



Paraprofessional Assessment: Study Guide

General test taking tips

- Read directions and questions carefully. Be prepared for questions that use words like EXCEPT, NOT, ALL or BEST.
- Read all possible answers before selecting one.
- Keep track of your time. You have 2.5 hours to complete all three assessments. If a question is extremely difficult, you may want to make your best guess and move on to ensure you don't run out of time.
- Be sure you click submit at the end of each test section. If you do not, your answers will not be recorded and you will not get a score.

Reading Assessment

Topics you might see on the Reading Assessment

Reading Skills and Knowledge questions measure the examinee's ability to understand, interpret, and analyze a wide range of text.

- Identify main idea, purpose, and details of a text
- Make inferences and draw conclusions
- Identify how a reading selection is organized
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in context
- Determine where information is presented as fact or opinion
- Interpret information from tables, diagrams, charts and graphs
- Phonics of sounding out words (long and short vowels, consonant sounds, rhymes, etc)
- Breaking words into parts (syllables, root words, prefix/suffix, etc)
- Distinguishing synonyms, antonyms, homonyms
- Alphabetizing words

Reading Study Guide

- The reading questions are based on reading passages, as well as some charts and graphs. The subject matter of these passages varies, but you do not need to have any background or outside knowledge to be able to complete the questions.
- Take time to read the passage or graphics carefully. You are much more likely to do well on the questions if you have read carefully and understand it as a whole. Even if you read carefully, there will be some vocabulary or information that is unfamiliar to you. Even if you don't understand everything in the passage, you may still be able to answer the questions correctly.
- Read ALL of the choices carefully before you answer.



Identifying Information in a Text

- Main idea questions ask about the central point of the reading passage. The main idea ties all of the sentences together. Sometimes it is directly stated, and other times it is not directly stated and you have to infer what the author intended as the main idea of the passage.
- Supporting details are used to support and elaborate on the main idea. The supporting details offer facts, details and definitions that refer to the main idea. These details are often used to provide evidence from the text that supports a specific point or idea.
- Primary purpose questions ask about the author's purpose in writing the piece. Some common primary purposes involve informing, describing, explaining, persuading or entertaining.
- Summarizing means to determine the most important ideas of the text and how they integrate together. It often requires taking a larger piece of text and simplifying it down to one sentence.
- Tone refers to the attitude or mood implied by an author's word choice and details.

Making an Inference

- An inference is a statement or idea that is suggested or implied by the author, but never stated explicitly. Inference questions ask you to use the clues in the text to figure out what is not directly stated. Often, questions that ask you to infer will be related to one of the following:
 - Main idea
 - Author's purpose
 - Specific vocabulary within the text
 - The author's tone or opinion

Fact and Opinion

- Facts can be verified as objectively true or false. Facts can be backed up by evidence or documentation. Facts are not biased by the feelings or emotions of the author.
- Opinions are an expression of opinions or judgements that are subjective in nature. Opinions often use adjectives that carry positive or negative connotations.

Foundational Reading Skills

- Some of the questions on the test will concern foundational skills of reading. Those are the skills that students need when learning the basic features of written text. Refer to the writing section of the study guide for specific tips on these areas.
 - Sounding out words by knowing various vowel, consonant and blend sounds.
 - Breaking words into parts such as syllables, root words, prefixes, suffixes
 - Distinguishing between synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms
 - Alphabetizing



Writing Assessment

Topics you might see on the Writing Assessment

- Writing Skills and knowledge questions assess the examinee's ability to identify:
 - Basic grammatical errors in standard written English
 - Errors in word usage (there/their/they're, then/than, etc)
 - Errors in punctuation
 - Errors in spelling
 - Errors in matching tenses (past/present/future)
 - Parts of speech (nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc)
 - Synonyms and Homonyms
- Application of Writing Skills and Knowledge in Classroom Instruction
 - Steps in the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing)
 - Appropriate sources for researching information
 - Revision skills such as organization, combining sentences, and transitions
 - Editing skills such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar
 - Determining audience and purpose for a piece of writing

Writing Study Guide

Synonyms and Antonyms

- Synonyms are words with the same or similar meanings. (*center/middle, home/house*)
- Antonyms are words with the opposite meanings. (*add/subtract, exit/enter*)

Homonyms

Homonyms are words that are spelled or pronounced the same, but have different meanings.

There are two types of homonyms:

- Homophones are words that are pronounced the same, but have different meanings. (*eight/ate, right/write, see/sea, meet/meat, too/to/two, they're/there/their*)
- Homographs are words that are spelled the same, but have different meanings or pronunciations. (*tear: to rip something apart (pronounced tare) or droplets that fall when you cry (pronounced teer)*)



Parts of Speech

Part of Speech	Function or "Job"	Example Words	Example Sentences
Verb	action or state	(to) be, have, do, like, work, sing, can, must	EnglishClub is a web site. I like EnglishClub.
Noun	thing or person	pen, dog, work, music, town, London, teacher, John	This is my dog . He lives in my house . We live in London .
Adjective	describes a noun	good, big, red, well, interesting	My dogs are big . I like big dogs.
Adverb	describes a verb, adjective or adverb	quickly, silently, well, badly, very, really	My dog eats quickly . When he is very hungry, he eats really quickly.
Pronoun	replaces a noun	I, you, he, she, some	The puppy is very playful. He loves to play with the ball.
Preposition	links a noun to another word	to, at, after, on, but	We went to school on Monday.
Conjunction	joins clauses or sentences or words	and, but, when	I like dogs and I like cats. I like cats and dogs. I like dogs but I don't like cats.

Subject Verb Agreement

- A subject is a part of the sentence that carries the person or thing that is showing activity or doing something in the sentence.
- A verb is an action made by the subject or a state of being in the sentence.
- In a sentence, the verb must agree with the subjects in number and person. The basic rule is that a singular subject (she, Bill, car) takes a singular verb (is, goes, shines), whereas a plural subject takes a plural verb.
 - *The dog growls when angry.* *The dogs growl when they are angry.*
 - *All of the chicken is gone.* *All of the chickens are gone.*
 - *Where are the pieces of the puzzle?* *Where is the key I left on the desk?*



Verb Tense

Verb tense shows us the timing of the verb. The most common tenses in English are past tense, present tense and future tense.

Past Tense-It already happened	Yesterday, the kids played outside.
Present Tense- It is happening right now	The kids are playing outside.
Future Tense- It has yet to happen	Tomorrow, the kids will play outside.

- We usually make the past tense by adding "d" or "ed" to the verb root word. Example; Hannah talked to her friend.
- Some verbs have irregular past tenses. Example; Hannah told him about her holiday. We do not add "d" or "ed" to the irregular past tense verb, but change the spelling. Tell becomes told, not telled.
- We also make the past tense by using the verb "to be" and add "ing" word.

Word Parts: Prefixes, Roots, and Suffixes

Word Part	Definition	Examples
Prefix	A group of letters place before the root/base word	dis-, re-, un-, non-, bi-
Base Word* <i>*The term root word is often used, but that actually refers to the Greek or Latin base of the word, which can't always stand alone.</i>	A standalone word	cycle, friend, care, use, help, call
Suffix	A group of letters place after the root/base word	-able, -ing, -est, -ness

A Few Basic Spelling Rules

- When you add a suffix that starts with E (such as *-ed, -er, or -est*) to a word that ends in Y, the Y usually changes to an I. (*cry/cried, baby/babies, dry/drier*)
- When you add the *-ing* suffix, you keep the Y and add the *-ing* ending (*cry/crying, dry/drying*).
- To make a plural:
 - if a word ends in *s, sh, ch, x, or z*, you add *es*. (*bus/buses, wish/wishes, box/boxes*)
 - If a word ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, drop the *y* and add *-ies* (*fly/flies, berry/berries, sky/skies*.)
 - For most other endings, you just add an *s*.



- You double the final single consonant before adding a suffix when the word ends with a single vowel followed by a single consonant AND the word only has one syllable or the final syllable of the word is stressed (*stop/stopping, swim/swimming, trip/tripped.*)

A Few Basic Punctuation Rules

- Apostrophes have two main uses – in contractions and to show possession.
 - Contractions: A contraction is where you take two words and combine them, missing out a letter or two along the way. (*should not/shouldn't, I have/I've.*) Generally, wherever the missing letters are, that's where the apostrophe goes.
 - Possessives: A possessive apostrophe is used to show ownership.
 - If the owner is singular, it's done by placing 's after the noun (*Carol's dog, the boy's shoe.*)
 - If the owner is plural, it's done by adding the apostrophe after the noun (*parents' house, childrens' bus.*)
- Commas are used to separate elements of a sentence. Here are a few of the common ways they are used:
 - to separate three or more items in a series
 - to show a pause after an introductory word or phrase
 - to set off words that interrupt the flow of thought in a sentence
 - before *and, or, or but* when it joins simple sentences into a compound sentence
 - To set off a direct quotation
- Semicolons and Colons
 - Use a semicolon to join parts of a compound sentence when a conjunction such as *and, but* or *or* is not used. Remember that a compound sentence has two or more simple sentences that are joined by a conjunction.
 - Use a colon to introduce a list of items that ends a sentence. Use a phrase such as *these, the following, or as follows.*

Application of Writing Skills in the Classroom: These are concepts related to various aspects of the writing process that are used regularly during writing instruction in the classroom.



The Writing Process:

A framework for defining the process of writing in distinct stages.

1. **Prewriting:** This is the planning phase of the writing process, when students brainstorm, research, gather and outline ideas, often using diagrams for mapping out their thoughts. Audience and purpose should be considered at this point, and for the older students, a working thesis statement needs to be started.
2. **Drafting:** Students create their initial composition by writing down all their ideas in an organized way to convey a particular idea or present an argument. Audience and purpose need to be finalized.
3. **Revising:** Students review, modify, and reorganize their work by rearranging, adding, or deleting content, and by making the tone, style, and content appropriate for the intended audience. The goal of this phase of the writing process is to improve the draft.
4. **Editing:** At this point in the writing process, writers proofread and correct errors in grammar and mechanics, and edit to improve style and clarity. Having another writer's feedback in this stage is helpful.
5. **Publishing:** In this last step of the writing process, the final writing product is produced and shared.

Audience and Purpose:

- An author's purpose is simply his or her reason for writing. Common purposes include:
 - to inform (to give information)
 - to instruct (to explain how to do something)
 - to persuade (to convince readers to do or believe something)
 - to entertain (to present humor or other enjoyable material)
- Intended audience means the people the writer has in mind as the readers. The intended audience will be:
 - a specific person (e.g., a newspaper editor, the principal, etc)
 - a group of people (e.g., college students, parents, teens, etc)
 - the general public (e.g., the public at large)



Credible and Appropriate Research Sources:

It is important that students are taught how to find and use credible sources when they are doing research for their writing. This process will help them avoid websites and other sources that are designed to sell goods and services or to advocate for specific points of view or beliefs. The goal is to have students use fact-based, unbiased, and accurate sources of information.

A few things to keep in mind when considering a source include:

- **Credibility**
 - Is the author stated?
 - What are the author's credentials?
 - Is it from a credible institution?
- **Accuracy**
 - Does the website provide accurate information?
 - Is there clear proof and research to back up the information?
 - Are there citations to specific sources?
 - Do you find the same facts when you look at other sources?
- **Bias**
 - Is the author trying to steer you in a certain direction?
 - Is their argument and research only showing one side of an issue?
 - Is there more commentary than fact?
- **Relevance**
 - How recent is the information?
 - Does the information really add to your paper?



Mathematics Assessment

Topics you might see on the Mathematics Assessment

The Math Skills and Knowledge questions assess the examinee's knowledge of mathematical concepts and ability to apply. The test questions do not require knowledge of advanced-level math vocabulary. Calculators are NOT permitted for use during the assessment.

- Perform basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers, fractions and decimals
- Solve word problems
- Solve one step variable equations. (example: what is x if $x-8=2$)
- Calculate percentage of a number
- Recognize position on numbers in relationship to each other ($>=<$)
- Perform computation related to area, volume and perimeter for basic shapes
- Convert between units or measures (such as inches/feet, oz/cups)
- Interpret graphs and charts

Mathematics Study Guide

Common Symbols

Symbol	Meaning
+	Add, Plus, Addition, Sum
-	Minus, Take away, Subtract, Difference
×	Times, Multiply, Product,
÷	Divide, Quotient
±	Plus or Minus
=	Equal
≠	Not Equal
≤	Less than or equal
≥	Greater than or equal
≈	Approximately equal to



Integers

Whole numbers are integers; there are positive and negative integers.

- Positive integers are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...
- The negative integers are ... -5, -4, -3, -2, -1 (the dots before or after the sequence indicate that there are more numbers in this sequence that continue indefinitely).

Whole numbers are also called “digits” that are used in combination to represent larger numbers. For example, the number 25 is composed of the digits 2 and 5. Each digit in a number carries a value depending on the place it occupies in the number. Below is a chart of place value for the number 2,463,587. Each number carries the value of its place. For example, the 2 is actually 2,000,000 because it is in the millions place. The 8 is actually 80 because it is in the tens place.

Millions	Hundred Thousands	Ten Thousands	Thousands	Hundreds	Tens	Ones
2	4	6	3	5	8	7

Computing Integers

- The sum of two numbers implies two numbers are added together.
- The difference of two numbers implies that the second number is subtracted from the first number.
- The product of two numbers implies that two numbers are multiplied together.
- The quotient of two numbers implies that the first number is divided by the second.

Rounding and Estimation

Rounding numbers is a method of decreasing the accuracy of a number to make calculations easier. Rounding is important when answers need to be given to a particular degree of accuracy. With the advent of calculators, we also need to be able to estimate a calculation to detect when the answer might be incorrect.

- The Rules for Rounding:
 - Choose the last digit to keep.
 - If the digit to the right of the chosen digit is 5 or greater, increase the chosen digit by 1.
 - If the digit to the right of the chosen digit is less than 5, the chosen digit stays the same.

Estimating is a very important ability which is often ignored. A leading cause of getting math problems wrong is because of entering the numbers into the calculator incorrectly. It helps to be able to estimate the answer to check if your calculations are correct.

Some simple methods of estimation:



- Decimals can be converted to fractions utilizing the place value of the last digit. For example, decimals are in tenths, hundredths, thousandths, etc. For example, the number .365 could be written as the fraction 365/1000. Common fractions in their decimal form:

Decimal	Fraction
0.125	1/8
0.25	1/4
0.33333	1/3
0.375	3/8
0.5	1/2
0.66667	2/3
.75	3/4

Percentage

- The concept of percentage is an extension of the material we have already covered about fractions. To allow comparisons between fractions we need to use the same denominator. As such, all percentages use 100 as the denominator. The word percent or “per cent” means per 100. Therefore, 27% is the fraction 27/100.
- Often, you are asked to figure out the percentage of a specific number. For example, figuring out the sale price of something that is marked off by a percentage.
 - Example: The shirt is \$40 and it is marked 25% off. What is the sale price of the shirt?
 - Convert the % off to a decimal by dividing the % off by 100 ($25/100 = .25$)
 - Multiply the full price by that decimal ($40 \times .25 = 10$)
 - Subtract that sale discount from the full price ($\$40 - 10 = \30)

Linear Equations

- Linear equations are equations that help you solve for an unknown quantity. In equations, this unknown quantity is called a variable and is represented by a letter (*for example, x*)
 - Example: $3x=120$
 - 3 multiplied by $x=120$
 - Therefore $120 \div 3=x$
 - Therefore $x=40$



Perimeter, Area and Volume

- Perimeter is the length of all of the sides of a polygon. (A polygon is a closed plane formed by three or more line segments.)
 - To calculate the perimeter of a polygon, add the lengths of each side. The total is the perimeter.
- Area is the amount of space enclosed by a polygon or circle.
 - To calculate the area of a rectangle, you multiply the length x the width.
 - For the area of a triangle, it is $\frac{1}{2}$ base x height.
- Volume is the amount of space enclosed by a three-dimensional object.
 - To calculate volume of a rectangle you multiply the length x width x height

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