Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

FACULTY GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to working with and supporting faculty and staff of Massachusetts educator preparation programs to help prospective educators receive the necessary preparation to meet the testing requirements and to enter the field of education. The Faculty Guide is one resource to help you better understand the MTEL testing program and assist licensure candidates who are preparing to take the test(s). Additional resources for faculty and candidates are available on the MTEL program web site and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education MTEL web page at **www.doe.mass.edu**.

Contacts and Additional Resources

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of Educator Licensure

Web: www.doe.mass.edu/licensure

- ▶ *Licensure Help*
- ▶ *Educator Licensure and Recruitment (ELAR) online tool*

Ph: (781) 338-6600

TTY: (800) 439-2370

Mail: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Educator Licensure
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-5023

Office of Educator Policy, Preparation and Leadership, MTEL

Web: www.doe.mass.edu/mtel

- ▶ *MTEL notices and updates*
- ▶ *Required tests*
- ▶ *Summary of test results by test date*
- ▶ *Test preparation course list*
- ▶ *FAQs*

Ph: (781) 338-6668

Mail: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Educator Policy, Preparation and Leadership, MTEL
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-5023

MTEL Program, Evaluation Systems, Pearson

Web:	www.mtel.nesinc.com

- ▶ *MTEL notices and updates*
- ▶ *Registration bulletin and online registration*
- ▶ *Test Information Booklets*
- ▶ *Practice tests*
- ▶ *Alternative testing arrangements information*
- ▶ *FAQs*

Ph: (413) 256-2892
(866) 565-4894 (toll free)

Fax: (413) 256-7077

TTY: (413) 256-8032

Mail: Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure
Evaluation Systems
Pearson
P.O. Box 660
Amherst, MA 01004-9013

Other Helpful Resources

▶   Licensure regulations: **www.doe.mass.edu/educators/resources.html**

▶   Curriculum frameworks: **www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks**

UNDERSTANDING TEST CONTENT

Overview of the MTEL Program

The Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®) program was initiated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) in 1998 as part of a comprehensive, standards-based system for improving teaching and learning. The MTEL tests are a specific requirement of Massachusetts law based on the Education Reform Act of 1993, which mandated a two-part testing program as one component of the state's teacher licensure requirements to ensure that licensed PreK–12 educators have the necessary subject matter knowledge and communication and literacy skills to practice in Massachusetts public schools.

The MTEL program includes a Communication and Literacy Skills test and PreK–12 subject matter tests, as well as tests for vocational technical and adult basic education licenses. Where applicable, the tests are aligned with Massachusetts educator licensure regulations (603 CMR 7.00 Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval; 603 CMR 4.00 Vocational Education; and 603 CMR 47.00 Licensure of Adult Basic Education Teachers and Preparation Program Approval). The MTEL tests also reflect, where applicable, the student learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

The MTEL tests are criterion referenced and objective based. As such, they are designed to measure a candidate's subject matter knowledge in relation to an established standard rather than in relation to the performance of other candidates.

Other prerequisites for obtaining an initial educator license, such as delivering effective instruction and managing classroom climate, are assessed by educator preparation programs.

Test Development Process

The MTEL test development process involves numerous steps to ensure that the tests meet the following goals:

▶ They are aligned with the Massachusetts licensure regulations and, where applicable, the student learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

▶ They are judged by Massachusetts educators to be relevant and important for assessing the knowledge and skills required of entry-level educators by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

▶ The tests are accurate and reliable—the data they yield have sufficient consistency to assure the Massachusetts public that licensure decisions are being made on reasonable grounds.

▶ The tests are valid—the information they yield provides an accurate measure of content knowledge and skills that have been validated throughout the development of the program.

▶ They have been prepared to be fair to all examinees; a fairness review of test objectives and items was conducted by Massachusetts educators and higher education faculty serving on a Bias Review Committee.

Over the course of the development process, the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson (Evaluation Systems) consults the Massachusetts Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval and the student learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, collaborates with Massachusetts educators, validates each MTEL test objective and test item in multiple ways, and convenes educators to recommend a qualifying score for each test to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition, to ensure compliance with technical and professional standards, the Department and Evaluation Systems consult with the testing program's Technical Advisory Committee, a committee of assessment experts.

Following initial development, MTEL tests are updated periodically so that the test content reflects current Massachusetts educator licensure laws and regulations. The standards and steps noted here also apply to the redevelopment process.

Massachusetts Educator Involvement

A broadly inclusive group of Massachusetts public school educators and higher education faculty are involved in the development and validation of the tests. For each test field, a Content Advisory Committee—made up of public school educators and higher education faculty from throughout the state and with a variety of backgrounds—is convened and participates in test development activities. The MTEL Bias Review Committee—whose members include Massachusetts educators with experience in, and sensitivity to, issues of bias and diversity—plays a critical role in the development process by reviewing the test objectives and test items. Additional Massachusetts educators participate in the test development process as participants in the content validation survey and as members of Qualifying Score Panels.

The roles of Massachusetts educators, and additional key components of the test development process, are summarized as follows:

Step	Description
Establishing Committees	The Department identifies public school educators and higher education faculty to participate on the Bias Review Committee and the Content Advisory Committees. Recommendations for committee membership are solicited from colleges and universities with educator preparation programs, professional associations, Department staff, and other committee members. Bias Review Committee membership is limited to Massachusetts educators with interest and experience in, and sensitivity to, issues of bias and fairness. Content Advisory Committee membership is limited to public school personnel holding the appropriate license and employment/assignment and higher education faculty involved in the preparation of educators for the field. The credentials (i.e., licenses held and teaching assignment) of all nominated individuals are verified. Committees are made up of individuals who represent the diversity of Massachusetts in aspects such as teaching area, teaching level, years of experience, geographic location, ethnicity, and gender.

Step	Description
Developing and Reviewing Test Objectives	Using Massachusetts licensure regulations and other Massachusetts-approved resources, Evaluation Systems develops draft test objectives that define test content. The draft test objectives are then reviewed and revised by the Bias Review Committee and the Content Advisory Committee, and the Department reviews and approves the draft test objectives.
Conducting the Content Validation Survey	The committee-approved test objectives are prepared for additional validation through a content validation survey. A sample group of Massachusetts public school educators, arts and sciences faculty, and educator preparation faculty are asked to rate the importance of each objective in each test field as it relates to performing the job of an educator in Massachusetts. Evaluation Systems then analyzes the survey data and reviews the results with the Department to determine the final set of test objectives to be used for testing.
Distributing Final Test Objectives	The final test objectives are published on the MTEL web site and distributed to Massachusetts colleges and universities and other organizations with educator preparation programs. As a result of the development process, the final objectives are aligned with the Massachusetts Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval and the student learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks as well as other pertinent state and national documents and are verified as important by Massachusetts educators.
Developing Test Items	Test items matching the final test objectives for each field are drafted. Each draft test item is developed to correspond to an approved test objective. This correspondence—aligning each item with specific test objectives—establishes the alignment of the test items with the Massachusetts licensure regulations.
Bias and Content Review of Test Items	The Bias Review Committee reviews the draft test items for issues of bias and fairness, recommending changes and deletions as needed. The Content Advisory Committees then meet to review and revise the draft test items primarily from a content perspective. The committee reviews help confirm that items match the objectives, are aligned with the Massachusetts licensure regulations and student learning standards, are accurate, and are job related for Massachusetts educators.
Pilot Testing	Test items are pilot tested in a variety of ways: by MTEL test-takers on operational forms of tests as non-scorable items, which do not affect the test score; as a supplemental activity at test administrations; and at Massachusetts colleges and universities at open pilot-test sessions and as part of intact class sessions. The pilot test data indicate how the items perform with Massachusetts licensure candidates. Items that do not perform acceptably on the pilot tests are identified for deletion, pending Department approval.

Step	Description
Developing Test Preparation Materials	A Test Information Booklet (TIB) is prepared for each field. Each TIB contains the test objectives, sample multiple-choice and open-response items, and suggestions for preparing for the test. Downloadable practice tests are also developed for many of the MTEL fields. Practice tests include full-length sample tests (with the same number of test questions as the operational tests) and performance evaluation information. All test preparation materials are posted on the MTEL web site.
Administering the MTEL Tests	New or updated tests are administered as part of regularly scheduled MTEL test administrations according to standardized testing procedures. Refer to the MTEL web site for detailed information about test administrations.
Determining Qualifying Scores	Following the first administration of new or updated tests, Qualifying Score Review panels are convened. The panels, made up of Massachusetts public school educators and higher education faculty—some of whom had served on the Content Advisory Committees or Bias Review Committee—participate in a structured item rating process that is used to recommend a qualifying score for each test. Following the qualifying score meetings, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education reviews the panel recommendations and sets the final qualifying score for each test.

Bias Prevention

The prevention of bias in the MTEL is essential to the fairness and validity of the program. Guarding against bias involves the collaboration of many educators and reviewers and is focused on two aspects of potential bias: excluding language, content, and perspectives that might disadvantage candidates, and including language, content, and perspectives that reflect the diversity of the Massachusetts population. The Bias Review Committee, established for the purpose of addressing bias issues, has a key role during the test development process. Additionally, educators from diverse backgrounds are involved throughout the development of test materials, and all individuals involved are asked to be attentive to issues of bias and fairness in their reviews.

Test Validation

Validation of the MTEL tests is designed to establish that the tests meet the purposes for which they were designed. With advice from the MTEL Technical Advisory Committee, the test development process involves industry-accepted procedures for the validation of licensure tests. This validation is based on test content, because tests of this type measure subject-matter knowledge required for licensure. The content of the tests, as specified in the test objectives and test items themselves, is the focus of MTEL validation.

The test development process is structured to gather validity evidence consistently and at multiple points. This process includes the following steps:

▶ analysis of Massachusetts documents and resources in developing the test objectives, including the Massachusetts educator licensure regulations and the student learning standards in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks

▶ review of test objectives by the Department

▶ review of test objectives by Massachusetts educators on the Bias Review Committee and the Content Advisory Committee for each test field

▶ validation of test objectives by Massachusetts educators through the content validation survey

▶ review of test items by Massachusetts educators on the Bias Review Committee and the Content Advisory Committees for each test field

▶ review and analysis of pilot test data

Test Administration and Scoring

The tests in the MTEL program are administered under standardized, consistent procedures at sites across Massachusetts. Test administrations are designed to provide a professional, equitable, and secure testing environment for candidates, including those who need alternative testing arrangements. Testing sites are screened and selected based on criteria related to test security, accessibility, and the quality of testing conditions and facilities.

All of the tests are available as paper-based tests, where candidates are issued paper test booklets and printed answer documents. Candidates record their answers to the multiple-choice and written open-response items onto their answer documents. Responses to speaking assignments are recorded.

Select tests in the program are also offered on computer, where candidates report to computer-based test centers and complete the tests by selecting answers on-screen to multiple-choice items and typing responses to open-response items.

For both testing formats, test administrators receive training in the test administration procedures and follow detailed procedural manuals before and during the test administration.

The MTEL tests are scored promptly following each test administration. Scoring procedures were designed with the input of the Department and Massachusetts educators to match the characteristics of each test field and response type.

The scoring of multiple-choice items includes quality assurance procedures in place to verify accuracy. For open-response items, qualified scorers are selected, trained for the scoring process, and monitored for accuracy and consistency. While scorers' qualifications may vary depending on the types of items they will score, in general, scorers have qualifications such as a Massachusetts educator license and employment in Massachusetts public schools in the subject area for which they are scoring, and/or are higher education faculty who prepare students in the subject area for which they are scoring. Each open-response item is scored independently by two or more scorers.

Because MTEL tests comprise both multiple-choice test items and open-response items, the total test score requires combining multiple-choice section and open-response section scores according to rules approved by the Department. Test results are reported to individual candidates, their sponsoring institutions or organizations, and the Department (the score reporting process is described later in this Guide).

Overview of the Tests

Purpose of the Tests

The purpose of the MTEL tests is to help identify those candidates who have the appropriate level of subject matter knowledge and communication and literacy skills judged to be important for entry-level educators in Massachusetts public schools. A single passing standard is set for each licensing test against which each candidate's performance is compared to determine whether the candidate passes the test. The tests are intended to determine whether a candidate has met an established criterion and are not intended to be a measure, or a predictor, of job or college performance or teaching effectiveness.
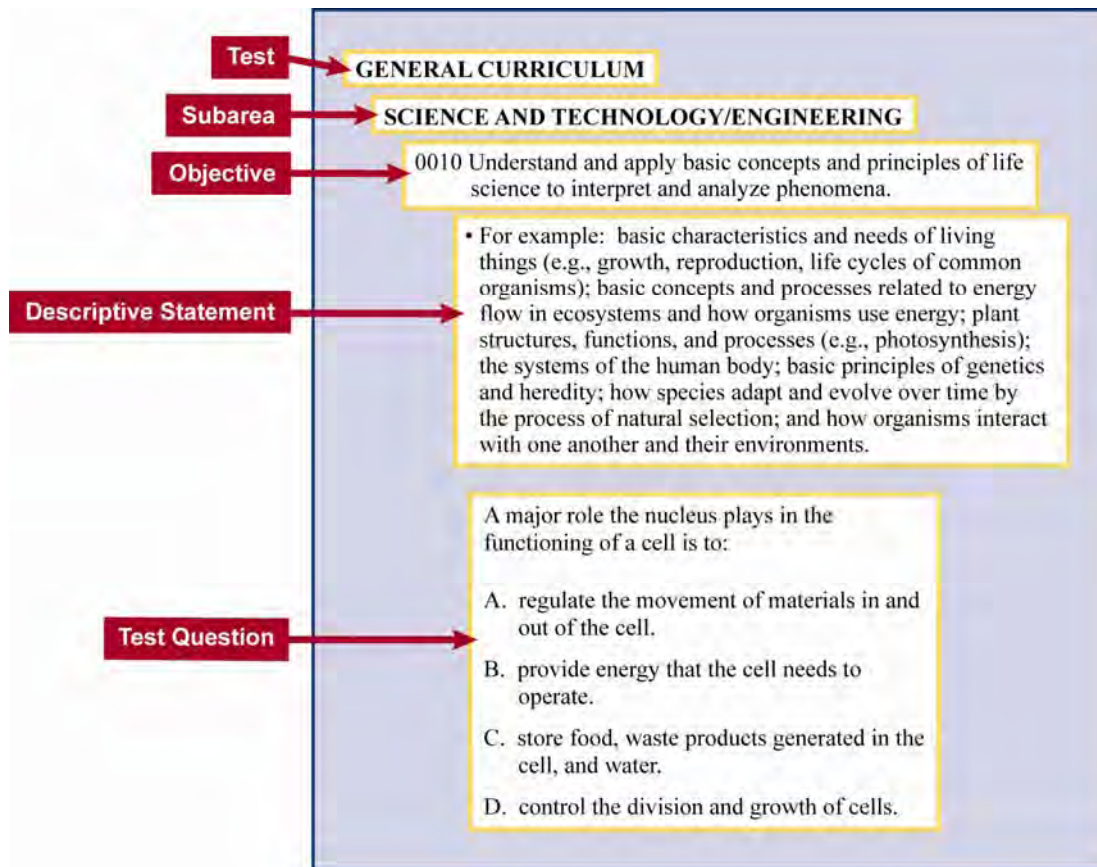
Each MTEL test, like other licensure tests, samples a broad base of content applicable in a wide range of educational settings, grade levels, and teaching assignments covered by the license. They are not designed as diagnostic tests, which would include substantially more questions necessary for making diagnostic decisions about individual candidates.

Organization of Test Content

The content eligible to be assessed on each test is defined by the set of test objectives for that test field. In general, the test content is organized as follows:

▶ Each test field is organized into three to nine subareas. These subareas define the major content domains of the test.

▶ Each subarea includes two or more test objectives. The test objectives are broad, conceptual statements, written in language that reflects the skills, knowledge, and understanding that an entry-level educator needs in order to teach effectively in Massachusetts public schools.

▶ Each test objective is clarified and further detailed by a descriptive statement, providing examples of the types of content covered by the test objective.

▶ Each multiple-choice item is written to measure the content of its associated test objective.

▶ Each open-response item is written to measure understanding of one or more test objectives. Information regarding which objective(s) or test subarea(s) are assessed by open-response items may be found in the Test Information Booklet for the particular test field.

▶ The number of test objectives within a given subarea generally determines the proportion of multiple-choice items that will address that subarea on a test. In other words, subareas with a greater number of test objectives will generally receive more emphasis (i.e., have a greater number of corresponding multiple-choice items) on the test than those with fewer test objectives.

The following chart shows the relationship among subareas, test objectives, descriptive statements, and test items in a typical test field.

Test → **GENERAL CURRICULUM**

Subarea → **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING**

Objective → 0010 Understand and apply basic concepts and principles of life science to interpret and analyze phenomena.

Descriptive Statement → • For example: basic characteristics and needs of living things (e.g., growth, reproduction, life cycles of common organisms); basic concepts and processes related to energy flow in ecosystems and how organisms use energy; plant structures, functions, and processes (e.g., photosynthesis); the systems of the human body; basic principles of genetics and heredity; how species adapt and evolve over time by the process of natural selection; and how organisms interact with one another and their environments.

Test Question → A major role the nucleus plays in the functioning of a cell is to:

A. regulate the movement of materials in and out of the cell.

B. provide energy that the cell needs to operate.

C. store food, waste products generated in the cell, and water.

D. control the division and growth of cells.

Types of Test Items

Each MTEL test contains a combination of multiple-choice and open-response items, and the Communication and Literacy Skills test also includes short-answer items. Refer to the field-specific information in the Test Information Booklets (available on the MTEL web site) for the number and types of items on a particular test.

MTEL multiple-choice and open-response items are written to assess a range of knowledge and skills. Test items may assess fundamental knowledge (e.g., principles, terminology), the application or analysis of knowledge (e.g., solving problems, drawing conclusions, making inferences), and/or the synthesis or evaluation of knowledge (e.g., generalizing from given information, integrating concepts from different areas, comparing and discriminating between ideas).

Multiple-choice items. For each multiple-choice item, a problem or situation is presented as a direct question or incomplete statement. This is followed by a set of four response options (A, B, C, D).

Some multiple-choice items are preceded by stimulus material that relates to the item. Among the types of stimulus material included on the MTEL are tables, maps, diagrams, descriptions of scientific problems or procedures, reproductions of works of art, and audio recordings presented on CD.

Excerpts from textbooks, newspaper or magazine articles, and literary works may also be used as stimulus materials.

Multiple-choice items on the MTEL are designed to be sophisticated, yet appropriate for assessing the knowledge and skills of entry-level educators. Item content is reasonable for the acceptably qualified educator candidate to recognize and interpret.   Items are designed to elicit various levels of critical thinking, calculation, and reasoning, without relying unnecessarily on situations or concepts that may be unfamiliar to most candidates.

Short-answer items. The Communication and Literacy Skills test includes short-answer items that are designed to require the recognition of common errors in sentence construction, grammar, and usage. Candidates are presented with sentences containing errors and are asked to provide responses in the form of revised sentences, written to correct the errors included in the item.

Open-response items. For each open-response item, a prompt is given that typically presents a problem or situation and asks the candidate to formulate a response. Answers to the open-response items may be written or spoken (e.g., for a foreign language test). The scoring rubrics for the open-response items, including the performance characteristics on which responses are scored and the scoring scales, are available in Appendix B. Sample open-response items, sample responses at each score point, and an analysis of each sample response for the Communication and Literacy Skills test and for the General Curriculum test are available in Appendix C.

Using Testing Information for Program Planning

Because the MTEL tests assess candidates on knowledge and skills required for licensure, testing information may be used to support curriculum and program planning efforts undertaken at the college or departmental level. The test objectives and score reporting data may be particularly helpful for evaluating curricula in relation to the content and licensure requirements that are assessed on the tests.

As previously discussed, the test objectives define the content that is assessed on the licensure tests. A review of the test objectives in relation to your institution's course offerings can yield information that may be helpful in ensuring your program is addressing the necessary content and skills. For example, the completion of the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart (described in Section 2 of this Guide) will result in a listing of the specific courses that cover particular content knowledge and skills assessed on the test.

Score-reporting data, made available to educator preparation programs after each test administration, can also be very helpful for program planning. The data include the test results for all candidates who requested their scores be sent to your institution. The data also include statewide total test and subarea scores. Consequently, you can determine how well candidates from your institution performed on the tests as a whole and in relation to candidates statewide.

Careful review of the MTEL reporting data, in conjunction with a review of your institution's own assessment data and the completed Objective-to-Course Matching Chart, should provide assistance to you in identifying program enhancements your college or department may wish to make.

HELPING CANDIDATES PREPARE FOR AN MTEL TEST

Test Preparation Resources

The MTEL web site and this Guide offer a number of resources that provide information about the content and administration of the MTEL. You may wish to become familiar with these resources in order to help candidates derive their maximum benefit. Materials designed for candidate use are described below.

▶ **Test Objectives**

What they are: The test objectives define the content that is assessed by the test. As described in Section 1 of this Guide, the test objectives are grouped into content subareas and include detailed descriptive statements.

Where to find them: The MTEL test objectives are available as stand-alone PDF files on the MTEL web site and are also provided in the Test Information Booklet for each test.

How to use them: A careful reading of the test objectives—noting subarea structures and depth and breadth of content coverage —will provide a good understanding of the content covered on a particular test. Because the test objectives and their associated descriptive statements offer examples of the types of content that are likely to be covered on the test, the objectives can help candidates identify specific areas in which they may need to strengthen their knowledge. As an additional step, you may wish to use the test objectives to complete an Objective-to-Course Matching Chart for candidates to determine whether they have completed coursework related to each of the test objectives (see "Assessing a Candidate's Readiness to Test" below).

▶ **Test Information Booklets**

What they are: The Test Information Booklets provide general information about the MTEL program, test preparation information, a description of the structure and format of the tests, test objectives, sample multiple-choice items and open-response items and responses, and a summary of the performance characteristics and scoring criteria for the open-response items.

Where to find them: Test Information Booklets may be downloaded free of charge from the MTEL web site.

How to use them: The candidate's test preparation should begin with a review of the relevant Test Information Booklet. Some candidates might benefit from your reviewing the booklet with them, discussing the organization of the booklet, and answering general questions that they may have about the test. This review might also provide you with a better understanding of the candidate's familiarity with the test structure and his or her preparation level.

▶ **Practice Tests**

▶ *What they are:* The MTEL practice tests (available for many of the fields) are full-length sample tests that include multiple-choice and open-response items as well as information about how to evaluate multiple-choice item performance and open-response item sample responses.

Where to find them: Practice tests may be downloaded free of charge from the MTEL web site.

How to use them: Practice tests may be used as one indicator of potential strengths and weaknesses in a candidate's knowledge of the content on the official test. Candidates may find them especially helpful because they are designed to simulate the MTEL tests in length and content and also offer worksheets for calculating a total score and identifying objectives and subareas for further study.

▶ **"Developing a Study Plan" Handout**

What it is: The "Developing a Study Plan" handout provides a quick overview of activities that may help a candidate prepare to take one of the tests. It covers much of the information provided in this Guide and the Test Information Booklets.

Where to find it: This handout is available as a stand-alone piece in Appendix A.

How to use it: Candidates may find the suggestions helpful in implementing their own preparation strategies. Faculty members should feel free to make copies of this handout to distribute to candidates.

▶ **Study Outline Chart**

What it is: The Study Outline Chart provides a framework for candidates to organize their thoughts and future studies for a test.

Where to find it: A blank Study Outline Chart, along with instructions for filling out the chart and a sample completed chart, is available as a stand-alone document to print or complete electronically in Appendix A. A blank chart and instructions for completing it are also provided in the Test Information Booklets.

How to use it: A completed Study Outline Chart identifies the content assessed by the test and the extent of the candidate's knowledge and preparation for the different content areas, as well as areas where further study may be needed and possible study resources.

▶ **"Test-Taking Strategies" Handout**

What it is: The "Test-Taking Strategies" handout provides a set of simple strategies for taking a test and may be especially helpful for candidates who have not recently been in a formal testing session.

Where to find it: This handout is available as a stand-alone piece in Appendix A.

How to use it: Candidates may find the test-taking advice offered in this handout to be helpful as they prepare for the MTEL. Faculty members should feel free to make copies of this handout to distribute to candidates.

Assessing a Candidate's Readiness to Test

This Guide includes resources designed specifically as tools for faculty members to use in helping candidates prepare to take the MTEL. One type of support you may be asked to provide is assessing a candidate's readiness to test. Materials designed for this purpose include the following:

▶ **Candidate Profile Worksheet**

What it is: The Candidate Profile Worksheet is an organized way to gather and consider information about a candidate's preparation needs. The worksheet includes sections for the candidate to provide general background information, information about prior experience (if any) with each test for which he or she is preparing, and the preparation steps already taken. It also includes a section for you to fill out after you meet with the candidate to indicate specific recommendations for additional coursework, materials, and/or activities that may help the candidate prepare for the test.

Where to find it: The Candidate Profile Worksheet is available as a stand-alone document to print or complete electronically in Appendix A.

How to use it: Ask the candidate to complete the Candidate Profile Worksheet. Then meet with the candidate to plan the candidate's test preparation approach, using the completed worksheet. The meeting may also help you learn of any confusion or misinformation the candidate might have about the role the tests play in the licensure process, the content and structure of the tests, expectations for performance on the test, or available program and institutional resources.

You may wish to review the completed worksheet before meeting with the candidate, and use the information to structure the meeting. Try to learn more about the candidate—how well prepared he or she is in the knowledge and skills measured by the test and the extent of his or her familiarity with the testing program. You may also wish to review the candidate's transcript.

▶ **Objective-to-Course Matching Chart**

What it is: The Objective-to-Course Matching Chart provides a framework for matching course content to the objectives of a specific test.

Where to find it: The Objective-to-Course Matching Chart, along with instructions for filling out the chart and a sample completed chart, is available as a stand-alone document to print or complete electronically in Appendix A.

How to use it: A completed Objective-to-Course Matching Chart compares the content assessed by the test with your institution's course offerings. Use the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart to determine whether a candidate has completed coursework covering content related to the test objectives, help identify specific areas in which the candidate may need to strengthen his or her knowledge, and help direct the candidate to appropriate coursework, course notes, or textbooks.

▶ **Additional Sample Open-Response Items and Responses**

▶ *What they are:* This Guide contains additional sample open-response preparation materials for the Communication and Literacy Skills writing subtest and the General Curriculum subtests, similar to those provided in the practice tests. It includes sample responses at the various score points, as well as explanations of the assigned scores.

Where to find them: The additional sample open-response materials are provided in Appendix C.

How to use them: For candidates who are taking the Communication and Literacy Skills writing subtest or either of the General Curriculum subtests, you may find the sample responses at each score point helpful in assessing a candidate's written response to the sample open-response items. A thorough review of the scoring criteria and the sample responses and analyses provided for these fields may also allow you to better assess responses written by candidates in preparation for tests in other fields.

Alternative Testing Arrangements/Candidates with Special Needs

Candidates with disabilities (e.g., a learning or physical disability) may have questions about the availability of alternative testing arrangements. Candidates with such inquiries should be directed to the MTEL web site. Alternative testing arrangements that are reasonable in the context of the MTEL licensing tests, do not fundamentally alter the nature of the test, and are supported by documentation may be provided, upon request, to candidates with a documented disability who would not be able to take the test under standard conditions.

Candidates who wish to request alternative testing arrangements need to follow the procedures in the MTEL registration bulletin and complete the request form that can be downloaded from the MTEL web site.

Developing a Plan for Candidates Who Are Retaking a Test

Candidates retaking a test should be strongly encouraged to study for it appropriately, even if they must delay retesting until a later date. If a candidate who has already taken an MTEL test without success and is preparing to retake the test comes to you for help, the following resources should inform the discussion about the candidate's areas of strength and weakness:

▶ the candidate's completed Candidate Profile Worksheet

▶ the candidate's score report(s) from previous attempt(s) to pass the test

▶ the candidate's completed Objective-to-Course Matching Chart

Using the Candidate Profile Worksheet

Refer to the information provided on this worksheet to get a general overview of the candidate's preparation and testing history. If there are preparation resources the candidate has not yet used, verify that the candidate knows how to find and use them. If the candidate is retaking the Communication and Literacy Skills writing subtest or the General Curriculum test, you may wish to

reference the sample open-response items and responses provided in the practice test as well as the additional sample responses and analyses provided in Appendix C to understand how the scoring scale is applied and to provide additional feedback about the candidate's written responses to the sample items.

Using the Candidate's Score Report

The candidate's score report provides information about the candidate's strengths and weaknesses relative to the knowledge or skills described by the test objectives. For the multiple-choice items, candidate performance information is provided for each subarea. Candidate performance information is also provided for the open-response items. A detailed explanation of score reports is provided in Section 3 of this Guide.

The following figure shows a sample score report for the Foundations of Reading test. The Foundations of Reading test contains multiple-choice items and open-response items, which are grouped into four subareas as shown. The range of possible scaled scores on this test is 100 to 300, with a scaled score of 240 or above representing passing status.
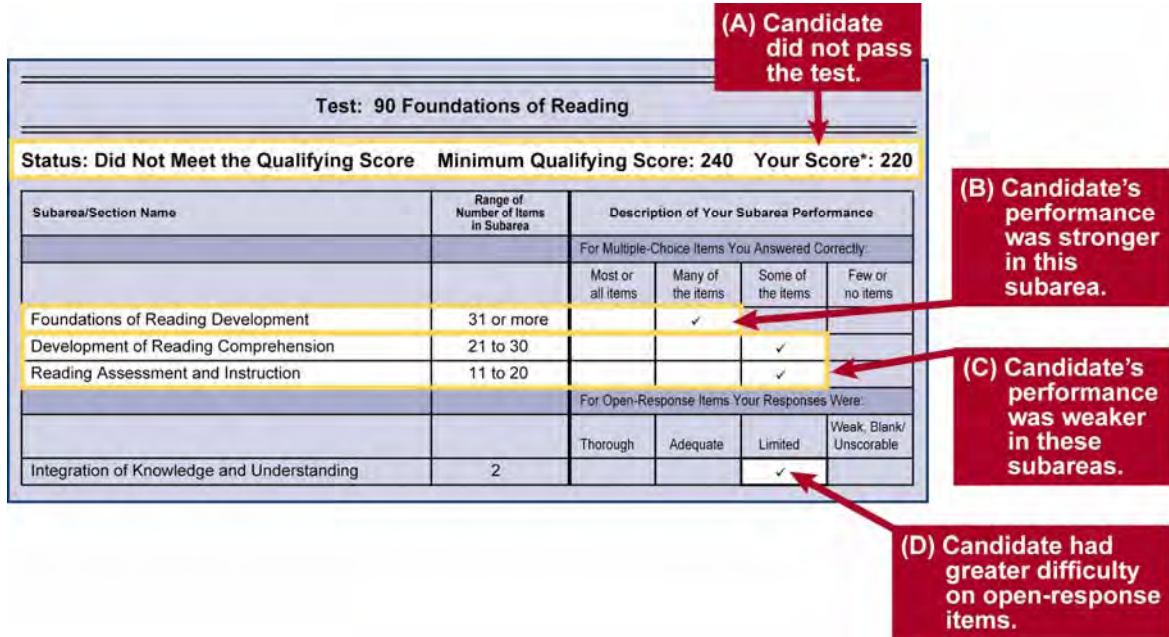
The sample score report shows that the candidate did not pass the test (A), earning a scaled total test score of 220. Performance on the Foundations of Reading Development subarea was relatively strong (B), however, weaker performance on other subareas contributed to a failing score. The candidate had greater difficulty on the Development of Reading Comprehension and the Reading Assessment and Instruction subareas (C), as well as Integration of Knowledge and Understanding, the open-response subarea (D). Using this information, you might advise the candidate to concentrate most heavily on these areas, since these are the areas in which the greatest improvement is needed.

It is also important to note that, while emphasizing these areas in which improvement is needed, the candidate should not neglect the subarea in which his or her performance was stronger, because improvement in any of the subareas will move the candidate closer to, or above, the passing score.

For example, simply paying greater attention or spending additional "thinking time" while responding to the test items in other subareas—or spending time reviewing all responses after completing the test—could produce a score improvement. It may be helpful to remind the candidate that the test session is designed to provide ample time to complete the test and review responses.

Using the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart

Once you have helped identify specific areas in which the candidate may need to strengthen his or her knowledge, the results of the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart should prove useful in directing the candidate to appropriate coursework, course notes, or textbooks. You can use the candidate's score report along with the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart; by using the score report to identify the candidate's problematic subareas, the completed Objective-to-Course Matching Chart can suggest coursework or other resources that pertain directly to the content of the objectives in those subareas. Instead of facing the task of preparing for the entire test, the candidate can now target preparation efforts to improve his or her knowledge of focused content that are likely to have an effect on test performance and the test score.

INTERPRETING CANDIDATE TEST RESULTS

Candidate Score Reporting

The MTEL uses scaled scores to summarize and report candidate performance. MTEL scores are reported on a scale from 100 to 300 with 240 being the scaled qualifying score needed to pass the test. Scaled scores are used for consistency in reporting total test scores for the multiple test fields in the MTEL program. Different MTEL tests may contain different numbers and types of test questions. A common scoring scale across test fields allows for total test scores to be reported in a consistent manner for all MTEL tests.

The scaled score for each test is obtained from the number of questions answered correctly and from the scores assigned to the candidate's written and/or oral responses. *Candidates are not penalized for guessing.* The MTEL score reports inform candidates of their passing status on the test; candidates who do not pass are also informed of their total test scaled score. Candidates who pass a test do not need to retake it, and there is no expiration date for the tests.

The qualifying score for each test was established based on recommendations from Qualifying Score Review Panels composed of Massachusetts public school educators and college and university faculty. The qualifying score was then set by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. The qualifying score for each test is converted to a scaled score of 240; this score reflects the appropriate level of knowledge and skills required for effective performance by an entry-level educator in Massachusetts public schools.

Candidate pass/fail status is based on the candidate's performance on the total test at a single test administration. Because test scores are based on the candidate's performance across the entire test, it is not possible to combine results on sections of a test across different test administrations.

Reading Candidate Score Reports

Subarea information. Subarea performance information may be valuable for helping the candidate to understand his or her test performance and to prepare, if necessary, to retake the test. Although candidates do not pass or fail individual subareas of an MTEL test, the subarea information may serve as an indicator of areas of relative strength and weakness. Candidates can use this information to guide their further study in preparation to retake a test.

Interpretive information. Faculty members and candidates reviewing subarea performance information should keep the following points in mind:

▶ In general, subareas with a greater number of test objectives receive more emphasis and are addressed by more multiple-choice test questions than are subareas with fewer test objectives.

▶ A candidate does not have to perform equally well in all subareas of the test in order to pass the test.

▶ The total test score does not represent an average of performance across subareas because the subareas may contain different numbers of multiple-choice test questions.

▶ Candidates do not pass or fail individual subareas of a test.

Furthermore, information regarding the candidate's performance on the open-response items is also provided on the score report. This information is based on the performance characteristics used for scoring and indicates whether the candidate's performance was weak, limited, adequate, or thorough.

In the sample passing score report shown below, you will see that the candidate

▶ met the qualifying score on the Foundations of Reading test;

▶ did better on the Foundations of Reading Development section of the test than on the Development of Reading Comprehension and Reading Assessment and Instruction sections; and

▶ had an adequate performance on the open-response items (Integration of Knowledge and Understanding section).

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Social Security Number: XXX - X5 - 6789
Test Date: September 16, 20XX
See reverse side for an explanation of how to read your score report.

101/003

SAMPLE EXAMINEE has met the qualifying score on the following test(s) as of September 16, 20XX:
01 Communication and Literacy Skills - Writing
01 Communication and Literacy Skills - Reading
03 General Curriculum
90 Foundations of Reading

SAMPLE EXAMINEE
1234 BEACON STREET
ANYTOWN MA 00000

Your scores have been reported to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Test: 90 Foundations of Reading

Status: Met the Qualifying Score　　　　**Minimum Qualifying Score: 240　　Your Score: ---**

Subarea/Section Name	Range of Number of Items in Subarea	Description of Your Subarea Performance			
		For Multiple-Choice Items You Answered Correctly:			
		Most or all items	Many of the items	Some of the items	Few or no items
Foundations of Reading Development	31 or more		✔		
Development of Reading Comprehension	21 to 30			✔	
Reading Assessment and Instruction	11 to 20			✔	
		For Open-Response Items Your Responses Were:			
		Thorough	Adequate	Limited	Weak, Blank/ Unscorable
Integration of Knowledge and Understanding	2		✔		

*Your Score: Scores for candidates who have met the qualifying score are not reported.

Cautions: Although examinees do not pass or fail individual test subareas/sections, the performance information above may be useful in understanding individual areas of strength and weakness. This information should be interpreted with caution since subareas/sections contain varying numbers of test items.

Each candidate score report also contains a section titled "How to Read Your Score Report" to help candidates interpret their test results accurately. A detailed Score Report Explanation is also available to candidates on the MTEL web site.

Score Reporting Timeline

On the score report date following each test administration (or testing window, for computer-based tests), score reports are made available online to candidates. If a candidate registers by mail or telephone, the candidate's score report is also mailed on this date. The score report dates, provided as part of the program's annual testing schedule, are available for candidates on the MTEL web site. If candidates take two or more tests on the same date, they will receive a score report for each test.

The score report, available online for 45 days, provides the candidate's test results for each test that the candidate took on the test administration date or, for computer-based testing, during the testing window. Candidates may also request when they register to receive their score reports by e-mail.

Score Reporting for Institutions and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Following each test administration, two institution reports—an Alphabetical Roster Report and an Institution Roster by Test Report—are made available via secure Internet access to an approved official at each Massachusetts educator preparation institution or other sponsoring organization. The reports are posted on the Internet by 5:00 p.m. eastern time on each official score report date.

Each report is made available in the following formats:

▶ **PDF files**—versions of the reports that can be viewed or printed.

▶ **ASCII files**—data files that can be downloaded and imported into software databases or applications that are unique to each institution. The ASCII file format allows institutions to format test scores to meet their individual needs.

These reports are designed expressly for use by institution faculty and administrators. They provide information about those candidates who, during the registration process, indicated that the institution or organization should receive their test results.

Alphabetical Roster Report

This report includes the names of all candidates (in alphabetical order) who tested on the date or period indicated. For each candidate, the report provides the social security number (last five digits only, if authorized by candidate), passing status for each test and subtest taken (P = Pass, NP = Did not pass), and scaled scores for the tests and subtests that were not passed.

Following is a sample Alphabetical Roster Report.

Institution Roster by Test Report

This report presents score information by test for candidates taking the test on a given test date. Candidates are listed alphabetically along with the last five digits of their social security number (if authorized by the candidate for release), the test date, their pass/fail status, and, for candidates who do not meet the qualifying score, a total test scaled score. The report also provides summary information for each test, listing the number of candidates tested and the number and percentage who did and did not meet the qualifying score. In addition, it includes data for candidates' statewide performance vs. institution performance. A more condensed format is used, but test-level data reported are similar to those appearing on the candidate score reports.

Following is a sample Institution Roster by Test Report.

Reviewing Test Results

In addition to using individual candidate information, institutions may find the total test and subarea performance information valuable for identifying courses or curriculum areas that may benefit from additional attention. Using the test information along with the test objective-course alignment information (see the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart in Appendix A) may provide you with a broader understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and the curriculum.

Interpretive Cautions

When reviewing the institution reports, please keep in mind the interpretive cautions that appear on each report. In general, the cautions include the following:

▶ Results based on smaller numbers of candidates are typically less stable than those based on larger numbers, and they may not provide a reliable indication of how candidates at an institution typically perform.

▶ The performance of candidates for a particular administration may not predict the performance of candidates who take the tests in the future.

▶ Although candidates do not "pass" or "fail" individual subareas or sections, the subarea performance information may be useful in understanding candidates' areas of strength and weakness. This information should be interpreted with caution since subareas and sections contain varying numbers of test items.

▶ Subarea performance information is based on fewer questions than the total test score and may be less reliable as an indication of performance.

▶ The individual candidate information contained in the institutional score reports is confidential and must not be disclosed to unauthorized persons or institutions. Appropriate safeguards must be implemented by all personnel to protect candidates from improper disclosure of information.

▶ Individual candidate results are to be used only for the purpose of Massachusetts educator licensure. They are not intended to be used for employment decisions, college admissions, admission to or completion of preparation programs, or any other purpose.

▶ Candidate test results included in the institution reports are complete as of the date and time the report is released. Additions or changes to this information may occur after this date. The Department maintains an updated file of official results for the purpose of licensure.

Institution reports may include additional cautions, as well as guidelines regarding the interpretation of the score scale for each test. Additionally, different cautions and interpretive guidelines may apply to different MTEL tests.

How Institutions Generate Custom Reports

In addition to the two reports described above, institutions also have the ability to generate custom reports for themselves. Authorized users of the score-reporting system have access to a program, *ResultsAnalyzer*™, that enables users to view, analyze, reorganize, download, and print reports based on test results data and on background information gathered during test registration. The system allows users to instantly access candidate, test, and program data, giving them the capability to

> ▶ create relevant and timely reports on candidate and institution test results;

> ▶ customize data queries to align with institution goals and areas of interest;

> ▶ aggregate performance data across testing program years;

> ▶ export data to Excel or other report software and print graphics; and

> ▶ analyze candidate and institution data for numerous variables (including self-reported data such as gender and education level).

Test Results Reported to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Department also receives score reports following each MTEL test administration. Included in the reports are the institution or sponsoring organization reports (Alphabetical Roster Report and Institution Roster by Test Report), a Pass Rate Report, and a data report including candidate score information, such as pass/fail status and subarea information. Individual candidate data are also uploaded to *ELAR*, the state's online licensure and recruitment system.

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APPENDIX A

WORKSHEETS AND HANDOUTS

Candidate Profile Worksheet

Objective-to-Course Matching Chart

Study Outline Chart

Developing a Study Plan

Test-Taking Strategies

CANDIDATE PROFILE WORKSHEET
INSTRUCTIONS

The Candidate Profile Worksheet is an organized way to gather and consider information about a candidate's preparation needs. The worksheet includes sections for the candidate to provide general background information, information about prior experience (if any) with each test for which he or she is preparing, and the preparation steps he or she has already taken. It also includes a section for an advisor to fill out after meeting with the candidate to indicate specific recommendations for additional coursework, materials, and/or activities that may help the candidate prepare for the test.

Directions for Candidates: You may print the worksheet and record your answers by hand, or you may download the worksheet as a Microsoft® Word document from the "Faculty Guide" page on the MTEL web site and type in your responses.

Complete sections A through D. Review sections E and F. Share the completed worksheet with an advisor for further guidance in preparing to take or retake a test.

Directions for Advisors: You should find the information on the completed worksheet useful in preparing to meet with the candidate to plan the candidate's test preparation approach. The meeting may also help you learn of any confusion or misinformation the candidate might have about the role the tests play in the licensure process, the content and structure of the tests, expectations for performance on the test, or available program and institutional resources.

Before the meeting, review the completed worksheet and use the information to structure the meeting. Try to learn more about the candidate—how well prepared he or she is in the knowledge and skills measured by the test and the extent of his or her familiarity with the testing program. You may also wish to review the candidate's transcript and/or the candidate's completed Objective-to-Course Matching Chart.

Based on the worksheet information, it may be clear that you should advise the candidate to obtain additional study materials. Record your recommendations for test preparation for the candidate in section F.

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CANDIDATE PROFILE WORKSHEET

Complete this worksheet to help you evaluate your level of preparation for the MTEL®. Indicate your responses in the spaces provided.

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Date:
Candidate name:
Advisor name:
Major field of study:
Minor field of study:
What is your current academic status? __ Freshman/first year __ Sophomore/second year __ Junior/third year __ Senior/fourth year __ Graduate student __ Part time/transcript evaluation __ Currently employed as an educator __ Not affiliated with educator preparation program

B. LICENSURE TESTING REQUIREMENTS

List the MTEL tests that you are required to pass for the educator license that you are seeking.

Test/Subtest Name	Test Code	Have you taken this test?	Passing Status
		__ Yes __ No	__ Passed __ Did not pass
		__ Yes __ No	__ Passed __ Did not pass
		__ Yes __ No	__ Passed __ Did not pass
		__ Yes __ No	__ Passed __ Did not pass

C. TESTING HISTORY

If you have already taken any of the tests listed in section B, attach copies of your score reports for the two most recent attempts.

D. TEST PREPARATION QUESTIONS

List the MTEL test that you are planning to take and when you are planning to take it. Complete one worksheet per test.

Test/Subtest Name	Test Date	Have you taken this test?
		__ Yes __ No

Provide the following information about your test preparation to date.

1.	Have you obtained and reviewed the test objectives for this test?	__ Yes	__ No
2.	Have you completed all or most of the coursework in which the content of this test is taught?	__ Yes	__ No
3.	Have you obtained the Test Information Booklet for this test?	__ Yes	__ No
4.	Have you reviewed the sample test questions in the Test Information Booklet?	__ Yes	__ No
5.	If there is a practice test available for your test, have you taken and scored the practice test?	__ Yes	__ No
6.	If you identified any objectives that represent areas of weakness for you, have you gathered and reviewed additional study materials for these objectives?	__ Yes	__ No
7.	Do you know the date and location of the next test administration?	__ Yes	__ No

E. PREPARING FOR THE TEST BY USING THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE PROVIDED

☑ Review your testing history (i.e., the score reports from your previous testing attempts). Based on your subarea performance, you or your advisor may be able to identify specific content areas on which you may want to focus extra attention when preparing for the test.

☑ Review your responses to the questions in section D. If you checked "no" in response to any question, you or your advisor may be able to identify additional activities to help you prepare to take this test. You may use section F below to list these additional test preparation activities.

F. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEST PREPARATION *(complete this section last)*

Based on your responses to the questions in section D and a review of your preparation to date, you or your advisor may use this section to list specific recommendations for additional test preparation activities.

Additional coursework recommended:
Additional study materials:
Other recommended preparation activities:

OBJECTIVE-TO-COURSE MATCHING CHART INSTRUCTIONS

The Objective-to-Course Matching Chart provides a framework for matching course content to the objectives of a specific test.

Because the test objectives and descriptive statements articulate the specific knowledge and skills assessed on each MTEL test, familiarity with the test objectives is central to identifying the content knowledge and skills on which licensure candidates are assessed. The objectives can be very helpful to faculty, both in advising candidates who are preparing to test and for academic purposes such as planning programs. A careful reading of the test objectives—noting subarea structures and depth and breadth of coverage of content, as detailed by the objectives and descriptive statements— will provide a good understanding of the content covered on a particular test.

You may print the chart and record data by hand, or you may download the chart as a Microsoft® Word document from the "Faculty Guide" page on the MTEL web site and type in your data.

For Use with Candidates: Use the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart to determine whether a candidate has completed coursework covering content related to the test objectives, help identify specific areas in which the candidate may need to strengthen his or her knowledge, and help direct the candidate to appropriate coursework, course notes, or textbooks.

For Program Planning Use: Using the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart and your knowledge of the test objectives, you can compare your institution's course offerings with the content assessed on the test, as described by the test objectives and descriptive statements. The completed chart will specifically match the content assessed by an MTEL licensure test and the particular course or courses on your campus in which that content is addressed. This information can then be used to

► advise candidates who are preparing to take the test for the first time, noting specific coursework they may wish to take before testing;

► direct candidates who are retaking a test, noting instructional materials and texts they may wish to review; and

► assess for academic program planning purposes, the extent to which institutional and departmental courses correspond with the licensure standards as defined by the test objectives (see "Using Testing Information for Program Planning" in Section 1 of this Faculty Guide).

Directions for Completing the Objective-to-Course Matching Chart

Step 1: Determine the number of test objectives. MTEL test fields have different numbers of test objectives. Use the test objectives provided for the specific field to determine the number of objectives covered by the test. Delete or cross off any unused objective numbers on the chart.

Step 2: Group the objectives into subareas. Using the test objectives, indicate on the chart the subareas to which the groups of objectives belong. You may do this by merging the cells in the "Subarea No." row above the objective numbers for each subarea or making dark lines between objective numbers that mark the beginning and end of a subarea. You can then add the subarea numbers (e.g., I, II, III, IV) in the appropriate sections of the "Subarea No." row.

Step 3: List the course names. Candidates using the chart should list the names of the courses they have taken that may cover content related to the test field in the first column of the chart. For institution program-planning use, list the courses in the institution's curriculum that candidates are typically advised or required to include in their programs of study leading to licensure. List courses within and beyond the department as appropriate. To make completion of the chart easier, list the courses in an order corresponding to the organizational pattern of the test objectives (i.e., first identifying and listing the courses that cover the content described by the objectives in the first subarea, then listing the courses that cover the content of the second subarea, and so on).

Step 4: Match the test objectives to the courses. Read each test objective and its associated descriptive statements carefully and review the descriptions of the course offerings.

▶   If a listed course or set of courses adequately covers the content of the objective, place a check mark or an X in the column corresponding to that objective number in the row of the chart on which the course name is listed.

▶   If no specific course or set of courses can be found that adequately covers the content of the objective, leave the column corresponding to the objective number blank and make a separate note about this finding.

Step 5 (optional): Identify additional resources for selected test objectives. Candidates and/or advisors may want to expand the chart to include Internet or other instructional resources beyond required coursework that link to particular objectives.

Sample Completed Objective-to-Course Matching Chart

An example of the first page of an Objective-to-Course Matching Chart as it might be completed by a faculty member is shown below. It illustrates the use of the chart with the English test (field 07). Note that the person completing the form has indicated, by eliminating the extra objective numbers (i.e., 16 to 40) for which the form provides columns, that there are 15 test objectives in this field. Note too that the 15 objectives have been grouped into the four subareas in the test objectives. Courses that cover content in the first subarea have been listed in the first column and matched to test objectives in subsequent columns. Finally, the person completing the form has cited at the bottom of the chart, in abbreviated form, additional candidate resources.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

OBJECTIVE-TO-COURSE MATCHING CHART

This chart may be used to review courses in relation to Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®).

Directions: Use a separate copy of this worksheet for each test field. Obtain a copy of the test objectives for the test field you are analyzing. Indicate which subareas contain which objectives by merging the cells in the "Subarea No." row above the objective numbers for each subarea or making dark lines between objective numbers that mark the beginning and end of a subarea. In the left-hand column, fill in the names of the courses and other resources that may cover content related to the test field. In the row for each course, place a check (✓) or X under each test objective that is covered by the course.

07 English — Test field number and name

A. Faculty — Chart prepared by

1/8/10 — Date

Test Objectives and Subareas

Subarea No.:		I									II		III	IV		
Objective No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16–40
ENG 112: American Literature	X															
ENG 114: Studies in Modern Fiction		X														
ENG 246: Major British Writers			X	X												
ENG 220: Literature Pre-1700					X											
ENG 360: World Literature						X										
ENG 364: Literary Forms and Theory							X	X								
ENG 420: The Written Composition										X	X					
EDU 366: Literature in the Classroom													X			
EDU 470: Reading Instruction														X		

Additional Resources:

Obj 13: Adams, *Beginning to Read*; Moats, *Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teachers.*

Obj 14: Harris & Hodges, *The Literacy Dictionary*; Lapp, Flood, and Farnan, *Content-Area Reading and Learning.*

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

OBJECTIVE-TO-COURSE MATCHING CHART

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Directions: Use a separate copy of this worksheet for each test field. Obtain a copy of the test objectives for the test field you are analyzing. Indicate which subareas contain which objectives by merging the cells in the "Subarea No." row above the objective numbers for each subarea or making dark lines between objective numbers that mark the beginning and end of a subarea. In the left-hand column, fill in the names of the courses and other resources that may cover content related to the test field. In the row for each course, place a check (✓) or X under each test objective that is covered by the course.

Test field number and name

Chart prepared by

Date

Test Objectives and Subareas

Subarea No.:																																								
Objective No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

Course Name

OBJECTIVE-TO-COURSE MATCHING CHART *(continued)*

Test Objectives and Subareas

Subarea No.:

Objective No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

Course Name

Additional Resources:

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

STUDY OUTLINE CHART INSTRUCTIONS

For Candidates: You may wish to use the test objectives and associated descriptive statements to prepare an outline of the content likely to be covered on the test(s), especially the content about which you are unsure. The process described here, which is designed to be used with the Study Outline Chart that follows, may help you organize your thoughts and your future studies for the test(s) both in college coursework and through other educational activities.

You may follow this process by yourself or with others in your program, such as the members of a study group. As you read the test objectives, remember that some of the test objectives may refer to content that you are currently learning or will learn in the near future during your college preparation, while other test objectives may refer to content you may have learned earlier or elsewhere.

You may print the chart and record your answers by hand, or you may download the chart as a Microsoft® Word document from the "Faculty Guide" page on the MTEL web site and type in your responses.

Directions for Completing the Study Outline Chart

Step 1: The first column of the chart lists test objective numbers, from 1 to 40. In the second column, briefly summarize the topic of each test objective, using a two- or three-word phrase (e.g., "Reading Comprehension," "Statistics and Probability").

Step 2: Read and consider each test objective and its associated descriptive statement and envision the content likely to be covered. Try to imagine the types of questions that might be asked about that content. Consider the content in relation to courses or other educational activities that you have undertaken in college or that you might undertake in the future. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can and record these notes in the third column. Participation in a study group may be particularly helpful for this task.

Step 3: In the fourth column, indicate the extent of your knowledge and educational preparation regarding the content of each test objective. Use symbols such as "✓" to indicate adequate knowledge and preparation, "X" to indicate partial knowledge and preparation, and "?" to indicate little or no knowledge and preparation. In cases of partial knowledge and preparation, highlight in the third column particular aspects of the test objective that you need to study further.

Step 4: Beginning with areas you identified where you have partial (X) or little or no (?) knowledge and preparation, devise a plan to increase your knowledge or enhance your preparation. See the "Identifying Resources" section below to help you find solutions to your individual needs. Note in the fifth column resources that may be particularly useful to you.

At the conclusion of this process, you will have a chart listing the test objectives (and parts of test objectives) about which you will need to learn more in order to prepare for the test. You will also have a plan for addressing your preparation needs.

Identifying Resources

After you have identified the test objectives on which you will focus your time, consider the resources you may use in studying the content of those test objectives. You may determine that you have not taken some relevant courses that would have covered content that will be assessed on the test. Consult with your advisor and, on his or her recommendation, take courses that will help you strengthen those areas where your content knowledge may be less strong.

Other resources include written materials, such as textbooks from relevant classes, your class notes and assignments, textbooks currently in use in Massachusetts public elementary and secondary schools; Massachusetts curriculum frameworks; and publications from local, state, and national professional organizations. Practice tests are also available for some fields at no cost from the MTEL web site. In addition, people can be important resources, including other students who have taken courses related to your needs and instructors who teach such courses. Instructors may be able to guide you in finding and reviewing notes and textbooks.

Sample Completed Study Outline Chart

An example of a student's completed Study Outline Chart for the Communication and Literacy Skills reading subtest is shown below.

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STUDY OUTLINE CHART

| Test Field: | Communication & Literacy Skills Reading Subtest | | Test Date: | July 2011 |

Obj. #	Topic	Notes on Test Content, Knowledge, and Courses	✓, X, ?	Resources
1.	Meaning of Words		✓	
2.	Main Idea and Details		✓	
3.	Writer's Purpose	Lit course?	X	
4.	Relationships Among Ideas	prob solving, pro & con, induce conclusions, recognize cause/effect	X	Dan's notes from class; book advisor recommended
5.	Critical Reasoning	validity of argument, relevance of facts	?	Take seminar
6.	Outlining & Summarizing	follow written instructions, interpret charts/graphs, etc.	✓	
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				

✓ = adequate knowledge and preparation; X = partial knowledge and preparation; ? = little or no knowledge and preparation

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

STUDY OUTLINE CHART

Test Field:

Test Date:

Obj. #	Topic	Notes on Test Content, Knowledge, and Courses	√, X, ?	Resources
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				

√ = adequate knowledge and preparation; X = partial knowledge and preparation; ? = little or no knowledge and preparation

STUDY OUTLINE CHART *(continued)*

Test Field: _____

Test Date: _____

Obj. #	Topic	Notes on Test Content, Knowledge, and Courses	✓, X, ?	Resources
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
24.				
25.				
26.				
27.				
28.				
29.				
30.				
31.				
32.				
33.				
34.				
35.				
36.				
37.				
38.				
39.				
40.				

✓ = adequate knowledge and preparation; X = partial knowledge and preparation; ? = little or no knowledge and preparation

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

DEVELOPING A STUDY PLAN

The following suggestions are designed to help you develop a study plan in preparation for the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®).

☑ Read the objectives.

The first step in preparing for an MTEL test is to identify what information the test will cover by reviewing the test objectives for your field. Test objectives are included in the Test Information Booklet for each test field and can also be found as stand-alone documents on the MTEL web site. Read them carefully to determine the areas of strength and weakness in your content knowledge.

Test objectives are organized into groups known as subareas. The subareas define the major content areas of the test. You will find a list of subareas at the beginning of each test objective list. The number of objectives within each subarea typically reflects the emphasis given to that subarea on the test. In general, subareas with greater numbers of objectives will receive more coverage on the test.

Once you have a broad picture of what the test includes, read each objective and its descriptive statements carefully to get a more specific idea of the knowledge you will be required to demonstrate on the test. When you have become familiar with the objectives, make a list of those objectives about which you feel you know the least. You may wish to use the Study Outline Chart provided in the Test Information Booklets and Faculty Guide to help you identify the extent of your knowledge and preparation in the different content areas defined by the test objectives. Use this review of the objectives to set priorities for your study time.

☑ Identify resources.

After you have identified the objectives on which you will focus your preparation, consider the resources you may use in studying the content of those objectives. The most appropriate resources may well be textbooks from courses you have taken. You may also wish to consult your class notes. This is especially important for courses you took more than a year ago. Talk with other candidates who have taken those courses more recently. Meet with your advisor or the professors who teach these courses. They may be able to provide you with some guidelines for reviewing your notes and textbooks and help you identify additional study resources.

☑ Review the sample test questions.

After you have become familiar with the objectives, you may want to review the sample test directions and the test question formats and suggested approaches contained in the Test Information Booklet. Then try to answer the sample multiple-choice items and open-response item(s) provided in the appropriate Test Information Booklet, and (if available for your test) the practice test.

Next, review the sample responses to the open-response items and the answer key for the sample multiple-choice items.

☑ If you are retaking a test, use the information on your score report.

Your subarea performance will help you identify possible areas on which to focus your studies. You may wish to concentrate your study on those subareas or sections of the test that include the greatest number of test items and that count the most toward your total test score.

☑ Take additional courses.

Consult with your advisor about whether you have completed sufficient coursework in preparation for the test. Your advisor may be able to identify specific courses that may cover content you have not yet studied.

☑ Form or join a study group.

Joining a study group can be effective for reviewing test-related content. You may gain the most from participation in a study group if you have already identified the test objectives with which you are less familiar and that you need to review more. If you have a specific need or area of weakness, a study group that focuses on that need or area may be best for you.

☑ Avoid cramming before the test.

A gradual study pattern will be more effective for learning unfamiliar or difficult content. In the last few days before the test, take time to review the content with which you feel more comfortable and avoid trying to learn new material.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

The following suggestions may help you develop strategies to use when you are taking the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®).

☑ **Follow directions.**
It is very important to listen to and follow all test directions. This includes any oral directions read by the test administrators and any written test directions. If you are taking a computer-based test, pay close attention to the tutorial provided before you begin the actual test.

☑ **Pace your work.**
Each test session is four hours in length. The time it takes for the directions at the beginning of the test session is not included in the four hours. You may wish to look through the test items when you are allowed to begin testing. This may give you an idea of how to pace yourself when taking the test. Remember to leave enough time to respond to the open-response items.

☑ **Read carefully.**
Do not try to speed up by skimming directions or by reading the test questions too quickly. You may miss important information and instructions.

☑ **Determine the "best answer."**
Your response to each multiple-choice test question should be the best of the alternatives provided. Read and evaluate all four answer choices before deciding which one is best.

☑ **Guess wisely.**
Your multiple-choice test score will be based on the number of multiple-choice questions you answer correctly. You will not be penalized for guessing. If you are unsure about a question, use your knowledge in the content area to eliminate as many of the alternatives as you can. Then select among the remaining choices.

☑ **Mark your answers carefully.**
Your responses to the multiple-choice questions will be scored electronically. On a paper-based test, it is critical for you to mark your answers carefully and clearly. If you skip a question, be sure that you skip the corresponding row of answer choices.

☑ **Check your accuracy.**
Use any remaining time at the end of the test session to check the accuracy of your work. If you are taking a paper-based test, make sure that you have filled in the appropriate bubbles on the answer sheet and that you have completely erased any stray marks.

☑ **Review carefully the open-response items and write legibly.**
Be sure to read and respond to each part of the items. Your responses to the open-response items will be evaluated by at least two qualified scorers. If you are taking a paper-based test, be sure to write legibly so that the scorers are able to read your responses and check that you have recorded your responses to the open-response items on the appropriate answer document and in the appropriate space.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

APPENDIX B

SCORING RUBRICS FOR OPEN-RESPONSE ITEMS

Communication and Literacy Skills Test

Subject Tests

Foreign Language Tests

English as a Second Language Test

Adult Basic Education Test

Vocational Technical Literacy Skills Test

OVERVIEW OF THE SCORING RUBRICS FOR OPEN-RESPONSE ITEMS

Open-response items are scored holistically using scoring rubrics that are approved by the Department. The scoring rubrics used for scoring the open-response items include a set of performance characteristics upon which the response will be rated and a scoring scale with a description of the typical features of performance at each of the four score points. Scorers award points on the quality of the candidate's response based on the performance characteristics that are delineated by the scoring scale. For the subject tests, the scorers are also given a list of relevant reference materials, called scoring notes, that can be used to access additional resources to evaluate the content of the candidate's response.

The performance characteristics and scoring scales are provided on the following pages. Scoring notes are test secure and confidential as they refer to specific test items and, therefore, are not included here.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® MTEL®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS:
WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE

Performance Characteristics:

Appropriateness	The extent to which the candidate addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
Mechanical Conventions	The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the candidate follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.
Usage	The extent to which the candidate's writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
Sentence Structure	The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
Focus and Unity	The clarity with which the candidate states and maintains focus on the main idea or point of view.
Organization	The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of the candidate's ideas.
Development	The extent to which the candidate provides statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and/or accuracy.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**A well-formed written response.** • The candidate addresses the assignment fully and uses appropriate language and style for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate shows mastery of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Usage and choice of words are careful and precise. • Sentence structure is effective and free of errors. • The candidate clearly states a main idea and/or point of view, and maintains focus and unity throughout the response. • The candidate exhibits control in the organization of ideas. • The candidate develops the response fully by providing ample statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy.
3	**An adequately formed written response.** • The candidate addresses the assignment adequately and generally uses appropriate language and/or style for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • There may be some errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Minor errors in usage and word choice are evident. • Sentence structure is adequate, although minor errors may be present. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is generally clear, and focus and unity are generally maintained. • The organization of ideas is generally clear. • The candidate provides a sufficient quantity of statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy to adequately develop the response.
2	**A partially formed written response.** • The candidate partially addresses the assignment and may use inappropriate language and/or style for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate makes frequent errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. • Sentence structure is poor, with noticeable and distracting errors. • The main idea and/or point of view is inconsistent and/or the focus and unity of the discussion are not sustained. • The candidate may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but organization is largely unclear. • The response includes very few statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.
1	**An inadequately formed written response.** • The candidate attempts to address the assignment, but language and style are generally inappropriate for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate makes serious and numerous errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice interferes with meaning. • Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is not identified. • Any organization that is present fails to present an effective sequence of ideas. • The candidate fails to include statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS:
WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE

Performance Characteristics:

Fidelity	The extent to which the response accurately and clearly conveys the main ideas and significant supporting details of the original passage.
Conciseness	The extent to which the response is of appropriate length, containing enough specificity to convey the main ideas and significant supporting details, while omitting insignificant content.
Expression	The extent to which the candidate uses his or her own words to clearly and coherently convey the main ideas and significant supporting details.
Grammar and Conventions	The extent to which the response shows control in the use of standard English conventions.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**A well-formed written response.** • The response accurately and clearly conveys all of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. It does not introduce information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original. Relationships among ideas are preserved. • The response is concise while providing enough statements of appropriate specificity to convey the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. • The response is written in the candidate's own words, clearly and coherently conveying main ideas and significant details. • The response shows excellent control of grammar and conventions. Sentence structure, word choice, and usage are precise and effective. Mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) conform to standard English conventions.
3	**An adequately formed written response.** • The response conveys most of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage, and is generally accurate and clear. It introduces very little or no information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original. Relationships among ideas are generally maintained. • The response may be too long or too short, but generally provides enough statements of appropriate specificity to convey most of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. • The response is generally written in the candidate's own words, conveying main ideas and significant details in a generally clear and coherent manner. • The response shows general control of grammar and conventions. Some minor errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage and mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) may be present.
2	**A partially formed written response.** • The response conveys only some of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. Information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original passage may substitute for some of the original ideas. Relationships among ideas may be unclear. • The response either includes or excludes too much of the content of the original passage. It is too long or too short. It may take the form of a list or an outline. • The response may be written only partially in the candidate's own words while conveying main ideas and significant details. Language not from the passage may be unclear and/or disjointed. • The response shows limited control of grammar and conventions. Errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage, and/or mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) are distracting.
1	**An inadequately formed written response.** • The response fails to convey the main ideas and details of the original passage. It may consist mostly of information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original. • The response is not concise. It either includes or excludes almost all the content of the original passage. • The response is written almost entirely of language from the original passage or is written in the candidate's own words and is confused and/or incoherent. • The response fails to show control of grammar and conventions. Serious errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage, and/or mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) impede communication.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TESTS

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	**The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	**The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TESTS

The scoring rubrics for the open-response items for the foreign language test components listed below are provided on the following pages.

Foreign Language Test	Scoring Rubric for Associated Open-Response Item			
	Written Expression	Oral Expression	Listening Comprehension	Reading Comprehension
29 Chinese (Mandarin)	✓	✓	✓	✓
26 French	✓	✓		
27 German	✓	✓		
30 Italian	✓	✓		
32 Portuguese	✓	✓	✓	✓
31 Russian	✓	✓	✓	✓
28 Spanish	✓	✓		

NOTE: The number preceding each test denotes the test code.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS—ORAL EXPRESSION

Performance Characteristics:

Content	Adequacy of the information presented, including the number of ideas, the development of ideas, and the depth and specificity of supporting details.
Coherence	Organization and clarity of ideas communicated.
Grammar	Accuracy of grammatical and syntactic constructions (e.g., conjugation of verbs, appropriate use of tenses, subject/pronoun and article/noun agreement).
Vocabulary	Command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and appropriateness of word choice.
Fluency	Ability to maintain a flow of speech, without hesitation or pauses which affect the overall comprehensibility of the response.
Pronunciation	Comprehensibility of articulation and the appropriateness of stress.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough application and strong command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's ideas are well developed and elaborated. • The candidate's ideas are logically sequenced, well connected, and consistently clear. • The response shows a comprehensive command of syntax and grammar, making only minor errors that do not interfere with the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates extensive command of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. • The candidate maintains a strong flow of speech, with few, if any, hesitations or pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is easily intelligible, with few, if any, errors.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate application and satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's ideas are adequately developed, with some elaboration. • The candidate's ideas are adequately organized and are generally clear. • The response shows good command of syntax and grammar, though some errors may cause minor interruptions in the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates a good command of generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. • The candidate generally maintains a steady flow of speech, with only occasional hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is generally intelligible, with only minor errors.
2	**The "2" response reflects a partial application and limited command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's ideas show limited development and elaboration. • The candidate's ideas are only partially organized and are at times unclear. • The response shows a limited command of syntax and grammar, with frequent errors that partially impede the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates a limited range of expression, using very simple vocabulary and lacking some key words and phrases. • The candidate does not maintain a consistent flow of speech, having frequent hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation contains several errors and is occasionally difficult to understand.
1	**The "1" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's response provides few, if any, comprehensible ideas, with minimal development. • The candidate's ideas are not organized and are largely unclear. • The response shows little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax, with numerous and frequent errors that make ideas incomprehensible. • The candidate demonstrates little knowledge of vocabulary beyond the most common words, and may misuse and misform numerous words and expressions. • The candidate fails to maintain any flow of speech, with frequent hesitations and pauses that interrupt comprehensibility. • The speaker's pronunciation contains numerous errors and is at times unintelligible.
U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, inaudible/incomprehensible, not spoken in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS—WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the objective of the assignment is achieved and the appropriateness of the response for the intended audience.
Coherence	Organization and clarity of ideas.
Content	Development of ideas and relevance of supporting details.
Grammar	Accuracy of grammatical forms and syntax.
Vocabulary	Command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions.
Mechanics	Accuracy of spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough application and strong command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.** • The response thoroughly fulfills the purpose of the written assignment and is completely appropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas are well organized and clearly expressed. • Ideas are extensively developed and well-supported with relevant information. • The response shows a comprehensive command of syntax and grammar, with only minor errors that do not interrupt communication. • Vocabulary reflects a broad command of the language and appropriate use of idiomatic expressions. • Spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation are mastered, with few, if any, errors.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate application and satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.** • The response satisfactorily fulfills the purpose of the written assignment and is generally appropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas show some organization and are generally clear. • Ideas are adequately developed with some elaboration and support of specific points. • The response shows a good command of syntax and grammar, though some errors may cause minor interruptions in communication. • Vocabulary and idiomatic expressions are general, but adequate for communicating a complete message. • There are minor errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation that do not interfere with communication.
2	**The "2" response reflects a partial application and limited command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.** • The response partially fulfills the purpose of the written assignment and may not be entirely appropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas show limited organization and are somewhat unclear. • Ideas are developed in a limited way with minimal support. • The response shows a limited command of syntax and grammar, with frequent errors that partially impede communication of ideas. • Vocabulary is simple and lacks key words and expressions but is sufficient for communicating a partial message. • There are some errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation, which partially interfere with communication.
1	**The "1" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.** • The response fails to fulfill the purpose of the written assignment and is inappropriate for the intended audience. • The candidate's ideas are unorganized and unclear. • Ideas are developed minimally, if at all, and lack any relevant supporting detail. • The response shows little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax, with numerous and frequent errors that impede communication. • Vocabulary is not adequate for communicating a complete message, with word usage errors and misformations that impede communication. • Errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation are so numerous that they impede communication.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not written in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS—LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Performance Characteristics:

Listening Comprehension	Accuracy and completeness in comprehending spoken language.
Inference	Demonstrated ability to infer information accurately from spoken language, including subtleties such as tone.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	• The candidate demonstrates thorough comprehension of the literal content of a sample of spoken language. • The candidate accurately infers implied information, including correctly characterizing tone when it is a factor in comprehension.
3	• The candidate demonstrates good overall comprehension of the literal content, though some details may be misunderstood or missed. • The candidate shows some ability to infer implied information, though some subtleties in tone may be misinterpreted or missed.
2	• The candidate shows partial comprehension discerning the main idea but fails to understand significant supporting ideas and details. • The candidate generally fails to infer information or discern tone.
1	• The candidate fails to demonstrate understanding of the main idea, showing comprehension only of isolated words and phrases. • The candidate fails to infer information or discern tone.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not written in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS—READING COMPREHENSION

Performance Characteristics:

Literal Comprehension	Accuracy and completeness in comprehending literal content of written language.
Inference	Demonstrated ability to infer information implied in a reading passage, including subtleties such as tone.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	• The candidate demonstrates thorough understanding of the literal content of the reading passage, including significant details. • The candidate accurately infers implied information, even if this information is subtly conveyed in the text.
3	• The candidate demonstrates understanding of the main idea of the passage but misses some details. • The candidate shows some ability to infer information from the text but may misinterpret some subtleties.
2	• The candidate shows partial understanding of the main idea of the passage but fails to understand significant supporting ideas and details. • The candidate generally fails to make inferences from the text.
1	• The candidate fails to extract the main idea from the passage, demonstrating comprehension only of isolated words and phrases. • The candidate fails to make any inferences implied in the text.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not written in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE—ORAL PROFICIENCY (TYPES 1–3)

Performance Characteristics:

Content	Adequacy of the information presented, including the number of ideas, the development of ideas, and the depth and specificity of supporting details.
Coherence	Organization and clarity of ideas communicated.
Grammar	Accuracy of grammatical and syntactic constructions (e.g., conjugation of verbs, appropriate use of tenses, subject/pronoun and article/noun agreement).
Vocabulary	Command of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions and appropriateness of word choice.
Fluency	Ability to maintain a flow of speech, without hesitation or pauses which affect the overall comprehensibility of the response.
Pronunciation	Comprehensibility of articulation and the appropriateness of stress.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough application and strong command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's ideas are well developed and elaborated. • The candidate's ideas are logically sequenced, well connected, and consistently clear. • The response shows a comprehensive command of syntax and grammar, making only minor errors that do not interfere with the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates extensive command of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. • The candidate maintains a strong flow of speech, with few, if any, hesitations or pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is easily intelligible, with few, if any, errors.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate application and satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's ideas are adequately developed, with some elaboration. • The candidate's ideas are adequately organized and are generally clear. • The response shows good command of syntax and grammar, though some errors may cause minor interruptions in the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates a good command of generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. • The candidate generally maintains a steady flow of speech, with only occasional hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is generally intelligible, with only minor errors.
2	**The "2" response reflects a partial application and limited command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's ideas show limited development and elaboration. • The candidate's ideas are only partially organized and are at times unclear. • The response shows a limited command of syntax and grammar, with frequent errors that partially impede the comprehensibility of ideas. • The candidate demonstrates a limited range of expression, using very simple vocabulary and lacking some key words and phrases. • The candidate does not maintain a consistent flow of speech, having frequent hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation contains several errors and is occasionally difficult to understand.
1	**The "1" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The speaker's response provides few, if any, comprehensible ideas, with minimal development. • The candidate's ideas are not organized and are largely unclear. • The response shows little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax, with numerous and frequent errors that make ideas incomprehensible. • The candidate demonstrates little knowledge of vocabulary beyond the most common words, and may misuse and misform numerous words and expressions. • The candidate fails to maintain any flow of speech, with frequent hesitations and pauses that interrupt comprehensibility. • The speaker's pronunciation contains numerous errors and is at times unintelligible.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, inaudible/incomprehensible, not spoken in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TEST
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE—ORAL PROFICIENCY
(TYPE 4: Read a passage aloud.)

Performance Characteristics:

Fluency	Ability to maintain a flow of speech, without hesitation or pauses which affect the overall comprehensibility of the response.
Pronunciation	Comprehensibility of articulation and the appropriateness of stress.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough application and strong command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The candidate maintains a strong flow of speech, with few, if any, hesitations or pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is easily intelligible, with few, if any, errors.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate application and satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The candidate generally maintains a steady flow of speech, with only occasional hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation is generally intelligible, with only minor errors.
2	**The "2" response reflects a partial application and limited command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The candidate does not maintain a consistent flow of speech, having frequent hesitations and pauses. • The speaker's pronunciation contains several errors and is occasionally difficult to understand.
1	**The "1" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the speaking assignment.** • The candidate fails to maintain any flow of speech, with frequent hesitations and pauses that interrupt comprehensibility. • The speaker's pronunciation contains numerous errors and is at times unintelligible.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, inaudible/incomprehensible, not spoken in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION TEST

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.** • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of effective writing or critical reasoning skills. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.** • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of effective writing or critical reasoning skills. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.
2	**The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.** • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of effective writing or critical reasoning skills. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.
1	**The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.** • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of effective writing or critical reasoning skills. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of effective writing or critical reasoning skills.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL LITERACY SKILLS TEST:
WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE

Performance Characteristics:

Appropriateness	The extent to which the candidate addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
Mechanical Conventions	The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the candidate follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.
Usage	The extent to which the candidate's writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
Sentence Structure	The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
Focus and Unity	The clarity with which the candidate states and maintains focus on the main idea or point of view.
Organization	The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of the candidate's ideas.
Development	The extent to which the candidate provides statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and/or accuracy.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**A well-formed written response.** • The candidate addresses the assignment fully and uses appropriate language and style. • The candidate shows mastery of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Usage and choice of words are careful and precise. • Sentence structure is effective and free of errors. • The candidate clearly states a main idea and/or point of view, and maintains focus and unity throughout the response. • The candidate exhibits control in the organization of ideas. • The candidate develops the response fully by providing ample statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy.
3	**An adequately formed written response.** • The candidate addresses the assignment adequately and generally uses appropriate language and/or style. • There may be some errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Minor errors in usage and word choice are evident. • Sentence structure is adequate, although minor errors may be present. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is generally clear, and focus and unity are generally maintained. • The organization of ideas may be ambiguous, incomplete, or partially ineffective. • The candidate provides a sufficient quantity of statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy to adequately develop the response.
2	**A partially formed written response.** • The candidate partially addresses the assignment and may use inappropriate language and/or style. • The candidate makes frequent errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. • Sentence structure is poor, with noticeable and distracting errors. • The main idea and/or point of view is inconsistent and/or the focus and unity of the discussion are not sustained. • The candidate may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but organization is largely unclear. • The response includes very few statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.
1	**An inadequately formed written response.** • The candidate attempts to address the assignment, but language and style are generally inappropriate for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate makes serious and numerous errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice interferes with meaning. • Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is not identified. • Any organization that is present fails to present an effective sequence of ideas. • The candidate fails to include statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL LITERACY SKILLS TEST:
WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE

Performance Characteristics:

Fidelity (closeness, faithfulness)	The accuracy and clarity with which the candidate uses his or her own words to convey and maintain focus on the writer's main ideas.
Conciseness (briefness, succinctness)	The extent to which the candidate's response is of appropriate length, depth, and specificity to convey the writer's main ideas.
Organization (logic, clarity)	The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of the candidate's ideas.
Grammar and Mechanics	The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors. The extent to which the candidate's writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors. The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the candidate's writing follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**A well-formed written response.** • Using his or her own words, the candidate accurately conveys the writer's main ideas and maintains focus and unity. • The candidate's response is concise, but provides enough statements of appropriate depth and specificity to convey the writer's main points. • The response exhibits control and organization. The writing is clear. • The candidate uses correct and effective sentence structure. The candidate's usage and choice of words are careful and precise. The candidate shows mastery of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
3	**An adequately formed written response.** • Generally using his or her own words, the candidate accurately conveys most of the writer's main ideas and generally maintains focus and unity. • The candidate's response may be too long or too short, but generally provides enough statements of appropriate depth and specificity to convey most of the writer's main points. • The candidate's organization of ideas may be somewhat unclear, incomplete, or partially ineffective. • The candidate uses adequate sentence structure, but minor errors may be present. The candidate's usage and choice of words display minor errors. The candidate makes some errors in the use of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
2	**A partially formed written response.** • The candidate conveys only some of the writer's main ideas and/or does not sustain the focus and unity of the discussion. The candidate relies heavily on the writer's words. • The candidate's response is too long or too short and/or includes few statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response. • The candidate may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but organization is largely unclear. • Sentence structure is poor, with noticeable and distracting errors. Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. The candidate makes frequent errors in the use of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
1	**An inadequately formed written response.** • The writer's main ideas are not identified. • The candidate fails to include statements that would contribute to the effective development of the response. • Any organization that is present fails to present an effective sequence of ideas. • Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. Imprecision in usage and word choice interferes with meaning. The candidate makes serious and numerous errors in the use of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEMS
AND RESPONSES

Communication and Literacy Skills Test

General Curriculum Test

OVERVIEW OF THE SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEMS AND RESPONSES

This section of the Faculty Guide includes information related to open-response items for selected tests: sample open-response items, test directions, scoring rubrics, sample responses with assigned scores, and explanations for the score assigned to each sample response. The information is organized as follows.

Communication and Literacy Skills Test (writing subtest)

Writing Summary Exercise

Directions for the Writing Summary Exercise
Sample Writing Summary Exercise
Scoring Rubric for Writing Summary Exercise
Writing Summary Exercise: Sample Responses for Each Score Point
Writing Summary Exercise: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Composition Exercise

Directions for the Composition Exercise
Sample Composition Exercise
Scoring Rubric for Composition Exercise
Composition Exercise: Sample Responses for Each Score Point
Composition Exercise: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

General Curriculum Test

Multi-Subject Subtest: Open-Response Item Assignment

Directions for the Open-Response Item Assignment
Sample Open-Response Item Assignment
Scoring Rubric for Subject Tests
Open-Response Item Assignment: Sample Responses for Each Score Point
Open-Response Item Assignment: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Mathematics Subtest: Open-Response Item Assignment

Directions for the Open-Response Item Assignment
Sample Open-Response Item Assignment
Scoring Rubric for Subject Tests
Open-Response Item Assignment: Sample Responses for Each Score Point
Open-Response Item Assignment: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITING SUMMARY EXERCISE
OF THE WRITING SUBTEST

This section of the writing subtest presents a passage for you to summarize in your own words. The passage can be found on the next page. Prepare a summary of approximately 100 to 150 words.

Your summary should effectively communicate the main idea and significant supporting details of the passage in your own words. You are expected to identify the relevant information and communicate it clearly and concisely without introducing your own ideas.

Your summary will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **FIDELITY:** The extent to which the response accurately and clearly conveys the main ideas and significant supporting details of the original passage.

- **CONCISENESS:** The extent to which the response is of appropriate length, containing enough specificity to convey the main ideas and significant supporting details, while omitting insignificant content.

- **EXPRESSION:** The extent to which the candidate uses his or her own words to clearly and coherently convey the main ideas and significant supporting details.

- **GRAMMAR AND CONVENTIONS:** The extent to which the response shows control in the use of standard English conventions.

The final version of your summary should conform to standard English conventions, should be written legibly, and should be your own original work.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

SAMPLE WRITING SUMMARY EXERCISE

Use the passage below to prepare a summary of 100–150 words.

An elementary school principal in Seattle, Washington, recently announced that she had discovered a secret disciplinary weapon: crackers and peanut butter. Whenever children are sent to her office for misbehavior during the pre-lunch hours, she asks if they have eaten breakfast. In most cases, the youngsters have not had anything to eat, and the provision of a secret snack goes a long way towards remedying the behavioral problem. Unfortunately, situations like this are not isolated occurrences, and it is time to find a permanent solution to the problem of hunger and food insecurity in our schools.

There are numerous physical, emotional, and behavioral consequences of not getting enough food. Children in food-insecure households are more likely to experience ear infections, headaches, stomachaches, and other health problems than children from food-secure households. They generally have difficulty making friends, often exhibiting antisocial behavior as well as increased levels of irritability and anxiety. All of these problems clearly detract from a child's ability to succeed in a learning environment. In one national study, kindergarten children from households without sufficient food were shown to score lower on pre-assessment tests and to learn less over the school year than other children. Hungry children at all grade levels also have a much higher rate of absences and suspensions.

School breakfast programs offer one of the most promising solutions to the problem. Many of those currently in place, however, are structured in ways that make them less successful than they could be. Often, children do not arrive at school early enough to participate. They may face a social stigma for eating breakfast at school. A more successful variation provides all children a free meal in their classroom at the start of the school day. With all of the students in a school participating, the program soon becomes an accepted part of everyone's daily routine that takes no longer than 10 to 15 minutes each morning and gives children the healthy start they need to perform successfully in the classroom.

It is unfair to expect children to behave well and engage in learning when they are hungry. Although the solution to this problem already exists and could have remarkably far-reaching effects if more fully implemented, legislators in many states have been reluctant to take the steps necessary to correct the problem. One way to push them in the right direction is by changing public perceptions of government-subsidized child nutrition programs. Rather than viewing such programs as mere handouts, we need to start seeing them as an investment in the nation's future.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

SCORING RUBRIC FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS:
WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE

Performance Characteristics:

Fidelity	The extent to which the response accurately and clearly conveys the main ideas and significant supporting details of the original passage.
Conciseness	The extent to which the response is of appropriate length, containing enough specificity to convey the main ideas and significant supporting details, while omitting insignificant content.
Expression	The extent to which the candidate uses his or her own words to clearly and coherently convey the main ideas and significant supporting details.
Grammar and Conventions	The extent to which the response shows control in the use of standard English conventions.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**A well-formed written response.** • The response accurately and clearly conveys all of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. It does not introduce information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original. Relationships among ideas are preserved. • The response is concise while providing enough statements of appropriate specificity to convey the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. • The response is written in the candidate's own words, clearly and coherently conveying main ideas and significant details. • The response shows excellent control of grammar and conventions. Sentence structure, word choice, and usage are precise and effective. Mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) conform to standard English conventions.
3	**An adequately formed written response.** • The response conveys most of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage, and is generally accurate and clear. It introduces very little or no information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original. Relationships among ideas are generally maintained. • The response may be too long or too short, but generally provides enough statements of appropriate specificity to convey most of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. • The response is generally written in the candidate's own words, conveying main ideas and significant details in a generally clear and coherent manner. • The response shows general control of grammar and conventions. Some minor errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage and mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) may be present.
2	**A partially formed written response.** • The response conveys only some of the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. Information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original passage may substitute for some of the original ideas. Relationships among ideas may be unclear. • The response either includes or excludes too much of the content of the original passage. It is too long or too short. It may take the form of a list or an outline. • The response may be written only partially in the candidate's own words while conveying main ideas and significant details. Language not from the passage may be unclear and/or disjointed. • The response shows limited control of grammar and conventions. Errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage, and/or mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) are distracting.
1	**An inadequately formed written response.** • The response fails to convey the main ideas and details of the original passage. It may consist mostly of information, opinion, or analysis not found in the original. • The response is not concise. It either includes or excludes almost all the content of the original passage. • The response is written almost entirely of language from the original passage or is written in the candidate's own words and is confused and/or incoherent. • The response fails to show control of grammar and conventions. Serious errors in sentence structure, word choice, usage, and/or mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) impede communication.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

WRITING SUMMARY EXERCISE: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

Students who are hungry and live in "food-insecure" situations are more likely to face health and behavioral problems that negatively affect their ability to learn. Typical issues range from headaches and ear infections to anti-social behavior and anxiety, resulting in more absences and less learning in the classroom.

Current school breakfast programs represent a good step towards addressing the need, but they often end each day before many children get to school, and children often feel embarrassed about participating. A program where <u>all</u> students receive breakfast at the start of the school day would eradicate these issues and should be supported. For legislatures to back it, however, the general public must begin thinking of free school breakfast for everyone as essential to future success, not as government charity.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

An elementary school principal in Seattle found that peanut butter and crackers helped children behave better--they were just hungry. Children who don't have enough food do not do well in school. There are alot more cases of being suspended, absences, and illnesses in hungry children than in children who aren't hungry. A plan needs to be put in place to make sure children get proper nutrition before they start school. School breakfast should be provided to every child during the first fifteen minutes of the school day. This will help children who face a social stigma for eating breakfast at school, in programs provided by the schools now. Children will learn and behave better if this plan is put in place.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

In Seattle Washington they have discovered a new way to keep the minds of children on through out their classroom lectures. It helping them to be better behaved to stay focussed on their teachers. This will make students do better in school as a result of this. School principal gave students a secret snack of peanut butter and crackers which went a long way towards making the hungry students behavoir better. It was becase she began to ask her students (if they were in trouble and send to princepal before lunch) if they had ate breakfast. An over whelming number of students had ate nothing that day.

There fore it was unfair to expect children to behave well and engage in learning when they are hungry. Not eating breakfasts or a Kid being in a food insecure household makes it lead to numerous problem physically, emotionally, and behavioral for children. These children get sicker more than the other kids in the school and they punch each other more and are anti-social. So, what was the solution for this Seattle schools? They all began to start their classes each and every single morning by giveing that peanut butter and crackers snack to every student in the class. This gave each student a fair chance to start their day right and not by being hungry.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

The essay talked all about how a principle in a Seattle school announce that she knew the secret to disciplin and that secret is penut butter and crackars. She found that there would be mis-behavior problem and no breakfast problem. This problem is a very big problem for many peple like parents students teachers. Breaksfast is the most imporant meal of the whole day and every one have breakfast because no breakfast means that student if student or no is hungry if a student is not eating the right nutrient then they are not able to be in class; and if a student is not eating the right breakfast they are not able to preform by behaveing in class. Especally in morning. Her scool came up with a program where okay students to eat breaksfast at school.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

WRITING SUMMARY EXERCISE: ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis for each sample response. For example, for each of the sample responses, the corresponding analysis will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "organization" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, if organization is unclear, then fidelity will be affected, because the relationship among ideas will be clouded. If sentence structure is confusing or ambiguous, that will also affect fidelity and focus. If usage is marked by errors so that meaning is lost or altered, then organization and fidelity will suffer. Even errors in spelling and punctuation can accumulate to such an extent as to undermine sentence structure, focus, and accuracy.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Fidelity: The response clearly and accurately conveys all the main points and significant details of the passage (the specific problems that hungry children have at school, the shortcomings of current school breakfast programs and their solution, and the need for legislative support for that solution). It does not introduce extraneous commentary or information, and the relationships among ideas are preserved.

Conciseness: The response is concise, but provides enough statements of appropriate specificity to convey the main ideas and significant details of the original passage. Unnecessary details are omitted (e.g., the Seattle principal and her peanut butter and crackers solution) while the central points of the passage are conveyed directly and concisely. Enough specifics are provided to connect the ideas and show understanding of the main points.

Expression: The response is written clearly and coherently in the candidate's own words. Limited wording from the original passage is used, but only to preserve conciseness, i.e., when substitutions would result in longer, more awkward phrasing. "[H]eadaches," "ear infections," "anti-social behavior," and "anxiety" appear in the original, but the candidate has used original sentence structure, and none of these words has easy, one-word synonyms.

Grammar and Conventions: The response shows excellent control of grammar and conventions throughout. Sentence structure, word choice, and usage are precise and effective. Mechanics conform to standard English conventions.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Fidelity: The response presents most of the writer's main points. The ideas that hungry children face health and behavior problems which affect their learning, that current school breakfast plans are not adequate, and that a plan is needed to feed all children breakfast at the beginning of the school day are all generally understood. The summary does not include the idea that for the legislature to act, a change in public attitude is necessary. Most statements are generally accurate but not as precise as in the "4" response. For example, "Children who don't have enough food do not do well in school" is generally faithful to the passage, but it is broad and does not capture the idea that the children affected are from "food-insecure" homes. It follows the phrase "they were just hungry," which again might apply to any child who might have missed breakfast that day.

Conciseness: The response leaves out the idea that for the legislature to act, a change in public attitude is necessary, but it is long enough to generally address the main point and most significant details. It is less concise than it could be because it opens with an unnecessary detail about the crackers and peanut butter that one Seattle principal uses to address discipline problems. Because the sentences are relatively simple, there is little packing of ideas and details into one sentence. For example, sentences two and three might easily be combined for greater conciseness and effect.

Expression: The candidate generally uses his own words. The phrase "face a social stigma for eating breakfast at school" is from the passage, but it is embedded within the candidate's own sentence structure. Otherwise, phrasing used from the original passage is limited to "school breakfast" and "elementary school principal," wording that does not benefit from being restated; if an attempt to paraphrase were made, the rewording would be longer than the original and thus would negatively affect conciseness.

Grammar and Conventions: The response demonstrates general control of grammar and conventions while using adequate, simple sentence structure. Minor errors in mechanics include misspelling "a lot," a lack of parallelism in the list "cases of being suspended, absences, and illnesses," and an unnecessary comma after "school" in the sentence that begins, "This will help children."

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Fidelity: The response conveys some of the passage's main ideas, namely that hunger has negative effects on students and that providing children food at the beginning of the school day is important. The candidate does not include the points that current school breakfast plans are not adequate or that for the legislature to act, a change in public attitude is necessary. In addition, inaccuracies and additions not found in the original passage negatively affect fidelity. For example, the candidate wrongly extends the Seattle anecdote to the entire article, refers to "classroom lectures" in an elementary school, and states that hungry students "punch each other more."

Conciseness: This response is not concise. Instead of being omitted, minor supporting details such as the "secret snack" are overemphasized. Spending so much time on the opening paragraph of the original passage while leaving out main ideas results in a summary that is too long in length but at the same time missing essential information.

Expression: The response uses language from the original passage, including short phrases (e.g., "long way towards") and almost entire sentences, such as "There fore it was *unfair to expect children to behave well and engage in learning when they are hungry.*" When using original language, the response is at times unclear: "In Seattle Washington they have discovered a new way to keep the minds of children on through out their classroom lectures." It is not clear, especially since this is the first sentence of the summary, what "keep the minds of children on" means.

Grammar and Conventions: The response demonstrates limited control of grammar and conventions. The number and variety of errors are distracting. They include lack of pronoun-antecedent agreement (e.g., "This gave each student a fair chance to start their day"), usage errors (e.g., "through out" and "over whelming"), misspellings (e.g., "behavoir," "becase," "giveing"), incorrect plurals (e.g., "this Seattle schools"), and awkward constructions (e.g., "This will make student do better in school as a result of this").

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Fidelity: The response fails to convey the main ideas and significant details of the original passage (the specific problems that hungry children have at school, the shortcomings of current school breakfast programs and their solution, and the need for legislative support for that solution). While "breakfast" and "mis-behavior" appear in the response, the relationship between them is not clear or accurate. The candidate's assertion that the Seattle school instituted a breakfast program is not supported by the passage. In addition, the candidate introduces opinion (e.g., "Breaksfast is the most imporant meal of the whole day") and suggests that the "right breakfast" is important, a point the original passage does not make.

Conciseness: The response is not concise. It excludes almost all of the content of the original passage by misrepresenting its meaning. Everything from the suggestion that the Seattle principal discovered "the secret to disciplin" to the assertion that the Seattle school "came up with a program where okay students to eat breaksfast at school" replaces the original content with inaccurate interpretations.

Expression: While the response is written in the candidate's own words, it is mostly confused and incoherent. When read literally, the sentence "She found that there is mis-behavior problem and no breakfast problem" would be opposite in meaning to what the original passage conveys. The next sentence, "This problem is a very big problem for many peple like parents students teachers," is confusing because the reader does not know which problem is referred to or in what way it is a problem for any of the people listed.

Grammar and Conventions: The response fails to show control of grammar and conventions. Many of the errors in this response impede communication. For example, what does it mean that "no breakfast means that student if student or no is hungry if a student is not eating the right nutrient then they are not able to be in class" or "if a student is not eating the right breakfast they are not able to preform by behaveing in class"? The multiple grammatical errors in these sentences make them difficult to understand. In other parts of the response, the many mechanical and grammatical errors include lack of subject-verb agreement (e.g., "a principle in a Seattle school announce"), misspellings (e.g., "disciplin," "penut," and "peple"), wrong usage (e.g., "principle" instead of "principal"), and fragments (e.g., "Especially in morning").

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

DIRECTIONS FOR THE COMPOSITION EXERCISE
OF THE WRITING SUBTEST

This section of the writing subtest consists of one writing assignment. The assignment can be found on the next page. You are asked to prepare a multiple-paragraph composition of approximately 300 to 600 words on an assigned topic.

Your composition should effectively communicate a whole message to the specified audience for the stated purpose. You will be assessed on your ability to express, organize, and support opinions and ideas. You will not be assessed on the position you express.

Your composition will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **APPROPRIATENESS:** The extent to which the response addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.

- **MECHANICAL CONVENTIONS:** The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the response follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

- **USAGE:** The extent to which the writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.

- **SENTENCE STRUCTURE:** The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.

- **FOCUS AND UNITY:** The clarity with which the response states and maintains focus on the main idea or point of view.

- **ORGANIZATION:** The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of ideas.

- **DEVELOPMENT:** The extent to which the response provides statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and/or accuracy.

The final version of your composition should conform to standard English conventions, should be written legibly, and should be your own original work.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

SAMPLE COMPOSITION EXERCISE

COMPOSITION EXERCISE

Read the passages below about grouping students according to academic ability; then follow the instructions for writing your composition.

Ability Grouping Is an Appropriate Educational Practice

Classroom instruction is most effective when it takes into account the different ability levels of students. Schools that don't use ability grouping often fail to provide appropriate challenges for gifted students or to identify the special needs of students who may not be able to keep pace with their peers. Grouping by academic ability also enables teachers to deliver instruction effectively in a way that best meets the needs of all students.

Ability Grouping Is Not an Appropriate Educational Practice

The potential costs of ability grouping clearly outweigh its benefits. Schools do not have a reliable way of determining individual potential, and many students are placed in groups that expect less of them than they can actually achieve. Moreover, ability grouping frequently attaches negative labels to students, undermining their self-esteem and creating self-fulfilling prophecies about their future academic performance.

Your purpose is to write a persuasive composition, to be read by a classroom instructor, in which you take a position on whether or not students should be grouped according to their academic ability. Be sure to defend your position with logical arguments and appropriate examples.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

SCORING RUBRIC FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS:
WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE

Performance Characteristics:

Appropriateness	The extent to which the candidate addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
Mechanical Conventions	The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the candidate follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.
Usage	The extent to which the candidate's writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
Sentence Structure	The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
Focus and Unity	The clarity with which the candidate states and maintains focus on the main idea or point of view.
Organization	The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of the candidate's ideas.
Development	The extent to which the candidate provides statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and/or accuracy.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**A well-formed written response.** • The candidate addresses the assignment fully and uses appropriate language and style for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate shows mastery of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Usage and choice of words are careful and precise. • Sentence structure is effective and free of errors. • The candidate clearly states a main idea and/or point of view, and maintains focus and unity throughout the response. • The candidate exhibits control in the organization of ideas. • The candidate develops the response fully by providing ample statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy.
3	**An adequately formed written response.** • The candidate addresses the assignment adequately and generally uses appropriate language and/or style for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • There may be some errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Minor errors in usage and word choice are evident. • Sentence structure is adequate, although minor errors may be present. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is generally clear, and focus and unity are generally maintained. • The organization of ideas is generally clear. • The candidate provides a sufficient quantity of statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy to adequately develop the response.
2	**A partially formed written response.** • The candidate partially addresses the assignment and may use inappropriate language and/or style for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate makes frequent errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. • Sentence structure is poor, with noticeable and distracting errors. • The main idea and/or point of view is inconsistent and/or the focus and unity of the discussion are not sustained. • The candidate may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but organization is largely unclear. • The response includes very few statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.
1	**An inadequately formed written response.** • The candidate attempts to address the assignment, but language and style are generally inappropriate for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate makes serious and numerous errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice interferes with meaning. • Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is not identified. • Any organization that is present fails to present an effective sequence of ideas. • The candidate fails to include statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

COMPOSITION EXERCISE: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

Grouping students by ability seems like a great idea on the surface. It would simplify a teacher's job by creating a classroom of students who are capable of learning at approximately the same level. This could be to the benefit of students because they will not have to wait through instruction that is inappropriate for them. However, tracking would also introduce many problems. Schools would have to spend administrative time overseeing the tracking. Tracking would be likely to benefit some students at the expense of others. The diversity and understanding that we should promote for our society would be undermined, and students assigned to lower groups might develop a negative view of themselves. There are benefits to dividing classes by ability, but overall the problems would outweigh them.

Ability tracking does not mean placing students in particular tracks and leaving them there forever. As students grow and learn and encounter new subjects, their abilities may rise and fall. Teachers would have to sort students into different tracks on a regular basis. This would take a lot of time and is difficult to do fairly. Because a placement might not be fair, it would need to be reviewed at least every year so that any incorrect placements could be changed. Making these assessments would create a whole new category of work for teachers and administrators, while in today's classrooms teachers are already pressed for time with standardized tests and packed curriculums.

The students most likely to benefit from ability tracking would be the ones who need help the least, the highly gifted and motivated. Although tracking might help to provide appropriate challenges for gifted students, this might come at the cost of other students. Teachers, taxpayers, and parents are likely to be more willing to put limited resources into a group that will clearly benefit from them: the gifted group. But this would not be fair and would widen the achievement gap even further. Education for all is a fundamental right, and public funds should be allocated equally among students. Homogeneous grouping is additionally detrimental

Sample Score Point 4 Response *(continued)*

to students' social development, even the gifted ones because in the real world individuals of varying ability are forced to work and live together. To place the top students just with other top students in no way prepares them for the real world. Meanwhile the other students are not inspired and challenged by their presence.

Ability tracking would also require more resources because if classes are taking place at different skill levels they will probably require different materials, perhaps entirely different textbooks or equipment. Schools today struggle to maintain adequate and up-to-date materials as it is. They do not need additional costs, especially during our current economic crisis, with teachers facing layoffs as school systems struggle to find the financial means just to keep schools open.

An even more important issue for ability grouping is the psychological affects on students. Teachers would need to decide whether to place students in higher or lower tracks, but a student's ability is not a black and white matter. Students may excel in some subjects, not in others, or even perform at different levels within a subject. Teachers and parents could potentially be at odds over a placement, which could create headaches for the school. The reaction of the child is also important to consider. Instead of being seen as a valued member of the school community, each student would now be judged by his "ability." This assessment might be unfair and hurtful. Students labelled as slow or weak may lose motivation or hope, and teachers and their peers may unfairly stereotype them.

Ultimately, though ability tracking might seem to offer benefits, it is too much of a minefield. The potential for unfairness, high costs and stigma are too great. Ability grouping does not appropriately promote the diversity and equality we value as Americans. This is not to say that all students perform at the same level, but that their differences need to be respected within a shared classroom, where all have an equal opportunity to excel.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

Some say that schools don't provide appropriate challenges for gifted students unless ability grouping is available. Others believe that schools cannot determine individual potential and are placed in wrong categories of learning abilities if ability grouping exists. Many debates are continually going on discussing if the appropriate educational practice should be to have ability grouping or not have it. Ability grouping is not an appropriate educational practice because many students are placed in the wrong levels of learning capibilities, being in a classroom of mixed learning abilities allows students to better strive towards their goals, and putting them in groups puts a negative label to the students name.

Today, schools cannot afford to pay as many teachers as they used to, they certainly cannot afford to determine individual potential. How often would they do this anyway. The schools test to see what level the student should be placed in but what if they are having an off day? The children get placed in the wrong group. Here the consequences could be life long. Testing is not right to decide such major issue, because a true test of potential could never exist—no one can see into the future to tell if they are going to do well, or might have done better in a different class. It is up to the individual person.

If students are in mixed ability levels, they will work harder to meet higher goals. They need some guidance and if people are doing well around them they will work harder to get those high grades. The students that are better learners can help the students with lower ability levels. Students can learn from other students. In the other scenerio you have students who never have a chance to see what they might be able to be capable of, because everyone around them is giving up. These students are being marginized unfairly.

Once someone places a label on you it sticks. Just like a bad nickname, a negative label of "slow learner" sticks with them forever. This can cause alot of damage to their self esteem. We are not supposed to be damaging students self esteem, we are supposed to be building them up.

In conclusion, it is not fair to the students to be placed in abilty grouping. Schools cannot determine appropriate learning levels and may be able to achieve at high levels if they weren't placed in such a low level of learning. The students in a mixed learning environment will be able to learn from each other and a negative label is stuck with that child forever. The ability grouped learning is not an appropriate educational practice.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

I do not agree with this idea, grouping is not appropriate durring educational practice. When children are put in a group they are automatically labelled as such. If a child is not the best and they are labelled it can be crutial towards they're self-esteem. Children should be able to learn and grow from each other. Not every child preforms at the same rate but they should not be labelled for everyone to notice and judge them differently. If a child is that far advanced or behind then the rest of the children then the administration and parents should talk about having the childs grade highered or lowered depending on the sittuation. By placing children into groups its like "you cant be worked with".

The cost of hiring more educators to educate these students are in fact more costly. They can not afford this in this time of budgets. People are loosing they're jobs with unemployment running out cant keep up the morgage payments. The fact is that when classrooms thru-out america would only benefit by having students who are disabled within their classes. You say no child left behind, but this would leave them behind. They have just as much to contribute as anyone. In this country everyone is equal and not better than another person – this is america. In the groups every one knows who they are and this can be hurtful.

There are some student who have special needs, they need to be in they're own groups sometimes. Reading disability or dylexia. They have they're own teachers who come in. This is a no-brainer b/c it is different than grouping. If these kids did not go to they're special class than that teacher would have nothing to do, it would be a job with no work, that wouldnt be fair to anyone. It is already built-in. They are not being held back they are being helped.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

People are always going to be in groups in school, thats the way people are. If teachers puts them there or they do. Its the same with "gifted" and "special", the names they give "ability". We all want belong somewhere. There are multipal different kinds of intellegences – those are groups. Religions, ethicities – also groups. Whose to say wether its good or bad. I might not agree with you about something but in my personel view thats a box I dont want to be in, people can change. When looking at academic the thing most of the time is Motivation, wether students are putting in the time or decided "this course is a wast, I want to go hang out. Highschool has alot of others things they could be invovled with, such as: sports, music or maybe you have a job after school. If anything abilility is secondary or third in how important the affect on grades and thats true in any group even "honors".

At some point you have to not care a negative lable is just that, its not real, but it is in someones mine. Like: jocks and geeks, or the In Crowd as oppose to any body else. Its kind of stupid but its humane nature.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS

COMPOSITION EXERCISE: ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis for each sample response. For example, for each of the responses, the corresponding rationale will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "appropriateness" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, if the response has no discernable organizational plan, then focus and unity will be affected. If sentence structure is confusing or ambiguous, that will affect the development of ideas. If usage is marked by errors so that meaning is lost or altered, then organization and focus will suffer. Even errors in spelling and punctuation can accumulate to such an extent as to compromise any effort to address the topic appropriately.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Appropriateness: The response addresses the topic fully and uses language and style that are appropriate to the occasion and audience—writing a formal essay for a professional credential, to be read by an audience of classroom instructors.

Mechanical Conventions: The response demonstrates a mastery of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, including the colon, the plural possessive apostrophe, and the correct enclosure of punctuation within quotation marks. There are a couple of minor comma errors (not placing a comma after the introductory element "Meanwhile" in the third paragraph and failing to close off the nonrestrictive element "even the gifted ones" with a second comma, also in the third paragraph) that do not detract from the total effect of mastery.

Usage: The response employs a precise and effective vocabulary, including terms such as "Homogeneous grouping," "stereotype," "minefield," and "stigma." Pronouns have clear antecedents, with one exception: in the sentence, "Students labelled as slow or weak may lose motivation or hope, and teachers and their peers may unfairly stereotype them," it is unclear whether "their" refers to "teachers" or "students."

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is effectively varied in form and rhythm. For instance, in the fourth paragraph, a very long sentence is followed by a shorter one, adding more power to the main point emphasized in the concluding sentence.

Focus and Unity: The response remains clearly focused on its thesis throughout: ability grouping would create more problems than it would solve. Arguments are forecast in the opening paragraph that are then developed in the body paragraphs and reinforced by a matching conclusion.

Organization: The response is very well organized. The opening paragraph acknowledges the potential benefits of ability tracking, but argues that these benefits would be outweighed by specific problems. The second paragraph focuses on the administrative burdens of ability tracking; the third paragraph cites the inequities that would harm lower-level students and the limitations that would harm high-level ones. The fourth paragraph points out the resource costs that would be involved; the fifth deals with the difficulties of placement. The final paragraph presents a conclusion that both summarizes the arguments and goes beyond them to say that ability grouping is at odds with American ideals.

Development: Each of the arguments the response makes is well supported. The workload ability that tracking would place on teachers and administrators is described; the problems of the homogeneous classrooms (over-funding of higher-level classes at the expense of lower-level ones, the loss of the realistic experience of diversity, the loss of inspiration by other students) are anticipated; the psychological problems for teachers trying to place students, and for parents and students reacting to placements—as well as the potential for harmful error—are powerfully cited.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Appropriateness: The response takes the form of a persuasive composition that addresses the topic adequately and generally uses appropriate language and style. The argument is made that ability grouping is unfair to students and undermines motivation. Some language is inappropriately informal, e.g., "having an off day" and "Once someone places a label on you it sticks" (inappropriate use of the second person).

Mechanical Conventions: The response contains some mechanical errors. There is a comma splice (first sentence of paragraph two, and again in the final sentence of paragraph four) and omitted possessive apostrophes ("students name," "students self esteem"). The question "How often would they do this anyway" is punctuated with a period instead of a question mark. Misspellings include "capibilities," "scenerio," and "abilty."

Usage: The response shows some errors in usage and word choice. "Marginized" is an incorrect attempt to use "marginalized." Pronouns are not always used correctly. In the sentence, "The schools test to see what level the student should be placed in but what if they are having an off day?" the pronoun "they" is probably meant to refer to "student," but because it is plural, grammatically it refers to "schools," which alters the meaning. Another pronoun agreement problem occurs soon after: "no one can see into the future to tell if they are going to do well." Paragraph four moves from second person ("you") to third ("them"). In the final sentence, the phrase "the ability grouped learning" is awkward.

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is adequate, with some minor errors. For example, in the second sentence, "Others believe that schools cannot determine individual potential and are placed in wrong categories of learning abilities if ability grouping exists," the students who "are placed" are omitted, so that it seems the schools themselves are being placed. Similarly, in the final paragraph, "Schools cannot determine appropriate learning levels and may be able to achieve at high levels if they weren't placed in such a low level of learning," the students again are omitted. In the opening paragraph, the sentence forecasting the three arguments is not parallel: "students are placed …" is a different structure than "being in a classroom … allows" and "putting them in groups … puts."

Focus and Unity: The response remains generally focused on its thesis. The second paragraph introduces the idea that schools cannot afford to perform diagnostic testing, an argument that is not related to the other arguments made and is not developed. The question "How often would they do this anyway" is also left hanging. The third argument (in paragraph four) does not mention "ability grouping" to aid the reader in connecting its points to the thesis.

Organization: The organization of the response is generally clear. The first paragraph identifies three reasons for the position, which are taken up for discussion in the three body paragraphs. There is a conclusion. Between and within paragraphs, there are only a few connecting words or phrases that help the logical sequence of ideas.

Development: There is sufficient support to adequately develop the response. Some support is repetitive. In paragraph three, for example, the point "they will work harder" is made twice in a row. In paragraph four, similarly, the point is made twice that a "label … sticks." The paragraph has very little additional development.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Appropriateness: The response partially addresses the topic, taking the position that "grouping" is not appropriate ("ability grouping" must be inferred by the reader). There is some inappropriate language and style: the use of the phrase "its like" to introduce a quoted statement; the abbreviation "thru," the informal "no-brainer" and "b/c." At one point the response switches to second person, an inappropriate voice for a formal essay: "You say no child left behind."

Mechanical Conventions: The response shows numerous mechanical errors. The opening sentence uses a comma splice. Apostrophes are omitted: "childs grade," "its," "cant," "wouldnt." A hyphen is wrongly inserted: "it is already built-in." "America" is not capitalized. Misspellings include "durring," "crutial," "preforms," "sittuation," "morgage," and "dylexia."

Usage: Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. In the opening sentence, "grouping is not appropriate durring educational practice" is confusing: during what educational practice? Many unclear phrases (e.g., "crutial towards they're self-esteem," "grow from each other,") force the reader to puzzle out meaning. "Then" is confused with "than"; "highered" is not a word. There are agreement problems of pronoun with antecedent ("Not every child … they") and of subject with verb ("The cost … are"). The word "disabled" is either wrongly used or the writer has misunderstood the topic. "They're" is consistently used to mean "their." The word "loosing" is used for "losing."

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is poor. A dangling participle has no subject: "By placing children into groups its like 'you cant be worked with'." In the sentence, "People are loosing they're jobs with unemployment running out cant keep up the morgage payments," the second predicate has no subject. "Reading disability or dylexia" is a fragment. "They are not being held back they are being helped" is a run-on. The cumulative effect of the sentence structure errors distracts and confuses the reader.

Focus and Unity: The focus and unity of the discussion are not sustained. The first two paragraphs are loosely concerned with arguments against grouping as hurtful labeling, but there is a detour into the issues of cost, unemployment, the mainstreaming of the disabled and "this is america." The third paragraph supports grouping of students with special needs, who are apparently not hurtfully labeled—a contradictory position.

Organization: The organization of the response is largely unclear. The opening paragraph says "grouping" is not appropriate, then says children should not be labeled (as what?), and then speaks of parents and administration "having the childs grade highered or lowered"—the first clue the reader has that the setting is school. The second paragraph touches on the cost of hiring educators, "this time of budgets," putting disabled students in the classroom, "no child left behind," and equality in "america." The third paragraph supports separate classes and teachers for students with special needs. Although each paragraph partially has a loose topic of its own, the relationship of one paragraph with the next is unclear.

Development: Very few statements contribute to the effective development of the response. Support is vague ("Children should be able to learn and grow from each other"), illogical ("This is a no-brainer b/c it is different than grouping"), or irrelevant ("If these kids did not go to they're special class than that teacher would have nothing to do, it would be a job with no work").

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Appropriateness: The response attempts to address the assignment, but the issue of whether or not ability grouping is appropriate educational practice does not clearly emerge. Language and style are inappropriately informal (e.g., "thats a box I dont want to be in" and "Its kind of stupid").

Mechanical Conventions: Serious and numerous errors in mechanical conventions make the response difficult to read. Errors include comma splices (e.g., "At some point you have to not care a negative lable is just that, its not real, but it is in someones mine"), missing apostrophes in contractions (e.g., "thats"), words wrongly capitalized (e.g., "Motivation" and "In Crowd"), words wrongly compounded (e.g., "Highschool" and "alot") or split (e.g., "any body"), and misspellings (e.g., "multipal," "intellegences," "ethicities," "personel," "wether," "wast," "invovled," "abilility," and "lable"). There is a very high frequency of errors in a very short response.

Usage: Usage errors are pervasive and include "whose," "its," "affect," "mine," and "humane." The imprecision of "I might not agree with you about something but in my personel view thats a box I dont want to be in" makes meaning difficult to comprehend—what is "that" and how is it like a "box"?

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is ineffective and few sentences are free of errors. For example, the opening sentence is a run-on. The second sentence is a fragment. "We all want belong somewhere" requires the use of the infinitive. The phrases "wether students are putting in the time or decided" and "sports, music or maybe you have a job" lack parallel structure.

Focus and Unity: No main idea or point of view is identified with respect to ability grouping in the classroom or even with respect to "groups," which the response seems to take as its subject. Ideas mentioned include that groups are inevitable, there are many different kinds, people may disagree, motivation affects grades, and negative labels have to be ignored. There is no unity among these various ideas.

Organization: The response fails to present a logical sequence of ideas. The response does not distinguish among groups people are assigned to (" 'gifted' and 'special' "), groups people fall into ("Religions, ethicities"), or groups people actively join ("sports, music"). Passing references are made to categorization, academic motivation, and social types ("jocks and geeks"), but these ideas are not related to one another. The response is written in two paragraphs, one long and disorganized, and one that seems to be presenting a conclusion, but that actually introduces a new point.

Development: The response lacks statements that contribute effectively to its development. As it lacks focus, there is no thesis to support. Statements such as "We all want belong somewhere" are not followed by support. The one point that is somewhat developed, about motivation being more important than ability in determining grades, is irrelevant to the assigned topic.

GENERAL CURRICULUM TEST

MULTI-SUBJECT SUBTEST

DIRECTIONS FOR THE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT

This section of the test consists of an open-response item assignment that appears on the following page. You will be asked to prepare a written response of approximately 150–300 words, or 1–2 pages, for the assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for the assignment.

Read the topic and directions for the assignment carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize your response.

As a whole, your response to the assignment must demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge of the field. In your response to the assignment, you are expected to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of the subject area by applying your knowledge rather than by merely reciting factual information.

Your response to the assignment will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- **PURPOSE:** the extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
- **SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE:** appropriateness and accuracy in the application of subject knowledge
- **SUPPORT:** quality and relevance of supporting evidence
- **RATIONALE:** soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject area

The open-response item assignment is intended to assess subject knowledge. Your response must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of the evaluation criteria by scorers. Your response should be written for an audience of educators in this field. The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. Your response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes you think will improve your response.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MULTI-SUBJECT SUBTEST

SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

After growing to maturity, a flowering plant produces flowers and then seeds. The offspring produced by the plant is a mix of genetic information from its two parents.

Using your knowledge of life science:

- describe two ways that flowering plants are pollinated; and

- explain the process by which some genetic material from each of the two parent plants contributes to the genetic makeup of the offspring.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MULTI-SUBJECT SUBTEST

SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TESTS

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	**The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	**The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MULTI-SUBJECT SUBTEST

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

There are various ways that flowering plants are pollinated. One way is by the wind blowing pollen from one plant to another of the same species. The pollen a plant produces is microscopic and extremely light, so even the slightest breeze can distribute it from one plant to another. The ease of movement plus the large quantity of pollen each flower produces (thousands of grains) means that the chances of wind pollination are very high.

Another way pollination can happen is from bees, butterflies, and other insects travelling from flower to flower to suck the nectar from the plant. When insects land on the flower and go after the nectar, they might accidentally rub their legs or antennae against the part of the flower that contains pollen (anther), so the pollen is sticking to them, and then they may accidentally rub that pollen off onto the next flower they visit. These are examples of cross-pollination.

When a grain of pollen from one flower lands on another of the same species, either from the wind or from insect activity, it must land on the pistil for fertilization to take place. Pollen contains the male information that has to get to the eggs inside the pistil. The pollen only contains half of the genetic material from its parent plant, and the eggs only have half of the genetic material from their parent plant. When they merge the offspring (usually seeds) have a genetic make up that's half from the male pollen and half from the female eggs.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

People or animals moving through the garden can brush against flowers just enough to cause pollination. As long as a grain of pollen from one plant shakes off and happens to land on another, pollination might occur. However, chances of pollination are better when birds, bees, and other insects get inside the flower and go after its nectar. A bird's beak or an insect's body will be covered in pollen after it drinks nectar. Some of the pollen that sticks to them gets left inside the next flower they visit, and some of that pollen is likely to land on the female part, resulting in pollination.

Pollen has to get from one plant to another for pollination. Pollen comes from the male parts of a plant. It has to get to the female parts of another plant. When that happens, the seed that results will have genes from each plant in it, male and female. One flower can make many seeds, all having genes from both parent plants. This is how genetic material is passed on from two different plants.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

There are only two possible ways for plants to become pollinated: by wind or by rain. Some plants have pollen that is easily blown by the wind. Mostly it takes a pretty strong wind to send the pollen flying around. You can tell when it's windy enough for pollination because your car gets all greenish yellow from all the pollen that is blowing around. The pollen also settles on different plants when it lands, and fertilization occurs, especially if there was enough wind for a lot of pollen to get to each plant. The other way is by rain. The pollen is so light weight that it easily gets washed away by the rain and carried to other plants so they can be fertilized.

After the plant is fertilized, the seeds begin to form inside the plant, which in turn causes an offspring. In the making of an offspring much genetic information is passed on. For example, if you open an apple or a tomato or a bean pod there are seeds inside. Everything has seeds inside that are its offspring. An orange has seeds for other oranges and a dandelion has seeds for other dandelions. This is how plants reproduce themselves.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

Flowering plants are pollinated in multiple ways. Two ways are by large numbers of plants and good fertilizer. A flowering plant will produce seeds. Once these seeds drop from the flower, they are carried away by birds, animals, and the wind. With the help of water and sunlight, the seeds will begin to grow. As the plant becomes fully mature, it can begin yielding seeds. Once seeds are produced the process of pollination will re-occur. New plants are the result of seeds which contain genes. You need a lot of plants to produce a large number of seeds and different new plants. Fertilizers make plants healthier and they will produce more seeds and bigger offspring, and more pollination will take place.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MULTI-SUBJECT SUBTEST

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT: ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis of each sample response. For example, for each of the responses, the analysis will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "purpose" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present here. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, a response weak in subject knowledge will affect the extent to which the purpose can be achieved as well as the soundness of the rationale. A lack of high-quality, relevant support affects the ability to demonstrate an ably reasoned response.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Purpose: The candidate fulfills the purpose of the assignment by detailing two ways that flowering plants are pollinated (wind and insects) and explaining how plants inherit genetic material.

Subject Matter Knowledge: All of the subject matter knowledge demonstrated in the response is appropriate to the question asked. The pollination of flowering plants both by wind and by insects is described accurately and substantially, as is the process by which genetic material from male and female organs contribute to the makeup of the plant's offspring. The response demonstrates solid knowledge of life science by using several precise terms correctly: antennae, nectar, pistil, pollen grain, fertilization, parent plant, anther, and cross-pollination.

Support: The response is strengthened by the amount and high-quality of the details that are provided. To support the idea of wind pollination, for example, the candidate specifies the microscopic size, light weight, and abundance of pollen. To support the idea of insect pollination, the response explains how pollen is transferred from a flower, to the insect, to the next flower. Fertilization is also described precisely: "a grain of pollen . . . must land on the pistil for fertilization to take place. Pollen contains the male information that has to get to the eggs inside the pistil." All of this supportive detail further demonstrates the candidate's grasp of the relevant concepts and subject matter knowledge.

Rationale: The response is well-reasoned and comprehensive. Each part of the response is clear, accurate, logical, and easy to follow. The candidate provides reasons why wind pollination and insect pollination work, reasons why the pollen grain has to land on the pistil, and reasons why offspring inherit genetic characteristics from both parent plants.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Purpose: The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. The response is clearly focused on addressing each of the two parts of the assignment and provides some discussion of both pollination and the genetic makeup of plants.

Subject Matter Knowledge: The response demonstrates generally accurate subject matter knowledge. The candidate correctly identifies two different means of pollination—one that happens by chance and one that occurs as a result of the activity of insects and birds. A general understanding of how pollen moves from one flower to another is evident, including that pollinators seek out nectar, not pollen. However, the response does not demonstrate detailed knowledge of pollination, including flower anatomy. The second paragraph explains in general terms how genetic material in a seed is inherited from two parent plants, without explaining the process of fertilization.

Support: The supporting details are adequate. "Birds, bees, and other insects" are examples of pollinators but are not specific. For example, identifying hummingbirds as a kind of bird that drinks nectar would be stronger support, as would naming specific insects. The candidate uses the general terms "male parts" and "female parts" instead of more specific terms like "anther," "stigma," or "pistil."

Rationale: The response is adequately reasoned. In answer to the first bullet, the candidate chooses "chance" as a way plants are pollinated, and although wind is a better example of this type of pollination, humans and animals "brush[ing]" by is adequate. The candidate does understand, however, that birds and insects are the more likely vehicles of pollination. Reasoning about the way parent plants contribute to the genetic makeup of offspring is adequate.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Purpose: The purpose of the assignment has been partially achieved. While the response generally focuses on pollination and the creation of offspring, the descriptions and explanations are incomplete. The first sentence, for example, states, "There are only two possible ways for plants to become pollinated: by wind or by rain." This declaration omits the role of bees, butterflies, bats, and birds, to name just a few other agents of pollination. The second paragraph contains no scientific description of how a plant's genetic makeup is determined.

Subject Matter Knowledge: The response reflects limited subject matter knowledge about pollination. Comments such as "The pollen also settles on different plants when it lands" lack critical specification about the conditions under which pollination is effective. The descriptions and explanations of pollination and fertilization are so general that the two terms seem to be used interchangeably, while the assignment requires clear understanding of the differences between these two processes. Similarly, the discussion of genetic makeup does not define a role for either the parent plants or for the male and female organs of a plant. Scientific terminology for and knowledge about plant reproduction is missing.

Support: The only reference to plant reproduction is "In the making of an offspring much genetic information is passed on." What is *the process by which* plant reproduction allows genetic material to be passed on? The examples of apple seeds and other seeds support the statement that "seeds begin to form inside the plant" after fertilization, but those examples do not shed any light on sexual reproduction in flowering plants or the role of each of the two parent plants.

Rationale: Both paragraphs of the response have discrete bits of information that indicate incomplete understanding. While it is true, for example, that wind is an important means by which plants become pollinated, it is not necessarily true that plants become fertilized as a result of having pollen land on them. Similarly, the fact that "Everything has seeds inside that are its offspring" indicates that seeds are critical to plant reproduction, but the issue of *how* they acquire the genetic traits of their parent plants has not been addressed.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Purpose: The purpose of the assignment is not achieved in this response. The two types of pollination cited ("large numbers of plants and good fertilizer") are not ways plants are pollinated. "Genes" are mentioned, but there is no discussion of how parent plants contribute to the genetic makeup of their offspring other than genes being contained in seeds.

Subject Matter Knowledge: There is little accurate and appropriate subject matter knowledge demonstrated in the response. The description of a flower producing seeds, while simplistically correct, does not directly apply to the question asked. And the assertion that "[o]nce seeds are produced the process of pollination will re-occur" is inaccurate in suggesting that pollination begins after the production of seeds, rather than being the process by which seeds are produced. There is no subject matter knowledge in the response relevant to the process of pollination or the passing on of genetic material from parent plants to offspring.

Support: There is no relevant support for responding to the topic of pollination and genetic makeup.

Rationale: The response reflects no reasoning about the topic beyond a weak connection between the quantity and health of a plant and its ability to reproduce. The candidate does not demonstrate understanding of the process of pollination or how genetic material from parent plants contributes to the genetic makeup of their offspring.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS SUBTEST

DIRECTIONS FOR THE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT

This section of the test consists of an open-response item assignment that appears on the following page. You will be asked to prepare a written response of approximately 1–2 pages for the assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for the assignment.

Read the topic and directions for the assignment carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize your response.

As a whole, your response to the assignment must demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge of the field. In your response to the assignment, you are expected to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of the subject area by applying your knowledge rather than by merely reciting factual information.

Your response to the assignment will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- **PURPOSE:** the extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
- **SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE:** appropriateness and accuracy in the application of subject knowledge
- **SUPPORT:** quality and relevance of supporting evidence
- **RATIONALE:** soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject area

The open-response item assignment is intended to assess subject knowledge. Your response must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of the evaluation criteria by scorers. Your response should be written for an audience of educators in this field. The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. Your response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes you think will improve your response.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS SUBTEST

SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

Elementary school students are asked to solve the following problem.
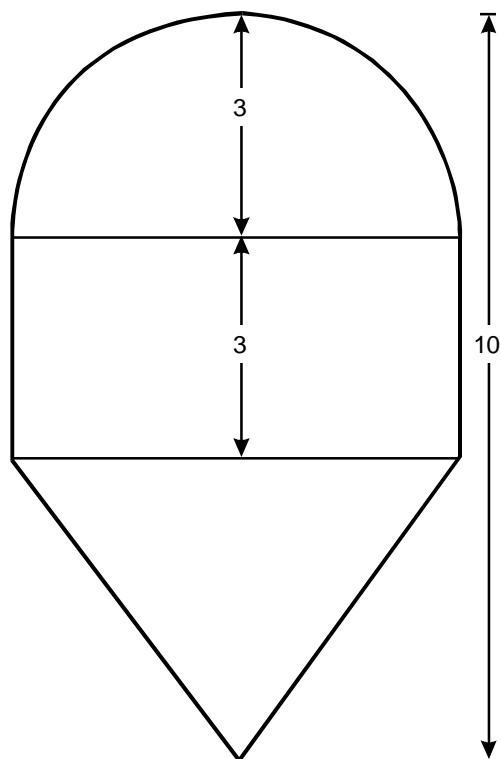
Approximately what fraction of the entire figure shown above is enclosed by the semicircle? (use $\pi = 3.14$)

Student response:

rectangle = 6 × 3 = 18

triangle = $\frac{1}{2}$ × 6 × 4 = 12

semicircle = $\frac{1}{2}$ × 2 × π × radius = 3π

$$\begin{array}{r} 3.14 \\ \times\ 3 \\ \hline 9.3.12 \end{array}$$

18 + 12 + 9.3.12 = 123.12

answer = $\frac{9.3.12}{123.12}$ or about $\frac{90}{120} = \frac{3}{4}$

Use your knowledge of mathematics to create a response in which you analyze the elementary school student's work and provide an alternative solution to the problem. In your response, you should:

- correct any errors or misconceptions evident in the elementary school student's work and explain why the response is not mathematically sound (be sure to provide a correct solution, show your work, and explain your reasoning); and

- solve the problem using an alternative method that could enhance the elementary school student's conceptual understanding of ratios and decimal multiplication in the context of the problem.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS SUBTEST

SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TESTS

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	**The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	**The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	**The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	**The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.** • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.

U	**The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.**
B	**There is no response to the assignment.**

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS SUBTEST

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

The process the student followed was correct. She had all the necessary steps.
First, the areas of the rectangle and triangle were correct. She found "3" to be
the radius of the semicircle, which means the diameter was "6." This was also the
length of the rectangle. She used "4" as the height of the triangle, which was
correct.

However, the formula for finding the area of the semicircle is incorrect. The
student used the formula for the circumference ($2\pi r$) and divided by 2 to get half.
She should have used $A = \pi r^2$ and found half of that number.

The student also made an error when multiplying $\pi \times 3$. She does not understand
how to multiply decimals.

Correct solution:

$A = 3.14 \times 9$
$= 28.26 \times 1/2$
$= 14.13$ (not 93.12, which is what the student had)

So the area of the whole figure = 18 (area of rectangle) + 12 (area of triangle) + 14
(rounded area of semicircle) = 44

Therefore,

$14/44 = 7/22 =$ approximately 1/3

I would review the formulas for finding the area and circumference of a circle
with this student, so that she can use them correctly for problems like these. But
for the multiplication mistake, I would talk with this student about how multiplying
decimals is like multiplying fractions, and the decimal places represent fractional
parts of a whole. I'd show her how to first estimate an answer by thinking of the
whole numbers.

Sample Score Point 4 Response *(continued)*

Example: 12.5 x 10.3

The answer should be close to 120 because 12 x 10 is 120, while .5 and .3 are fractional parts of a whole—5 tenths and 3 tenths.

Then we could actually multiply 5/10 x 3/10 to show that the answer results in hundredth (15/100), which helps to explain how to figure out how many decimal places are needed in the answer when multiplying two or more decimals.

Then we could go back to the problem and try first estimating the answer to 3.14 x 3 (around 9), then do it by writing the decimal as a fraction (14/100) and multiplying it times 3/1, which equals 42/100.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

The student has the correct areas for both the rectangle and the triangle. However, in the semicircle they should have used $A = \pi r^2$ and then taken half of it. The student also multiplied incorrectly.

Semicircle:

$A = .5 \times 3.14 \times 3^2$

.5 x 9.42

= 14.13

= 14/44 = 7/22 = about 1/3 of the figure

As an alternative method, I would review the formulas for these three figures. I would teach estimations of areas for geometric figures. But for the multiplication error, I would review the decimals. Then I would show them the difference between areas and perimeters.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

The student should have used the area formula for the semicircle. $A = \pi r^2$.

Also, there was a multiplication error.

The areas for the rectangle and triangle were correct.

Therefore, 18 + 12 + 28 = 58

and 28/58 = 30/60 = 1/2

So it is 50% of the figure.

An alternative method would be to look at how big the semicircle is compared to the rest of the figure. 3/4 of the whole would be much larger than the size of the semicircle actually looks. The student could be shown that her answer is not logical just by looking at the figure.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

The student's answer doesn't make any sense. Just looking at it you can tell it isn't 3/4 of the whole. First of all, the student did not multiply correctly. 3.14 x 3 = 9.32 = 10 rounded

So, the correct solution would be:

1/2 x 2 x 10 = 1 x 10 = 10

18 +12 + 10 = 40

10 / 40 = 1/4

Therefore, the semicircle is 1/4 of the whole figure.

GENERAL CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS SUBTEST

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT: ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis for each sample response. For example, for each of the responses, the corresponding analysis will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "purpose" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present here. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, a response weak in subject knowledge will affect the extent to which the purpose can be achieved as well as the soundness of the rationale. A lack of high-quality, relevant support affects the ability to demonstrate an ably reasoned response.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Purpose: All aspects of this assignment have been fully addressed. The response provides a thorough analysis of each part of the student's work. That is followed by a correct, step-by-step problem-solving process and answer, as well as an alternative problem-solving approach that addresses a specific need the candidate identified to enhance this student's conceptual understanding of the rules for multiplying decimals.

Subject Matter Knowledge: The response is strengthened by the analysis of what the student did correctly as well as a discussion of where errors occurred in the student's work. By reviewing what the student did right, the candidate is demonstrating specific relevant mathematical knowledge, including the formulas for finding the areas of the rectangle and the triangle. The discussion of the errors (incorrect formula for finding the area of a semicircle and incorrect multiplication of decimals) and an alternative approach to decimal multiplication further reveal the candidate's substantial and accurate subject matter knowledge.

Support: The analysis of the student's work provides high-quality support that is often quite detailed, such as "She found '3' to be the radius of the semicircle, which means the diameter was '6.' This was also the length of the rectangle. She used '4' as the height of the triangle, which was correct." The candidate adds parenthetically what each number represents in the solution, e.g., "18 (area of rectangle)," support that strengthens the response overall. The alternative solution takes the reader through the explanation step-by-step with good detail.

Rationale: The candidate's depth of understanding is made clear by the manner in which this response deals with all aspects of the student's work. The candidate provides reasons why each step in the student's response is either correct or incorrect. The final section of the response, explaining where and why to focus on decimal multiplication with this student, and then showing a concrete example of how to do this, makes the candidate's reasoning process clear.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Purpose: The candidate has largely addressed the assignment, identifying the errors that the student made, providing a correct solution, and suggesting an alternative method. However, there is only adequate explanation of why the student's work is not mathematically sound, and the alternative method explains only in general a "review" of the errors missed and does not solve the problem using the alternative method.

Subject Matter Knowledge: There is generally accurate application of math knowledge in the response. The candidate shows understanding of how to find the areas of three geometric figures (rectangle, triangle, and semicircle) and correct multiplication skills. The lack of a more elaborate explanation of the student's work means that the candidate is not able to show substantial math knowledge at the level of a "4" response. Without a fuller explanation of the alternative method, any math knowledge demonstrated remains general.

Support: The response provides adequate support by briefly identifying what the student has correct (areas of rectangle and triangle) and then giving the correct formula for a semicircle. Although the candidate solves correctly for the fraction, she leaves out steps that would fully explain her work. The alternative method is described only in general terms, without the examples that would make the response better than adequate.

Rationale: This is an adequately reasoned response. The candidate shows basic math knowledge and understanding of finding areas, multiplying decimals, and estimating fractions.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Purpose: The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. The two student errors are identified but not explained, the candidate's solution of the original problem is incorrect, and the proposed alternative method is more of a visual proof than a way to show the student how to approach the problem differently in order to enhance his conceptual understanding of ratios and decimals.

Subject Matter Knowledge: The math knowledge demonstrated is limited. The candidate knows the formulas for finding areas of rectangles, triangles, and semicircles, and understands that there was a multiplication error. But the response has no explanation of the student's work and does not demonstrate how to correctly multiply decimals. The suggested alternative method is limited by not presenting a genuinely different way of approaching the mathematical concepts involved with solving this problem.

Support: Support is limited since the problem is incorrectly solved and there is no explanation of the student's work or a viable alternative solution. The candidate does provide the formula for finding the area of a semicircle. There is no explanation of the steps that would detail how the candidate is solving the problem.

Rationale: There is limited understanding of the math involved in this assignment. There is little explanation of the student's errors, the method of solving the problem, or how the student might be helped to understand ratios and decimals by taking a different approach to the problem.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Purpose: The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. Although the candidate does identify the multiplication error, he does not himself multiply correctly. The second error is not identified, there is no correct solution, and no alternative method is suggested.

Subject Matter Knowledge: There is a little math knowledge demonstrated in the multiplication of 3.14 × 3: although the answer is incorrect, it does reflect the correct placement of decimals. The solution to the original problem is wrong because the candidate does not know the correct formula for finding the area of a semicircle; he instead uses the student's formula for finding circumference.

Support: The support is weak. The few details present are not relevant because they are not solving the problem with the correct formula, explaining the student's misconceptions, or providing an alternative approach to understanding ratios and decimals.

Rationale: The response reflects little reasoning about the topic. The visual objection to the student's answer is acceptable, but there is little correct reasoning after that point. By the same reasoning, the candidate ought to be able to tell that his answer of ¼ is also incorrect.