
B. 42
C. 47
D. 52

Correct Answer: C. To find the mean, or average, of a data set simply add all the values together and then divide by the total number of values. The total value of the data set is 517 and there are 11 numbers. 517 / 11 = 47.

ParaPro:

Writing

Overview

There are about 30 Writing questions.

The Writing section has two types of questions:

- Writing Skills and Knowledge
- Application of Writing Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

So, let's start with Writing Skills and Knowledge.

Writing Skills and Knowledge

This section tests your ability to find errors in sentences. These errors include:

- word usage
- punctuation
- spelling

You'll also need to have a basic understanding of the parts of speech and the parts of a sentence.

Here are some concepts that you may see on the test.

Parts of Speech

Take a look at the parts of speech:

- Noun – a person, place or thing
- Verb – shows action
- Pronoun – replaces a noun
- Adjective – describes a noun
- Adverb – describes a verb, adjective, or other adverb
- Preposition – shows the relation to another word

On the test, you will be required to identify the part of speech for an underlined word. Here is an example:

<u>Without</u> a doubt, the girl knew she made a great grade on the test.

In the sentence, the underlined word is being used as a(n)...

A. noun
B. adverb
C. verb
D. preposition

In this example, the word without is being used as a preposition.

Adverbs

Let's talk more specifically about adverbs. Adverbs describe verbs. A lot of adverbs end in -ly. Adverbs usually answer one or more of the following questions:

- How?
- How often?
- When?
- Where?

When an adverb describes a verb, it is usually located close to the verb. Take a look at this example:

The hunter carefully fired his gun at the deer so he would hit it.

The adverb (*carefully*) describes the verb (*fired*), because it explains how the hunter fired his gun. Below are common adverbs and the questions they answer.

How?	How Often?	Where?	When?
Sadly	Always	There	Now
Easily	Never	Here	Yesterday
Loudly	Sometimes	Outside	Early

Commonly Misused Words

There are many words that people commonly misuse. Sometimes, the words are spelled similarly (which is the reason for the confusion). Take a look:

Word	Usage	Example
there	in or at a place	There is my pen.
their	shows possesion	I heard their voices.
they're	they are	They're home from the hospital.

Word	Usage	Example
then	relating to time	I was at work then.
than	comparing two things	She is faster than I am.

Here is how this concept may appear on the test:

Then Tony realized he would rather wear a nice pair of pants then a full suit.
A B C D

Can you identify the error in this sentence? The error occurs in choice C; *then* should be *than*, because a comparison is being made between wearing a nice pair of pants and a full suit.

Application of Writing Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

This section tests your ability to assist students with writing activities, including the writing process. Take a look at the steps of the writing process:

Here are some concepts that you may see on the test.

Revising a Composition

Before we talk specifically about revising a composition, you should know that revising and editing are different. Revising involves:

- adding new ideas
- expanding on ideas
- adding more detail
- improving understanding
- eliminating wordiness, redundancies, and confusing elements

Editing involves fixing errors in:

- spelling
- punctuation
- capitalization
- grammar
- sentence structure

In a composition or essay, ideas should be organized into paragraphs that flow smoothly. Take a look at the most common elements of a composition:

Introduction paragraph:
- attention grabber
- thesis statement

Body paragraphs:
- topic sentence
- evidence
- explanation
- conclusion sentence

Conclusion paragraph:
- reword main ideas
- reword thesis statement
- predict/show importance

You will be expected to know how to help students revise their compositions. A test question may look like this:

> *Charlie has been assigned to write a personal essay about what he did this summer. He is struggling with writing the thesis statement. What strategy would be effective in helping Charlie with his problem?*

For this question, you will need to select an answer that involves writing a good thesis statement. Typically, a thesis statement answers the question or prompt. In personal essays, it gives an overall statement about what your essay will be about.

Different Modes and Forms of Writing

There are many different modes of writing including descriptive essays, narratives, and letters. Take a look at those three:

Descritpive Essay	Narrative	Letter
• has an introduction, body, and conclusion • appeals to the senses	• story with characters • may include dialogue • includes events in a plot	• includes heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature • includes personal information

You may have to identify a form of writing on the test. You'll also need to know how to explain the differences between forms of writing. Here is an example of a test question:

> *A teacher asks his students to write a letter to their best friend. This letter should contain all parts of a letter. Timmy writes a letter and shows it to you. His letter is one large paragraph. What response should you give Timmy to make sure his letter contains the necessary parts?*

For this question, you should choose the response that includes all of the parts of a letter. The parts of a letter are the heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature. It appears that Timmy included the body of the letter, but forgot to include the other elements.

Reference Materials

Reference materials include dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopedias, biographies, almanacs, and atlases. These sources can be found online or in print.

Students use reference materials to improve their writing. For example, students may use dictionaries to find the correct spellings of words. Thesauruses can be used to find synonyms or antonyms.

Reference materials should be accessible to students while they are writing; however, it takes direct instruction and practice to learn how to use these sources.

And that's some basic info about the Writing section.

Now, let's look at a few practice questions in each area to see how these concepts might appear on the real test.

Writing Practice Questions

Question 1

Identify the error in the following sentence:

It's time for the football game to begin, but the home team can't find its football. Did pranksters take it? Its difficult to know exactly what happened. No error.

A. It's
B. its
C. it?
D. Its
E. No error.

Correct Answer: D. The word "it's" is a contraction for it is. The word "its" is possessive, showing ownership, but doesn't need an apostrophe. "Its" should be revised to "it's" and used as a contraction, because the writer intends to say, "It is difficult to know exactly what happened."

Question 2

Identify the error in the following sentence:

After a grueling soccer practice in the excessively hot sun, I was hungry and thirsty my mom took me home for dinner. No error.

A. grueling soccer practice
B. excessively hot
C. sun, I
D. thirsty my
E. No error.

Correct Answer: D. This is a run-on sentence, and the two independent clauses should be separated by a period, a semicolon, or a coordinating conjunction here.

Question 3

Identify the error in the following sentence:

My youngest sister, Audrey, is constantly messing with my belongings she has broken four of my unicorn statues since Monday! No error.

A. , Audrey,
B. constantly
C. belongings she
D. Monday!
E. No error.

Correct Answer: C. These two independent clauses need to be connected by a semicolon or a conjunction with a comma, or separated by a period.

Question 4

Which part of speech is the underlined word an example of?

Bull sharks swim in both fresh and salt water.

A. noun
B. verb
C. adjective
D. preposition

Correct Answer: B. Verbs are actions. In this sentence, "swim" is the verb.

Question 5

Identify the error in the following sentence:

Alexandra's schedule was so full that trying to fit in an emergency dentist appointment was like fitting an extra piece into a completed puzzle. No error.

A. Alexandra's schedule
B. emergency dentist appointment
C. extra piece
D. completed puzzle.
E. No error.

Correct Answer: E. There is no error in this sentence.

Question 6

A third-grade class is learning the steps of the writing process. The students are currently writing sentences and paragraphs. Which of the following steps of the writing process have students already completed?

A. brainstorming ideas on a topic
B. rewriting sentences to correct any grammatical errors
C. adding or adjusting words in a sentence
D. sharing the final product with classmates and the teacher

Correct Answer: A. Brainstorming comes before writing sentences and paragraphs in the writing process.

Question 7

In the publishing step of the writing process, it is important that students' writing is:

A. organized and that editing has begun.
B. neatly written or printed from a word processor and that it is clearly understood.
C. planned using a graphic organizer to make sure the ideas flow in a logical order.
D. planned, drafted, and revised, and that editing has begun.

Correct Answer: B. Publishing is when the final product is written or printed on a word processor and the writing is clearly understood.

Question 8

Why is incorporating multiple types, genres, lengths, and styles of writing into the classroom important for student writing success?

A. so that students don't become bored or weighed down by purely academic writing
B. because students need variety in the classroom to effectively learn all writing skills
C. because writing in different styles, genres, and types allows students to practice writing skills in authentic and meaningful ways
D. to show students that school is not the only place where writing occurs

Correct Answer: C and D
C. A variety of writing topics and genres allows the teacher to individualize writing to student interests and create authentic writing assignments.
D. Students need to understand that writing is a lifelong skill, not only to be used in academics.

Question 9

A teacher assigns a writing project in which students focus on their own unique characteristics. She encourages her students to focus on something that makes them different or that might be seen as a negative thing by peers and describe the positive aspects of it. What is the greatest benefit of this project?

A. This allows students to develop pride in themselves and a relationship with the teacher.
B. It builds a relationship with other students.
C. It focuses on both sides of an issue.
D. It allows students to practice their writing skills while focused on a personal issue.

Correct Answer: D. Writing skills can be improved with a variety of assignments.

Question 10

Which of the following is best promoted by allowing students to write to each other or family members during class time?

A. the understanding that there are real-world purposes for writing
B. a relaxed atmosphere in which students can write friends whenever they want to do so
C. a classroom in which friendships are being encouraged
D. appropriate social skills such as writing thank you notes or invitations

Correct Answer: A. Students need to see and use writing in realistic situations.