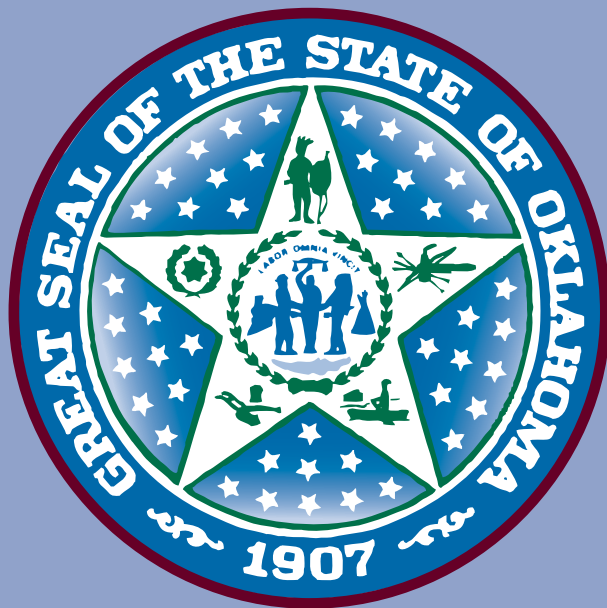


Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators™

Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination™

STUDY GUIDE

076 OPTE: 6–12



Oklahoma Commission
for Teacher Preparation

OK-SG-FD076-02

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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
 - Performance 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 three practice constructed-response assignments for the OPTE test field included in this study guide.

Test Competencies

The test competencies are broad, conceptual statements that reflect the subject-matter skills, knowledge, and understanding an entry-level educator needs to teach effectively in Oklahoma public schools. The list of test competencies for each OPTE test field represents the **only** source of information about what the specific 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 constructed-response assignments included in this section are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in this OPTE test field. 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 your OPTE, 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.

Sample responses are provided immediately following the practice constructed-response assignments. The sample responses in this guide are for illustrative purposes only. Your written responses 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 constructed-response assignments is provided in addition to the OPTE 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 for your test field.

SUBAREAS:

- I. Learners and the Learning Environment
- II. Instruction and Assessment
- III. The Professional Environment

The content covered by the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination is organized into subareas of test content as described below. The Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination is further divided into two components: a selected-response component and a constructed-response component.

SUBAREA I—LEARNERS AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Competency 0001

The teacher understands how students learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and physical development at all grade levels, including early childhood, elementary, middle level, and secondary.

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

The teacher understands the processes by which students acquire knowledge and construct meaning.

The teacher understands developmental characteristics of students and how developmental factors affect learning.

The teacher recognizes ways in which a student's development in one domain (e.g., physical, social-emotional, intellectual) may affect other domains.

The teacher applies strategies for promoting learning among students at different developmental levels.

Competency 0002

The teacher understands that students vary in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adaptable to individual differences of learners.

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

The teacher understands differences in students' learning strengths and needs (e.g., related to variations in learning style, multiple intelligences).

The teacher recognizes and understands factors that may affect learning and performance and adapts instruction to meet the needs of students based on various factors (e.g., family situations, cultural and language differences, socio-economic circumstances, prior learning, special talents, and disabilities).

The teacher recognizes how to locate and secure resources and support services to meet varied student needs.

Competency 0003

The teacher uses best practices related to motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, self-motivation, and active engagement in learning, thus providing opportunities for success.

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

The teacher analyzes factors that affect students' motivation to learn (e.g., expectations of parents/guardians and teachers, prior experiences in school).

The teacher applies instructional strategies that motivate students to learn and achieve (e.g., relating lessons to students' interests, providing opportunities for students to exercise choice in learning).

The teacher applies principles of effective classroom management (e.g., in relation to appropriate discipline, student decision making, standards of behavior) to establish an atmosphere of cooperation, trust, and mutual support.

The teacher analyzes how aspects of the physical environment (e.g., spatial arrangements, resources, classroom displays) affect learning.

Competency 0004

The teacher understands the process of continuous lifelong learning, the concept of making learning enjoyable, and the need for a willingness to change when the change leads to greater student learning and development.

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

The teacher encourages students to participate in learning activities that involve intellectual challenge, exploration, and reflection.

The teacher models for students a willingness to consider new ideas or modify behavior in response to new information or changing circumstances.

The teacher designs instructional activities that respond to student initiatives and preferences and that provide opportunities for students to explore topics that are meaningful to them.

The teacher helps students relate classroom learning to their lives outside school and to their personal goals.

SUBAREA II—INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Competency 0005

The teacher plans instruction based upon curriculum goals, knowledge of the teaching/learning process, subject matter, students' abilities and differences, and the community, and adapts instruction based upon assessment and reflection.

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

The teacher applies principles and procedures used in instructional planning (e.g., defining lesson or unit objectives, developing lesson plans, choosing appropriate learning activities).

The teacher recognizes key factors to consider when planning instruction (e.g., goals, students' characteristics and prior experiences, community characteristics, cultural and ethnic diversity, available time and resources, opportunities for making interdisciplinary connections).

The teacher analyzes and revises aspects of a given lesson plan (e.g., organization, approach, activities, comprehensiveness) in response to changing circumstances (e.g., changes in students' interests, opportunities for involvement of parents/guardians/families, availability of resources, current events).

The teacher interprets formal and informal assessment results and uses them to plan or modify learning activities.

The teacher uses a variety of resources (including technology) in planning and implementing instructional activities.

Competency 0006

The teacher understands curriculum integration processes and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills and effective use of technology.

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

The teacher understands ways to integrate and implement different curriculum areas to promote student learning.

The teacher understands principles and techniques associated with specific instructional strategies (e.g., cooperative learning, direct instruction, discovery learning, whole-group discussion, computer-assisted instruction, interdisciplinary instruction).

The teacher applies a variety of instructional approaches to promote the development of higher-order thinking skills and encourage independent learning.

The teacher analyzes how various teacher roles (e.g., instructor, facilitator, coach, audience) and student roles (e.g., self-directed learner, group participant, passive observer) may affect learning processes and outcomes.

The teacher recognizes ways to enhance learning through the use of print, manipulative, technological, and human resources (e.g., primary documents, unit-counting blocks, computers and other educational technologies, community experts).

Competency 0007

The teacher develops a knowledge of and uses a variety of effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

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

The teacher applies strategies for adapting communication to facilitate student understanding (e.g., providing examples; simplifying complex problems; using visual, aural, and kinesthetic cues).

The teacher fosters students' expressive and receptive communication skills by modeling effective strategies for conveying information, collaborating, questioning, and responding.

The teacher interacts with students in ways that demonstrate respect for and sensitivity to individual differences.

The teacher understands how to use a variety of communication tools, including computers and other educational technologies, to enrich learning.

Competency 0008

The teacher understands and uses a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate and modify the teaching/learning process ensuring the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

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

The teacher uses assessment to adapt teaching to address the intellectual, social, and physical development of the student.

The teacher understands the characteristics and appropriate uses of formal and informal assessments (e.g., criterion and norm-referenced instruments, teacher-designed classroom tests, portfolios, peer assessment, student self-assessment, observation).

The teacher understands measurement principles and assessment concepts (e.g., validity, reliability, bias).

The teacher effectively interprets and communicates assessment results to students, parents/guardians, and colleagues.

Competency 0009

The teacher shall have an understanding of the importance of assisting students with career awareness and the application of career concepts to the academic curriculum.

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

The teacher applies strategies to increase students' awareness of connections between academic learning and the workplace (e.g., introducing young children to different types of jobs, integrating authentic learning/work experiences into the curriculum, expanding students' knowledge of career opportunities).

The teacher understands how to involve employers and members of the community in career awareness and preparation activities.

The teacher plans and implements learning experiences to address racial, socio-economic, ethnic, and gender stereotyping related to careers.

The teacher plans and implements instructional activities that help students develop skills needed in the workplace (e.g., working in teams, problem solving, communication).

SUBAREA III—THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Competency 0010

The teacher evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community), modifies those actions when needed, and actively seeks opportunities for continued professional growth.

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

The teacher applies strategies for self-assessment (e.g., with respect to effectiveness of instruction; relations with colleagues; gender, cultural, and other biases; and interactions with parents/guardians/family members).

The teacher understands how to evaluate and respond to feedback (e.g., from supervisors, students, parents/guardians, colleagues).

The teacher utilizes resources to promote professional growth (e.g., colleagues, professional associations, journals) and selects appropriate professional development activities (e.g., inservice training programs, continuing education).

The teacher collaborates with other members of the school community (e.g., other teachers, mentors, supervisors, special needs professionals, administrators, support staff) to enhance skills and solve problems.

Competency 0011

The teacher understands the State teacher evaluation process, "Oklahoma Criteria for Effective Teaching Performance," and how to incorporate these criteria in designing instructional strategies.

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

The teacher understands and incorporates state-mandated standards for teacher performance (e.g., instruction, scheduling, record keeping).

The teacher recognizes specific practices that meet or fail to meet OCETP standards.

The teacher demonstrates knowledge of OCETP criteria for evaluating teacher skills in managing and delivering instruction.

The teacher applies OCETP criteria in reflecting on one's management and instructional practices and determining whether modifications are necessary.

Competency 0012

The teacher fosters positive interaction with school colleagues, parents/families, and organizations in the community to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being.

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

The teacher applies strategies for active collaboration with colleagues (e.g., other teachers, mentors, supervisors, special needs professionals, administrators, support staff) to address the needs of students and improve the learning environment.

The teacher understands schools and school systems within the context of the larger community.

The teacher applies strategies for initiating and maintaining effective communication with parents/guardians and recognizing factors that may promote communication in given circumstances.

The teacher recognizes how to use community resources to enrich learning experiences.

Competency 0013

The teacher understands the legal aspects of teaching, including the rights of students and parents/families, as well as the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher.

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

The teacher applies knowledge of teachers' legal rights and responsibilities (e.g., with regard to student discipline, situations involving suspected child abuse, the expression of political views).

The teacher understands laws related to students' rights (e.g., assuring equal access to education, providing an appropriate education for students with special needs, maintaining confidentiality, ensuring due process).

The teacher applies knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians in various situations (e.g., in relation to student records, school attendance).

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE MODULES

The content covered by the modules described below is assessed through the constructed-response component of the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS MODULE: Learners and the Learning Environment

(This module requires candidates to construct written responses that demonstrate an understanding of aspects of professional knowledge as described in Subarea I. Assignments and responses for this module will relate to Competencies 0001, 0002, 0003, and/or 0004 of the test framework.)

This component of the assessment requires candidates to exercise critical thinking skills to analyze educational issues related to learners and the learning environment and present their own opinions in a coherent and convincing way. For example, the candidate is presented with a brief summary of a contemporary educational issue or topic (e.g., student development patterns, theories of learning, motivational techniques). The candidate responds in writing by presenting his or her own point of view on the topic and supporting that position with reasoned arguments and appropriate examples.

STUDENT INQUIRY MODULE: Instruction and Assessment

(This module requires candidates to construct written responses that demonstrate an understanding of aspects of professional knowledge as described in Subarea II. Assignments and responses for this module will relate to Competencies 0005, 0006, 0007, 0008, and/or 0009 of the test framework.)

This component of the assessment requires the candidate to apply general principles of teaching and learning in planning, delivering, and adapting instruction and assessment. For example, the candidate is presented with an instructional goal (e.g., fostering students' critical thinking skills, providing opportunities for students to explore a topic using a range of learning modes, helping students relate instructional content to their own experience). The candidate responds in writing by describing and evaluating instructional strategies and activities designed to help students attain that goal.

TEACHER ASSIGNMENT MODULE: The Professional Environment

(This module requires candidates to construct written responses that demonstrate an understanding of aspects of professional knowledge as described in Subarea III. Assignments and responses for this module will relate to Competencies 0010, 0011, 0012, and/or 0013 of the test framework.)

This component of the assessment requires the candidate to reflect on and apply knowledge of the professional roles and responsibilities of the teacher. For example, the candidate is presented with a situation arising from an interaction with colleagues, parents/guardians, or community members and requiring some form of action. The candidate responds in writing by identifying and discussing important issues raised by the situation, describing an appropriate course of action, and explaining how the proposed action is likely to lead to a desirable outcome.

The Oklahoma *General Competencies for Licensure and Certification* are provided below.*

The teacher understands the central concepts and methods of inquiry of the subject matter discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.**

The teacher understands how students learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and physical development at all grade levels including early childhood, elementary, middle level, and secondary.

The teacher understands that students vary in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adaptable to individual differences of learners.

The teacher understands curriculum integration processes and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills and effective use of technology.

The teacher uses best practices related to motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, self-motivation and active engagement in learning, thus, providing opportunities for success.

The teacher develops a knowledge of and uses a variety of effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

The teacher plans instruction based upon curriculum goals, knowledge of the teaching/learning process, subject matter, students' abilities and differences, and the community; and adapts instruction based upon assessment and reflection.

The teacher understands and uses a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate and modify the teaching/learning process ensuring the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.

The teacher evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community), modifies those actions when needed, and actively seeks opportunities for continued professional growth.

The teacher fosters positive interaction with school colleagues, parents/families, and organizations in the community to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being.

The teacher shall have an understanding of the importance of assisting students with career awareness and the application of career concepts to the academic curriculum.

The teacher understands the process of continuous lifelong learning, the concept of making learning enjoyable, and the need for a willingness to change when the change leads to greater student learning and development.

The teacher understands the legal aspects of teaching including the rights of students and parents/families, as well as the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher.

The teacher understands the Oklahoma core curriculum and is able to develop instructional strategies/plans based on Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS).**

The teacher understands the State teacher evaluation process, "Oklahoma Criteria for Effective Teaching Performance," and how to incorporate these criteria in designing instructional strategies.

* The Oklahoma *General Competencies for Licensure and Certification* were adopted by the Oklahoma State Board of Education as required by Legislative House Bill 1549. The competencies that comprise the test framework for the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination are drawn from these *General Competencies*.

** Knowledge of the content described by this competency will be assessed on the Oklahoma Subject Area Tests™ (OSAT™).

Practice Selected-Response Questions

Competency 0001

The teacher understands how students learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and physical development at all grade levels, including early childhood, elementary, middle level, and secondary.

1. A kindergarten teacher should be most concerned about the social-emotional development of which of the following children in his class?
 - A. Carlos, who always chooses the same classmate whenever he is allowed to choose a partner for an activity
 - B. Diane, who insists on being the "mother" whenever she plays in the dramatic play center
 - C. Nancy, who often talks to herself when she is playing alone or with others at the water or sand tables
 - D. Robbie, who rarely interacts with classmates and refuses to let others join him in activities

Correct Response: D. By the time they enter kindergarten, most children are developmentally ready and eager to interact with their peers. The behaviors described for Carlos, Diane, and Nancy are typical of five year olds whose development is proceeding normally and should not be cause for concern. Robbie's behavior, however, does warrant concern, particularly if it persists over time. It is not typical for a child of this age to isolate himself consistently from classmates. Such behavior may be a manifestation of a significant social or emotional problem.

Competency 0001

The teacher understands how students learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and physical development at all grade levels, including early childhood, elementary, middle level, and secondary.

2. Which of the following activities would require students in a social studies class to apply the most advanced level of cognitive skills?
 - A. Students read a passage about the multiple causes of a historical event and then discuss how each cause contributed to the event.
 - B. Students listen to a presentation about a series of historical events and then create a timeline based upon that information.
 - C. Students select a historical event and then use a print or nonprint resource to find information about the event.
 - D. Students identify possible explanations for a historical event and then discuss types of evidence that would support each explanation.

Correct Response: D. Asking students to identify and assess possible causes of a historical event requires students to form hypotheses and to relate various types of supporting information to each of the possibilities. These tasks involve analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, all of which are higher-order cognitive skills. Together, they make this activity by far the most challenging of the four classroom activities described.

Competency 0001

The teacher understands how students learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and physical development at all grade levels, including early childhood, elementary, middle level, and secondary.

3. A teacher wishes to develop effective methods for teaching seventh- and eighth-grade students about the dangers of various behaviors, such as riding in a car with someone who has been drinking alcohol or interacting with people who carry guns. The teacher is most likely to achieve this goal if instructional planning takes into account the fact that, in general, young people of this age:
 - A. are highly responsive to suggestions for modifying behavior if the suggestions are supported by facts.
 - B. feel invincible and assume that they will never have to face the worst possible consequences of their actions.
 - C. are more willing to change behaviors that are related to peer relationships than to change other types of behaviors.
 - D. cannot imagine any situation they have not personally experienced.

Correct Response: B. In this situation, the teacher's task is not only to impart knowledge but to help students recognize its relevance to their personal lives and apply it in situations involving personal risk. A teacher who wants to help students develop responsible habits (e.g., refusing to ride with a driver who has been drinking) must take into account the attitudes and assumptions that shape behavior. Most young adolescents have difficulty imagining that any serious harm could come to them. The teacher will therefore need to plan instruction that addresses this sense of invincibility and that guides students to the understanding that their behavior can have serious, even deadly, consequences for themselves.

Competency 0002

The teacher understands that students vary in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adaptable to individual differences of learners.

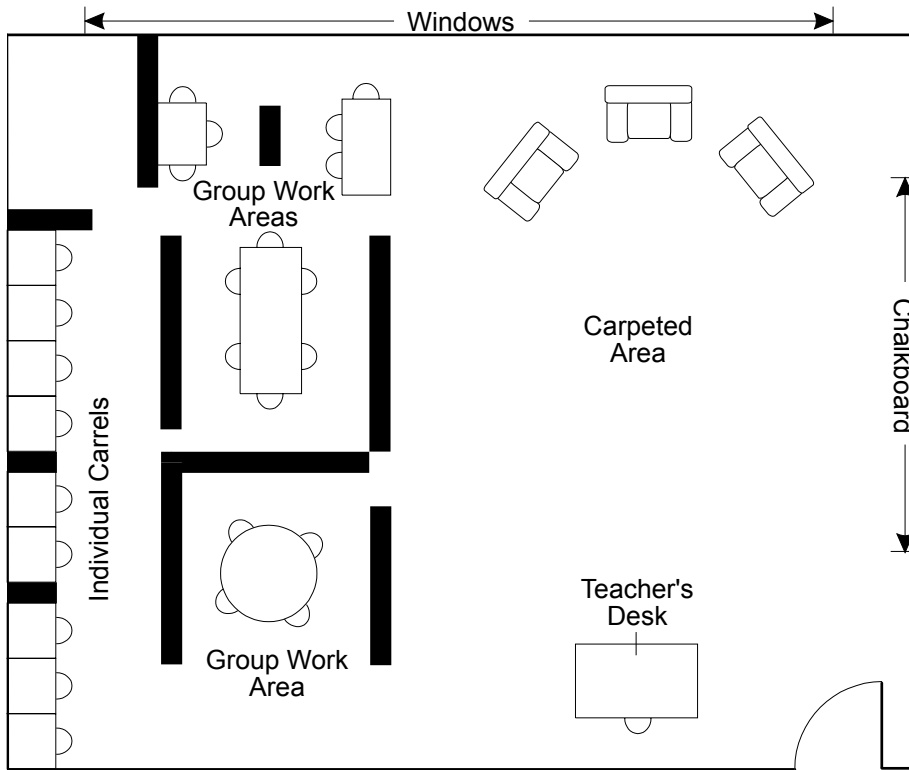
4. A teacher whose students achieve at a range of levels is considering using ability grouping for much of the instruction in his classroom. According to educational research, such an approach is most likely to have which of the following *negative* effects?
- I. increasing obstacles to achieving a sense of community and mutual support among all students
 - II. reducing all students' sense of achievement in regard to their own learning
 - III. communicating low expectations for students who currently perform at lower levels of achievement
 - IV. making it more difficult to individualize instruction for students with varied needs
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: A. Assigning students to ability groups on a regular basis focuses attention on differences among students, rather than on ways in which students can contribute to one another's learning. This creates a classroom climate in which it is difficult to establish a sense of community and mutual support (option I). In addition, regularly grouping students on the basis of their academic performance communicates to those who are performing at lower levels that they are expected to have difficulty with certain types of learning not only now but in the future (option III).

Competency 0003

The teacher uses best practices related to motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, self-motivation, and active engagement in learning, thus providing opportunities for success.

5. Use the floor plan below of an elementary school classroom to answer the question that follows.



This classroom arrangement is most likely designed primarily to:

- A. accommodate the preferences and needs of students with a variety of learning styles.
- B. communicate the idea that learning in group contexts has advantages over learning independently.
- C. facilitate instruction that integrates concepts and materials from different disciplines.
- D. enable the teacher to monitor off-task student behavior easily and effectively.

Correct Response: A. The floor plan indicates that this classroom is designed to provide a variety of seating arrangements to accommodate students with a range of learning styles. The individual carrels offer a quiet and distraction-free area for students who prefer to work by themselves. Students who work best in an interactive setting can meet at any of the small tables in the partitioned areas, where they can work together without disturbing classmates in other areas. The carpeted area with its easy chairs provides a comfortable, informal setting for students who learn better when they are physically relaxed. The open carpeted area permits the teacher to provide learning activities that are motivating to students who like to be physically active.

Competency 0004

The teacher understands the process of continuous lifelong learning, the concept of making learning enjoyable, and the need for a willingness to change when the change leads to greater student learning and development.

6. During a science lesson, students in a fourth-grade class notice that a rainbow has appeared outside. They crowd around the windows to observe it. As the rainbow fades, the students begin to wonder aloud what causes rainbows to appear and why they disappear so quickly. In this situation, the teacher can best maximize student learning by taking which of the following actions?
- A. Use the students' questions about rainbows to structure a future lesson on the topic.
 - B. Refocus students' attention on the original lesson as quickly as possible to minimize the distraction caused by the rainbow.
 - C. Take advantage of students' excitement by spending some of the remaining class time helping them learn more about rainbows.
 - D. Offer to help students use independent learning skills at a later time to pursue their interest in rainbows.

Correct Response: C. Allowing students to pursue a topic that has aroused their curiosity validates their interest and encourages them to take an active role in their learning. In this situation, the students are highly motivated to learn about the phenomenon that has unexpectedly appeared outside the classroom. By responding to the students' excitement and helping them explore their interest in rainbows, the teacher takes advantage of their curiosity to help them expand their understanding of specific content (rainbows) and to model a behavior that will promote students' lifelong learning skills. Even more important than these benefits, however, is the message communicated by the teacher's response: that students' interests are respected and valued and that learning can be a self-directed and personally meaningful activity.

Competency 0005

The teacher plans instruction based upon curriculum goals, knowledge of the teaching/learning process, subject matter, students' abilities and differences, and the community, and adapts instruction based upon assessment and reflection.

7. A teacher is planning a thematic unit that will incorporate activities in the areas of social studies, language arts, and math. Which of the following questions should the teacher address *first* in planning the unit?
- A. What student learning goals should I include in the unit?
 - B. What proportion of individual, small-group, and whole-class activities should I include in the unit?
 - C. How can I best motivate students' independent learning during the unit?
 - D. What methods should I use to assess students' learning during the unit?

Correct Response: A. Instructional planning should begin with clearly defined student learning goals. This is particularly important in the design of interdisciplinary units in which the learning goals should guide the selection of content to be covered in each subject area and determine how material will be integrated across disciplines. If teachers know in advance what concepts and skills they want students to learn as a result of their exposure to a set of subject areas, they will be better able to create meaningful connections among the learning experiences in each subject and present the unit in a coherent manner.

Competency 0005

The teacher plans instruction based upon curriculum goals, knowledge of the teaching/learning process, subject matter, students' abilities and differences, and the community, and adapts instruction based upon assessment and reflection.

8. Before the beginning of each school year, a teacher reviews the records of her new students and fills in as much information as possible on a form that she maintains for each student. Then the teacher adds information to each student's form as the year progresses. One student's form is shown below.

Student's name: <i>Keisha Singleton</i>
Name of parent(s)/guardian(s): <i>Charlotte Singleton</i> Phone number(s): <i>(W)342-9781 (H)343-2267</i>
Areas of particular strength: <i>math, art</i>
Areas of need: <i>spelling; oral expression</i>
Interests, hobbies, special skills: <i>loves animals, especially horses; plays the violin; enjoys puzzles</i>
Home language: <i>English</i>
IEP/disabilities? <i>No</i>

Which of the following would be the most appropriate way of using these forms to enhance instruction?

- A. Use knowledge of a student's interests, hobbies, and special skills to individualize rewards for progress and work well done.
- B. Use information about students' strengths and needs to ensure that each student spends most of the time focusing on areas of need and the least amount of time working in areas of strength.
- C. Use knowledge of students' backgrounds, strengths, and needs to group students with similar characteristics for instruction.
- D. Use information about a student's strengths and special interests to adapt lessons and facilitate learning in areas in which performance is relatively weak.

Correct Response: D. A student is most likely to benefit from learning experiences that draw on his or her special abilities and are presented in interesting, meaningful contexts. If a student tends to have difficulty in a particular academic area, a teacher can foster the student's motivation and confidence by designing learning activities based on the student's personal interests and strengths. Of the response choices given, therefore, the most appropriate use of the form would be to provide information about a student's strengths and interests that can be used to adapt lessons and facilitate learning in the student's area of weakness.

Competency 0005

The teacher plans instruction based upon curriculum goals, knowledge of the teaching/learning process, subject matter, students' abilities and differences, and the community, and adapts instruction based upon assessment and reflection.

9. A high school teacher sees an interesting science activity described in a professional journal and decides to try performing the activity herself before using it in her classroom. A preliminary trial of the activity is most likely to benefit the teacher by:
- I. helping her anticipate the types of problems students may have with the activity.
 - II. allowing her to determine how student performance during the activity will be assessed.
 - III. providing information that will help her determine the amount of class time needed for the activity.
 - IV. enabling her to link the activity conceptually to content previously addressed with the class.
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: A. A preliminary run-through will give the teacher a sense of how the activity described in the journal will proceed in the classroom. Moving through all of the steps in the activity will enable the teacher to anticipate where her students may become confused or have difficulty performing a task. This knowledge will help her modify the activity appropriately for use in her class. A trial run will also help her determine a realistic time frame for each component of the activity.

Competency 0006

The teacher understands curriculum integration processes and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills and effective use of technology.

10. A teacher begins an ecology unit by asking her students to discuss what the term *ecology* means to them. Which of the following are the primary benefits of introducing the unit in this way?
- I. The teacher will get a better idea of how to group students during activities related to the unit.
 - II. Students will have a chance to reflect on what they already know about the topic.
 - III. The teacher will obtain information about students' current understanding of the topic.
 - IV. Students will be encouraged to work collaboratively during the remainder of the unit.
- A. I and III only
 - B. II and III only
 - C. I and IV only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: B. Asking students to articulate their thinking about a topic encourages them to reflect upon their prior knowledge and experiences (option II) and to become actively engaged in relating new information to what they already know. Introducing a unit by asking students to discuss the new topic is an effective strategy for determining students' current understanding of the topic (option III). Information from such preliminary discussions enables the teacher to design instruction that builds on students' existing knowledge and addresses gaps and misconceptions in their understanding.

Competency 0006

The teacher understands curriculum integration processes and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills and effective use of technology.

11. A math teacher often begins class periods by selecting students to go to the chalkboard to write out and explain their solutions to homework problems. If a student cannot solve a problem or has trouble explaining a solution, the teacher requests that a classmate volunteer to assist. The most important *disadvantage* of this instructional approach is that it is likely to:
- A. communicate to all students that the teacher has low expectations for their academic performance and progress.
 - B. focus too much student attention on learning processes and too little attention on learning products.
 - C. have an adverse effect on some students' self-esteem and on the overall emotional climate of the classroom.
 - D. undermine students' willingness and ability to use more cooperative approaches in other class activities.

Correct Response: C. Students who have difficulty with some aspect of school work often experience feelings of frustration and incompetence, particularly when their unsuccessful efforts are witnessed by others. In this case, a student who is unable to solve a math problem correctly or to explain a procedure is likely to feel embarrassed or even humiliated when another student provides the correct response. The situation invites students who have difficulty to compare themselves with their more competent peers, thereby reinforcing feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. It is the teacher's responsibility to design instruction that promotes students' feelings of competence and self-esteem.

Competency 0007

The teacher develops a knowledge of and uses a variety of effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

12. A high school teacher is planning a presentation on a complex, multiple-step process. Which of the following instructional strategies is most likely to help ensure the effectiveness of the presentation?
- A. After explaining each step in the process, ask the students to identify anything they do not understand.
 - B. Display a graphic representation of the process and its components and refer to it throughout the presentation.
 - C. Throughout the presentation, refer to sections of the students' textbook that cover material relevant to what is being discussed.
 - D. Pause frequently during the presentation in order to provide students with ample time to take notes.

Correct Response: B. A graphic representation is most likely to help minimize the confusion that students are likely to feel when encountering unfamiliar and complex material. By enabling the students to conceptualize the process visually, a graphic representation can help them grasp the overall structure of the process and see the relationships among its component parts. Frequent references to the graphic during the presentation should also help students maintain their attention and follow the teacher's explanation.

Competency 0007

The teacher develops a knowledge of and uses a variety of effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

13. At the beginning of the year, a sixth-grade teacher has a "Get to Know You" conference with each of his students. One of the students has a physical condition that restricts her ability to hold and manipulate books and other materials. Which of the following is the most appropriate way for the teacher to communicate sensitivity to this student's special needs?
- A. Assure her that although she will be given the same assignments as her peers, allowances will be made for her disability in grading some aspects of her work.
 - B. Avoid raising the topic of her disability and downplay its significance if she expresses concern about it.
 - C. Acknowledge her disability and offer to work with her to adapt class activities to make sure she has every opportunity for success.
 - D. Tell her about other students with physical disabilities who have had successful experiences in the teacher's classroom.

Correct Response: C. The most appropriate way to show sensitivity to this student's special needs is to acknowledge the student's disability in a matter-of-fact way and to assure her that every effort will be made to enable her to participate fully in the class. By offering to work with the student to adapt specific activities, the teacher communicates willingness to provide the student with every opportunity for success. This approach also encourages the student to take an active role in identifying and meeting her own needs in the class.

Competency 0008

The teacher understands and uses a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate and modify the teaching/learning process ensuring the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

14. A teacher is reviewing her students' scores on a norm-referenced test in science. These scores can best help the teacher:
- A. identify the extent to which her students have mastered each of the major instructional objectives in science.
 - B. compare each student's potential to learn science with his or her actual performance in science.
 - C. improve alignment between her science curriculum and national science education standards.
 - D. compare her students' level of science knowledge with the science knowledge of a representative sample of their peers.

Correct Response: D. A student's score on a norm-referenced test provides information about the student's performance in relation to the performance of a *norm group* (e.g., students of the same age or grade level and having similar demographic characteristics). In this case, the scores on the norm-referenced science test tell the teacher how each student's achievement in science compares to the science achievement of a large and representative sample of other students who have taken the same test.

Competency 0008

The teacher understands and uses a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate and modify the teaching/learning process ensuring the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

15. A teacher administers a pretest to students before beginning each new math unit. Which of the following are important benefits of this practice?
- I. The teacher communicates to students high expectations for their performance during each unit.
 - II. The teacher obtains baseline data with which to measure student progress during each unit.
 - III. Students are motivated to develop personal learning goals related to each unit.
 - IV. The teacher gains a sense of what content should be emphasized in each unit.
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: D. Giving students a pretest before introducing new subject matter is an effective means of determining individual students' current knowledge and skills in the subject area. As the unit progresses, each student's learning can be measured in relation to the baseline of knowledge and skills indicated in the pretest (option II). Data from pretesting can also help the teacher evaluate the effectiveness of unit learning activities for the class as a whole. An equally important function of pretesting is to help the teacher identify gaps or misconceptions in students' knowledge, as well as areas in which student skills and knowledge are relatively strong. These data will enable the teacher to tailor instruction to the class's learning needs (option IV).

Competency 0008

The teacher understands and uses a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate and modify the teaching/learning process ensuring the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

16. A teacher records on the table below the grades earned by his students on assignments and quizzes addressing different topics in a unit.

	Average Assignment Score (%)	Average Quiz Score (%)
Topic 1	74	72
Topic 2	82	86
Topic 3	61	56
Topic 4	90	87

Which of the following is the most appropriate conclusion to draw from this information?

- A. Assignments were too easy and failed to prepare students adequately for quizzes.
- B. Additional instruction should be provided to reinforce Topic 3 before moving on to a new unit.
- C. Substantial variation in the quality of instruction during the unit led to inconsistent student performance.
- D. Instruction related to Topic 4 did not provide sufficient challenge for the students in this class.

Correct Response: B. The average scores on assignments and quizzes associated with Topics 1, 2, and 4 suggest that, on average, students have mastered most of the content being assessed. However, the average scores on assignments and quizzes associated with Topic 3 are considerably lower than for the other topics. Therefore, the most appropriate conclusion would be that students had particular difficulty with Topic 3 and would benefit from additional instruction in that area.

Competency 0009

The teacher shall have an understanding of the importance of assisting students with career awareness and the application of career concepts to the academic curriculum.

17. A kindergarten class recently visited a local post office, where a postal worker showed the children how the post office functions and talked to them about his job. Which of the following steps taken by the teacher would best build on the post office experience to promote children's continuing exploration of the world of work?
- A. encouraging students to notice the many other types of workers they regularly encounter in their community
 - B. setting up in the classroom a "post office" that is stocked with envelopes, stamps, and mail bags
 - C. holding a class discussion about the various types of work done by their own parents/guardians
 - D. having each student dictate to the teacher an account of the post office trip for display in the classroom

Correct Response: B. Setting up a classroom post office stocked with mail-related materials will enable kindergartners to explore ideas and roles relating to the world of work in a manner appropriate to their level of cognitive and social development. Because children at this age learn best in a play environment where they can interact with realistic objects and experiment with different roles, the simulated post office would provide the most effective means for encouraging them to explore and build upon what they have learned from their visit to the real post office.

Competency 0009

The teacher shall have an understanding of the importance of assisting students with career awareness and the application of career concepts to the academic curriculum.

18. Which of the following standards is most important for a teacher to apply when selecting materials to promote the career awareness of middle school students?
- I. The materials should include portrayals of men and women in a variety of occupations.
 - II. The materials should emphasize jobs that tend to be widely available in the local area.
 - III. The materials should address the opportunities and requirements of different career choices.
 - IV. The materials should emphasize types of jobs that are unfamiliar to students.
- A. I and II only
 - B. II and III only
 - C. I and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: C. At the middle school level, an important focus of career awareness instruction should be to expand students' awareness of the types of career options available to them and to counteract any stereotypes (such as gender stereotypes) that may limit their thinking about career opportunities (option I). In addition, instructional materials should provide students with information about educational and other requirements associated with a variety of occupations and careers (option III) so that they have a beginning understanding of what they will need to do to prepare for a particular career path.

Competency 0010

The teacher evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community), modifies those actions when needed, and actively seeks opportunities for continued professional growth.

19. Mr. Fuentes will be attending a series of in-service training workshops on using instructional technologies. Use of which of the following strategies will probably help Mr. Fuentes benefit most from the workshops?
- A. Before the workshops begin, solicit from colleagues their ideas about what information he should try to obtain during workshop sessions.
 - B. Secure additional materials on instructional technologies to expand on the information presented at the workshops.
 - C. Reaffirm his own ideas about the uses and limitations of technology in the classroom before participating in the workshops.
 - D. Make frequent opportunities to apply newly acquired skills in his classroom.

Correct Response: D. To get the most out of learning and professional development experiences, teachers, like their students, need to use newly acquired knowledge, thereby making it their own. After attending the workshop on instructional technologies, the teacher would benefit most by finding frequent opportunities to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the workshop to a range of instructional activities. This strategy will both reinforce new skills and provide opportunities to expand upon their use.

Competency 0011

The teacher understands the State teacher evaluation process, "Oklahoma Criteria for Effective Teaching Performance," and how to incorporate these criteria in designing instructional strategies.

20. A teacher in Oklahoma is being evaluated while presenting a lesson. Which of the following teacher behaviors would most likely *fail* to meet state-mandated performance standards for instruction?
- A. The teacher continues the planned lesson even though a number of students seem confused about what is being taught.
 - B. The teacher spends a significant amount of class time reviewing prior learning related to the lesson rather than introducing new content.
 - C. The teacher allows student ideas expressed during discussion to move the lesson in an unexpected direction for part of the period.
 - D. The teacher fails to include a small-group component in the lesson and instead focuses exclusively on whole-class and individual approaches.

Correct Response: A. According to the state-mandated performance standards for instruction, teachers must demonstrate ability to monitor students' progress toward learning objectives and to change instruction based on the results of monitoring. A teacher who does not continuously monitor student understanding or does not modify a lesson when it is clear that students are confused would fail to meet important Oklahoma criteria for effective teaching performance.

Competency 0012

The teacher fosters positive interactions with school colleagues, parents/families, and organizations in the community to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being.

21. A teacher plans to assign his students a research project and asks the school librarian to provide the class with instruction on library use. The teacher can best help ensure that the library session will be productive by providing the librarian with information about:
- I. students' current research and library skills.
 - II. the criteria the teacher will use to assess student work on the project.
 - III. motivational strategies that have been effective with this class.
 - IV. the nature of the research project the teacher will be assigning.
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: B. The library training session is most likely to be productive if the librarian has a means for targeting the library skills and materials that will be most useful for the research project. If the teacher provides the librarian with information about students' existing library skills and prior experiences doing library research (option I), the librarian will know at what level and in which areas to begin instruction. Informing the librarian about the nature of the research project (option IV) will enable the librarian to focus on those materials that relate most directly to the teacher's learning objectives for the project.

Competency 0012

The teacher fosters positive interactions with school colleagues, parents/families, and organizations in the community to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being.

22. A teacher has arranged a conference with the parent of a ninth-grade student who has been experiencing academic problems. The teacher met with the parent earlier in the school year, but this will be their first meeting to discuss the student's performance. Which of the following approaches is most likely to facilitate clear communication with the parent and result in a productive meeting?
- A. Have one or more colleagues who have also worked with the student attend the meeting to substantiate the teacher's assessment of the student's performance.
 - B. Bring to the conference examples of the student's work that illustrate strengths and key problems and be prepared to show and explain them to the parent.
 - C. Demonstrate a willingness to follow the parent's suggestions in developing procedures and criteria for future evaluations of the student's work.
 - D. Concentrate on providing objective data such as assignment grades and test scores and avoid discussing possible causes of the performance problems.

Correct Response: B. An important purpose of meeting with the parent or guardian of a student who is having academic difficulty is to involve the parent in helping the student improve performance. The teacher will most likely succeed in this effort if the parent views the teacher as an advocate who is aware of the student's strengths as well as his or her areas of difficulty. In addition, the parent must be helped to understand the nature of the academic problem. The teacher can take a first step toward both of these goals by showing the parent examples of the student's work and explaining the ways in which the examples indicate areas needing improvement and special abilities that the student can draw on in addressing the problem.

Competency 0013

The teacher understands the legal aspects of teaching, including the rights of students and parents/families, as well as the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher.

23. Over the past six months, incidents of physically aggressive behavior among students have become increasingly common at Garfield Middle School. Teachers suspect that a rise in gang membership is a major source of the problem. In this situation, the teacher's *primary* responsibility is to:
- A. ensure the physical safety of all students in the school.
 - B. involve students in finding solutions to the problem of physical aggression at the school.
 - C. determine the causes for the rise in gang membership.
 - D. provide parents/guardians with detailed information about incidents of physical aggression at the school.

Correct Response: A. Teachers are legally responsible for ensuring the safety of students, anticipating foreseeable dangers, and taking reasonable measures to protect students from harm. In this situation, a comprehensive response to the problems of physically aggressive behavior and gang activity in the school will undoubtedly require long-term efforts involving students, teachers, administrators, and parents, as well as agencies in the larger community. Though they may also participate in addressing the overall problem, the teachers' *primary* responsibility is to take immediate action to ensure the safety of all students.

Competency 0013

The teacher understands the legal aspects of teaching, including the rights of students and parents/families, as well as the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher.

24. Ms. Jackson, who teaches an eleventh-grade world history course, decides to begin a unit on the rise of Islam with a lesson on the major tenets of the Islamic religion. Which of the following would be the most appropriate way for Ms. Jackson to introduce her students to this material while avoiding violating the constitutional prohibition against promoting religion in the public schools?
- A. Structure the lesson as a comparative discussion in which equal attention is given to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
 - B. Design the lesson to study religious beliefs in historical and cultural contexts rather than focusing on issues of doctrine.
 - C. Offer to excuse from the lesson, and from related reading assignments, any students who would feel uncomfortable discussing religion.
 - D. Assign readings that balance the content of the lesson by offering various critical perspectives on Islamic doctrine.

Correct Response: B. The First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution prohibit civil authorities from making any law that gives preference to a particular religion or interferes with the free expression of religious beliefs. Since the middle of the twentieth century, court decisions interpreting this prohibition have stated that comparative religion and the history of religion may be studied in the public schools, as long as the instruction does not seek to advance a particular religious doctrine. To comply with constitutional law, therefore, the teacher would most appropriately present information about a particular religion such as Islam from a historical and cultural perspective.

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

At the end of Bicycle Safety Week, Mr. Flint asks his first graders to draw pictures about what they have learned and to write about their pictures using invented spelling. Walking around the room 15 minutes later, he sees that Bethany has not made any attempt to write. The following dialogue takes place.

Mr. Flint: Remember to write a sentence about your picture, Bethany.

Bethany: I can't. I don't know how.

Mr. Flint: Sure you can. Just think of what you want to say. Then write down the sounds you can hear.

With some more coaxing from Mr. Flint, Bethany finally writes B SAF UN YR BIC below her drawing. Then she announces, "I know it's wrong. Dad says writing's hard for me, just like it was for him."

Competency 0003

The teacher uses best practices related to motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, self-motivation, and active engagement in learning, thus providing opportunities for success.

25. Based on this interaction, which of the following is the most reasonable conclusion for Mr. Flint to draw?
- A. Bethany should be evaluated to determine whether she has inherited a learning disability that affects her writing skills.
 - B. Bethany's father does not take a great deal of interest in the progress his daughter is making in school.
 - C. Bethany will need a more structured approach to writing instruction to develop competence as a writer.
 - D. Bethany's progress toward writing is being impaired because her father is communicating low expectations for her in that area.

Correct Response: D. Students' level of confidence in their ability to learn is strongly influenced by the negative or positive expectations of the significant people in their lives. When a child expresses the belief that he or she is incapable of doing a particular task and cites a parent's opinion as the source of this belief, it is reasonable to conclude that the parent's low expectations are interfering with the child's achievement. In this case, the parent has communicated to his child that he expects her to experience difficulty in writing because he did. That the child is reluctant even to try the writing task is further evidence that fear of failure, rather than lack of ability, may be the source of the problem.

Competency 0012

The teacher fosters positive interactions with school colleagues, parents/families, and organizations in the community to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being.

26. To follow up on his concerns about Bethany, Mr. Flint invites her father to meet with him. As he begins a brief explanation of how he uses the whole language approach as part of his language arts instruction, Bethany's father becomes exasperated. "I just don't see enough evidence that Bethany is learning," he says. "I'd like to see more worksheets. I'd like to see more spelling tests." Which of the following responses would be most appropriate and effective for Mr. Flint to make?
- A. Present a portfolio or other examples of Bethany's work and point out specific ways in which she is making progress.
 - B. Assure Bethany's father that much current research supports the effectiveness of the whole language approach.
 - C. Explain that a child can learn spelling words and do skills practice with worksheets without becoming a good reader or writer.
 - D. Offer to individualize Bethany's instruction by giving her more opportunities to complete skills worksheets.

Correct Response: A. When a parent expresses concern that a teacher's methods of instruction in a particular subject area are not effective for his or her child, the most effective response is to show the parent examples of work that demonstrate the child's progress in the subject area. A parent whose stated interest is in results is more likely to be reassured by concrete evidence of achievement than by an explanation or defense of the teacher's instructional methods.

Information About the Constructed-Response Modules

The second section of the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination consists of three constructed-response modules, each of which presents a specific performance assignment.

The ***Critical Analysis Module*** asks candidates to analyze an educational issue related to learners and the learning environment.

The ***Student Inquiry Module*** asks candidates to describe an instructional activity that would help students in an identified grade level and subject area achieve a specific learning goal.

The ***Teacher Assignment Module*** asks candidates to apply professional knowledge to evaluate a school or classroom situation and recommend a course of action to address that situation.

Each assignment requires candidates to prepare a written response of up to two pages.

Candidates may take different approaches in responding to the educational issues, instructional assignments, and school/classroom situations described in the constructed-response performance assignments. ***There is no one "correct" or "best" answer. Responses will be judged solely on the basis of the scoring criteria listed below.***

Candidates should also bear in mind that the OPTE performance assignments measure professional knowledge and skills, not writing ability. However, candidates' responses must be in edited American English and communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgments of the candidates' teaching knowledge and skills.

The following pages contain directions for Section Two of the OPTE, a practice performance assignment for each type of constructed-response module, a sample response to each assignment, an evaluation of each sample response, information about performance assignment scoring, and the OPTE scoring scale. The sample responses in this guide are for illustrative purposes only. Written responses should be original work, written in the candidates' own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

A full description of the content covered by the constructed-response modules is provided in the test competencies section of this guide.

Sample OPTE Constructed-Response Assignment Directions

Sample directions for Section Two of the OPTE (the constructed-response modules) 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

This section of the test consists of **three** performance assignments.

- 1) A **Critical Analysis Module**. Record your response to the Critical Analysis Module on pages 3 and 4 of your answer document.
- 2) A **Student Inquiry Module**. Record your response to the Student Inquiry Module on pages 5 and 6 of your answer document.
- 3) A **Teacher Assignment Module**. Record your response to the Teacher Assignment Module on pages 7 and 8 of your answer document.

You must write your response to each assignment only on the pages provided for that assignment in the answer document. You will not receive additional pages. You may either print or write, as long as your handwriting is legible. You must use a pencil. Make sure that you have time to plan, write, review, and revise what you have written.

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

Read each 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 each performance assignment to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. ***However, your final responses must be written on the appropriate pages of the answer document.***

Your written responses will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate that you possess the knowledge and skills of teaching practice as defined by the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination (OPTE) framework. The framework describes professional knowledge and skills regarding learners and the learning environment, instruction and assessment, and the professional environment. While assignments and responses may vary in the extent to which they address any particular aspect of each subarea of the OPTE test framework, as a whole the written response for the Critical Analysis Module must demonstrate an understanding of professional knowledge related to learners and the learning environment; the written response for the Student Inquiry Module must demonstrate an understanding of professional knowledge related to instruction and assessment; and the written response for the Teacher Assignment Module must demonstrate an understanding of professional knowledge related to the professional environment.

(continued on next page)

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Your responses to the performance assignments will be scored based on the following criteria:

- fulfillment of the purpose of the assignment
- appropriate application of professional knowledge
- accurate and effective application of professional knowledge
- elaboration of professional knowledge

The OPTE performance assignments are intended to assess professional teaching knowledge and skills, not writing ability. However, your responses must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of your professional knowledge and skills by scorers. You should present a thoughtful, reasonable response to each performance assignment, supported by details, examples, and descriptions. The performance assignment may present alternative points of view about an educational issue. Your score will be based on how effectively you use your professional knowledge to describe and support your position or point of view about a topic. There is no one "correct" or "best" answer.

The final version of each response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. Your responses should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. You may, however, use citations when appropriate.

Be sure to address the specific assignments 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 response before completing each performance assignment. Check that your final responses are written on the appropriate pages of the answer document.

Practice Critical Analysis Performance Assignment

In the following Critical Analysis Module, you will be asked to analyze and discuss an educational issue related to Subarea I of the OPTE test framework, "Learners and the Learning Environment."

Respond to the following Critical Analysis Module assignment:

Classroom Management: Teacher-Directed or Participatory?

Educators continue to debate whether the emphasis in classroom management strategies should be on teacher-established rules and procedures or on guidelines and policies created and implemented with substantial student input. Supporters of teacher-imposed rules and procedures argue that students often do not have the maturity or experience to set and enforce appropriate classroom standards and that inviting students to make decisions about how a class will be run undermines the authority a teacher needs to be effective. Proponents of participatory classroom management strategies maintain, to the contrary, not only that students are capable of developing and implementing classroom behavior standards, but that the process of doing so fosters student development, enhances students' commitment to classroom rules, and promotes a positive learning environment.

In a written response for an audience of teachers, use your knowledge of *learners and the learning environment* to analyze and discuss the issue of teacher-directed and participatory classroom management strategies.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*Professional knowledge as described in Subarea I, "Learners and the Learning Environment," includes:*

how students learn and develop

how students vary in their approaches to learning

how to use best practices related to motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, self-motivation, and active engagement in learning

how to promote lifelong learning and make learning enjoyable

A Very Good Response to the Practice Critical Analysis Performance Assignment

As a beginning teacher in an elementary school I know it will be important for me to make sure classroom rules are clear and that students follow them consistently. Elementary school students sometimes "test" teacher rules as a way of beginning to assert their independence from adults. Or, if their thinking is still egocentric, they may not be able to appreciate why their "own" behavior needs to be restricted by rules. If most classroom rules are made by the teacher, students may not buy into them. Therefore, I believe that most rules for the operation of elementary school classrooms should be made with input from the students.

Students at this level are able to provide input about classroom rules. For example, if a 4th grade student were asked about a rule that should be followed in the classroom, she might say something like "Don't just yell out answers." The teacher could lead a discussion among the students about why that rule would be important and how the rule should be worded, then work with them to come up with a rule such as "Raise your hand and wait to be called on during class discussions." If the students understand the rationale for the rule (so that everybody gets a fair chance to contribute) and if the teacher enforces the rule so that the students see that it is effective, most students will respect it and follow it.

But I also believe there are some rules that teachers must establish on their own. The mentor teacher in the class where I did my student teaching had a rule that there would be no gum chewing. The need for this rule was obvious. The classroom was carpeted, the furniture was new, and there was a state-of-the-art computer system. The students probably would not have developed or voted for this rule. My mentor teacher, however, explained the reason for the rule carefully and praised students for maintaining a clean classroom environment, so most students followed the rule.

In most classrooms, students should have a great deal of input into classroom rules to ensure that they understand why they are important and will be motivated to follow them. But there are also some essential rules that the teacher needs to impose. Students will respect the rules if the teacher makes the reason for the rules clear to the students, in language they can understand, and enforces the rules consistently. The result will be a positive classroom atmosphere that supports student learning.

Evaluation

This assignment requires the candidate to apply professional knowledge about Subarea I of the OPTE framework, "Learners and the Learning Environment," to analyze and discuss an important educational issue: the development of rules to facilitate classroom management by teacher direction or through student participation.

The purpose of this assignment is fully achieved. Each part of the assignment is addressed thoroughly and demonstrates effective application of relevant aspects of professional practice related to learners and the learning environment.

The candidate presents a general premise that involving students in the development of classroom rules is a desirable goal. This premise is supported by a developmentally and professionally appropriate example of how a teacher could guide fourth-grade students to produce a classroom rule that would address a management need. The candidate also demonstrates a professionally sound explanation of situations in which a teacher-established rule may be required as a way to ensure the protection of school property, and this is supported by an observation of an effective strategy used by the candidate's mentor teacher.

Thus, the response provides evidence that the candidate understands the knowledge and skills defined in Subarea I of the OPTE framework, "Learners and the Learning Environment."

Practice Student Inquiry Performance Assignment

In the following Student Inquiry Module, you will be asked to use your professional knowledge about Subarea II of the OPTE test framework, "Instruction and Assessment."

Respond to the following Student Inquiry Module assignment:

Learning Goal: Students will develop the ability to organize and present information.

In a written response for an audience of teachers, identify a grade/age level and subject area for which you are prepared to teach, then use your knowledge of *instruction and assessment* to:

- describe an activity you could use to enhance the ability of students at that grade/age level to organize and present information; and
- explain why you believe that activity would be effective in developing students' ability to organize and present information.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*Professional knowledge as described in Subarea II, "Instruction and Assessment," includes:*

how to plan instruction

how to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills

how to use effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom

how to use assessment strategies to evaluate and modify the teaching/learning process

how to assist students with career awareness and apply career concepts to the curriculum

A Very Good Response to the Practice Student Inquiry Performance Assignment

I hope to teach English at the high school level. An activity that I think would be very interesting for students and also would help them develop their ability to organize and present information would be to have them make presentations about the characters in a novel using a television talk show format. This activity would come at the end of a unit on the novel—after the students had finished reading a novel and the class had completed a series of other activities about the literary elements of a novel. The activity would have the following steps.

- Students choose one of four or five novels to read at the beginning of the unit.
- Students who read the same novels meet in small groups and identify important conflicts among characters in their novel.
- The whole class views several videotaped clips from talk show interviews and discusses what kind of questions elicit the best answers, how to ask follow-up questions, etc.
- Students go back to their groups to write a script containing questions and answers for their novel characters and to rehearse their presentations. I help them refine their scripts but they elaborate as they wish when putting on their talk show.
- Students suggest criteria for evaluating the presentations and I prepare an evaluation form.
- Students put on their presentations. All of the students complete evaluation forms for each presentation, which I summarize and provide to each group for their review only. Also, I videotape each presentation so that each group can evaluate their own performance.

I believe this would be an effective activity for developing students' ability to organize and present information because it would 1) engage students' imagination and enthusiasm; 2) encourage students to think deeply about the characters in the novel, their motivations and relationships with one another; and 3) require them to organize their thoughts and present information for a given purpose, in a particular setting, to a specific audience.

Evaluation

This assignment requires the candidate to apply professional knowledge about Subarea II of the OPTE framework, "Instruction and Assessment," by describing an instructional activity for a given grade level and subject area that will help students develop the ability to organize and present information.

The purpose of this assignment is fully achieved. Each part of the assignment is addressed thoroughly and demonstrates effective application of relevant aspects of professional practice related to instruction and assessment.

The candidate proposes an activity in which high school English students create and present a television talk show that features the characters from a novel they have just studied. The candidate provides a detailed description of this multipart activity, including a clear sequence of student learning experiences. The activity described by the candidate is appropriate to the grade level and subject area indicated; blends individual, small-group, and whole-group settings; features both collaborative and independent assignments; makes effective use of instructional technology; and requires students to utilize multiple forms of communication. The description of this series of activities effectively demonstrates knowledge of instructional planning, the use of communication to enhance learning, and the relationship between assessment and learning.

Thus, the response provides evidence that the candidate understands the knowledge and skills defined in Subarea II of the OPTE framework, "Instruction and Assessment."

Practice Teacher Assignment Performance Assignment

In the following Teacher Assignment Module, you will be asked to use your knowledge about Subarea III of the OPTE test framework, "The Professional Environment."

Respond to the following Teacher Assignment Module assignment:

A month before your school's winter vacation begins, a student's mother notifies you that she will be taking her daughter Susan out of school two weeks early for an extended trip out of state. The mother requests that when Susan returns, you go over with her whatever she missed. Your district has a vague policy that discourages, but does not prohibit, parents or guardians from withdrawing children from school for limited periods of time. There are no penalties imposed for school missed for such reasons.

In a written response for an audience of teachers, use your knowledge of *the professional environment* to:

- **identify and discuss important issues involved in this situation;**
- **describe a plan of action that you would use to address this situation; and**
- **explain why you think the plan of action you recommend is likely to be effective.**



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*Professional knowledge as described in Subarea III, "The Professional Environment," includes:*

how to evaluate the effects of your choices and actions on others in the learning community, how to modify those actions when necessary, and how to actively seek opportunities for professional growth

how to use the state teacher evaluation process and criteria to promote professional growth

how to foster positive interaction with school colleagues, parents/families, and community organizations to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being

how to respond to situations involving the legal aspects of teaching, including the rights of students and parents/families, as well as the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher

A Very Good Response to the Practice Teacher Assignment Performance Assignment

Extended absences from middle school can disrupt a student's work and there are several things to consider in responding to this situation. I would have to take into account the fact that the school has no clear policy about extended vacations. I would also have to deal with Susan's mother who believes it is the teacher's responsibility to help her child make up for any time absent from school. Most important, I would need to think about the message I wanted to send to Susan about getting her work done.

First, I would reassure Susan's mother that I want to help Susan keep up with her coursework. But I would also explain that it would not be fair to the other students for me to devote a great deal of my time helping one student catch up from an extended vacation. I would suggest that the two of us work out a plan in which both of us take responsibility for helping Susan keep up with her studies.

Second, I would meet with Susan both before her vacation and after her return. At the first meeting, Susan and I would decide what work she would do on her vacation and what work she would do after her return. At the end of that meeting I would ask Susan to get together with her mother to plan how she would complete the work she would be taking with her on her vacation. At the second meeting, I would review Susan's plan and make any suggestions that I thought would be helpful. Once Susan returned, we would meet again to go over the work she had completed on her vacation, and to review what Susan needed to do to catch up with her classmates.

Third, I would bring up the subject of extended vacations at our next faculty meeting and ask other teachers to share their experiences with such situations. I would also recommend that the school develop a policy regarding teacher/student/parent responsibilities in these situations, and that this policy be communicated to all parents at the beginning of each school year.

I feel that these three steps would effectively address this situation by helping Susan develop a plan to keep up with her studies, by making sure that both Susan and her mother understood their roles and responsibilities, and by establishing a clear policy that would guide parents, students, and teachers in the future.

Evaluation

This assignment requires the candidate to apply knowledge about Subarea III of the OPTE framework, "The Professional Environment," to address the roles and responsibilities of the teacher in a situation in which a student is taking an extended vacation from school.

The purpose of this assignment is fully achieved. Each part of the assignment is addressed thoroughly and demonstrates effective application of relevant aspects of professional practice related to the teaching environment.

The response includes consideration of important professional issues involved in this situation, a detailed plan of action, and an explanation of why that plan of action would be effective. The candidate identifies the student need presented by the extended vacation and recognizes that the parent's assumptions must be addressed, while also considering the broader implications of the school's lack of a policy regarding extended absences. The plan of action recommended by the candidate reflects an awareness of the need to consider his/her choices and the actions of others, the importance of fostering positive interactions with parents/guardians/families, and the need to work in collaboration with colleagues. Each component of the plan—focusing on the student's academic needs, addressing the parent's assumptions and responsibilities, and initiating a discussion about the need for a more coherent school policy—is clearly described and effectively developed through relevant details. Finally, the candidate explains how the three-part plan of action would effectively address the multiple issues that the situation presents.

Thus, the response provides evidence that the candidate understands the knowledge and skills defined in Subarea III of the OPTE framework, "The Professional Environment."

PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT SCORING

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

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

OPTE Performance Characteristics

Scorers judge the overall effectiveness of each OPTE performance assignment response while focusing on a set of performance characteristics that have been defined as important aspects of the performance assignments.

The performance characteristics for the OPTE performance assignments are listed below.

Purpose	The extent to which the candidate fulfills the purpose of the specific constructed-response module by responding to all elements of the specific performance assignment in an appropriate manner.
Appropriate Application of Professional Knowledge	The extent to which the candidate provides an appropriate application of current professional knowledge and practices, as defined in the subarea of the OPTE test framework relevant to the specific performance assignment.
Accurate and Effective Application of Professional Knowledge	The extent to which the candidate presents an accurate and effective application of current professional knowledge and practices that is focused in the appropriate subarea of the OPTE test framework and addresses the educational issue, learning goal, or professional situation presented in the specific performance assignment.
Elaboration of Professional Knowledge	The extent to which the candidate offers elaboration upon statements, assertions, positions, professional opinions, etc. through the use of supporting details, examples, and descriptions relevant to the specific performance assignment and appropriate subarea of the OPTE test framework.

OPTE Scoring Scale

SCORE	SCORE POINT DESCRIPTION
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, as described in the subarea of the OPTE test framework relevant to the constructed-response module.</p> <p>The response completely fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding fully to the given task. The response provides a highly appropriate application of professional knowledge that is relevant to the subarea of the OPTE test framework being assessed. The response demonstrates an accurate understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, and is very effective in meeting the aims or goals stated in the performance assignment. Information presented within the response is well elaborated through the use of high-quality examples and strong supporting evidence.</p>
3	<p>The "3" response reflects a general understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, as described in the subarea of the OPTE test framework relevant to the constructed-response module.</p> <p>The response fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding generally to the given task. The response provides an appropriate application of professional knowledge that is relevant to the subarea of the OPTE test framework being assessed. The response demonstrates a generally accurate understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, and is effective in meeting the aims or goals stated in the performance assignment. Information presented within the response is elaborated through the use of some effective examples and supporting evidence.</p>
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, as described in the subarea of the OPTE test framework relevant to the constructed-response module.</p> <p>The response partially fulfills the purpose of the assignment by attempting to respond to the given task. The response provides a partially appropriate application of professional knowledge, with some relevance to the subarea of the OPTE test framework being assessed. The response may contain some significant inaccuracies in its understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, and is not generally effective in meeting the aims or goals stated in the performance assignment. Information presented within the response is not well elaborated, containing few effective examples and minimal supporting evidence.</p>
1	<p>The "1" response reflects little or no understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, as described in the subarea of the OPTE test framework relevant to the constructed-response module.</p> <p>The response does not fulfill the purpose of the assignment. The response provides an inappropriate and/or irrelevant application of professional knowledge in terms of the subarea of the OPTE test framework being assessed. The response demonstrates a largely inaccurate understanding of current professional knowledge and practices, and is ineffective in meeting the aims or goals stated in the performance assignment. The response contains very little effective elaboration, with few, if any, effective examples and little, if any, supporting evidence.</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>

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