

New Mexico

Teacher Assessments™

Study Guide

New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency™

**03 Elementary Level/
04 Secondary Level**



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An Overview of the Testing Program, How to Prepare for the Assessments, and the Day of the Test: Helpful Hints

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

[An Overview of the Testing Program, How to Prepare for the Assessments, and the Day of the Test:
Helpful Hints](#)



An Introduction to the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels)

The New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) is designed to measure professional pedagogical knowledge and skills. The Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary) should be taken by individuals seeking a K–8 teaching license. The Assessment of Teacher Competency (Secondary) should be taken by individuals seeking a 7–12 teaching license. Individuals seeking New Mexico teacher licensure in Special Education or K–12 may take either assessment.

The New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) consists of the following:

- A set of 75 selected-response questions,
- 3 restricted-response assignments, and
- 1 extended-response assignment.

For each of the restricted-response assignments, a single-page answer document will be provided for your response. For the extended-response assignment, a two-page (four sides) answer document will be provided. Your response to the extended-response assignment may be up to four pages in length.



Test Framework

The New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency comprises 12 competencies that are provided below.

The elementary and secondary levels of the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency share a common framework. The elementary level of the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency focuses primarily on grades K–8; the secondary level of the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency focuses primarily on grades 7–12.

Student Development and Learning
Instruction, Assessment, and the Learning Environment
The Professional Environment

SUBAREA I—STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

This section focuses on what teachers should know about how students develop and learn. It addresses how factors in students' lives, including their social and cultural environments, affect growth and learning. It also addresses how teachers can promote growth and learning by responding to each child's specific strengths and needs.

0001 The teacher understands developmental processes and variations and uses this knowledge to provide instruction that promotes students' learning and development.

For example:

- recognizing developmental processes and how a student's development may affect performance
- analyzing how developmental variation among students affects instructional decision making
- demonstrating knowledge of how specific developmental factors may affect learning
- applying knowledge of students' developmental characteristics to develop and evaluate alternative instructional goals, strategies, and assessments

0002 The teacher understands how factors in the home, the school, and the community may affect students and uses this knowledge to create a classroom environment in which all students can grow and learn.

For example:

- recognizing how family patterns and the home environment may affect student learning
- recognizing how schoolwide structures (e.g., tracking, inclusion) and classroom practices (e.g., grouping, student-teacher interactions, acknowledgment of student achievement and progress) may affect students' self-concept and learning
- distinguishing how peer interactions may promote or hinder a student's success in school, and identifying strategies for dealing with peer-related issues in given classroom contexts
- demonstrating knowledge of how community factors (e.g., cultural and socioeconomic diversity) may affect student learning, and identifying strategies for using the community as a resource to promote learning

0003 The teacher understands learning processes and applies knowledge of strategies that foster students' active engagement in learning.

For example:

- analyzing processes by which students acquire knowledge and construct meaning, and applying strategies for facilitating learning in varied contexts
- recognizing how various teacher roles (e.g., direct instructor, facilitator) and student roles (e.g., self-directed learner, group participant, passive observer) may affect learning processes and outcomes
- analyzing factors that affect students' learning, and applying strategies for adapting instruction to help ensure all students' success
- applying knowledge of instructional strategies for promoting self-directed learning, and fostering students' sense of responsibility in relation to their own learning

0004 The teacher understands and is sensitive to diverse student populations, creates learning opportunities and environments that respond to differences among students, and fosters an appreciation of and respect for diversity.

For example:

- applying strategies for working effectively with and meeting the needs of students with various cultural or language backgrounds, disabilities, talents, family situations, socioeconomic circumstances, and prior learning experiences
- recognizing the importance of acknowledging that every student can learn, and communicating high expectations for each student's performance and progress
- demonstrating knowledge of differences in students' learning strengths and needs and the instructional implications of these differences
- recognizing the value of using a variety of resources and support services inside and outside the school to meet student needs
- applying strategies for fostering students' understanding and appreciation of diversity, and promoting a sense of community among individuals and groups in the classroom

SUBAREA II—INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT, AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This section focuses on what teachers should know about how to help students learn successfully. It addresses how teachers should organize instruction, use assessment, and interact with students to help them learn. It also addresses how to enhance students' motivation and encourage their use of positive, productive learning behaviors.

0005 The teacher understands how to plan instruction and uses this knowledge to design appropriate and effective student learning opportunities.

For example:

- recognizing how various factors (e.g., goals, selection of content, state standards, student population, available time and other resources) affect instructional planning
- applying knowledge of procedures used in instructional planning (e.g., defining lesson or unit objectives, developing effective lesson plans, choosing learning activities, sequencing activities)
- evaluating and revising elements of a given lesson plan for improving student learning
- applying strategies for working in collaboration with others to plan instruction

0006 The teacher understands multiple approaches to instruction and uses this knowledge to facilitate learning and encourage students' development.

For example:

- examining the characteristics, advantages, and limitations of varied instructional strategies (e.g., cooperative learning, direct instruction, discovery learning, whole-group discussion, lecture, computer-assisted instruction, interdisciplinary instruction, individualized instruction)
- applying knowledge of how to use different instructional strategies for achieving specified goals (e.g., promoting higher-order thinking skills, independent thinking and learning, creativity, study skills, decision-making and problem-solving skills)
- applying knowledge of procedures for integrating curriculum
- recognizing how to vary the role of the teacher (e.g., working with students as instructor, coach, observer) in response to a given instructional situation or goal
- recognizing ways to enhance learning through the use of print, manipulative, technological, and human resources

0007 The teacher understands and uses effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, learning, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the learning environment.

For example:

- recognizing effective communication techniques for given situations and needs (e.g., conveying and clarifying information, questioning, engaging in active listening, collaborating with and responding to students)
- examining how individual and group differences can affect communication, and recognizing how to interact with all students in ways that demonstrate respect and sensitivity
- applying strategies for modifying communication to facilitate student understanding (e.g., providing examples; simplifying complex issues and ideas; using visual, aural, and kinesthetic cues)
- using varied and effective communication skills, including nonverbal communication skills, to promote positive teacher-student rapport
- analyzing communication issues in various teacher-student interactions (e.g., in relation to communicating expectations, providing feedback, maintaining student self-esteem, encouraging students to express their thoughts and to communicate about their own learning)

0008 The teacher understands how to use varied assessment strategies to learn about students, plan instruction, monitor student progress, and modify the teaching/learning process to enhance student learning and development.

For example:

- demonstrating knowledge of the characteristics, uses, and limitations of types of formal and informal assessment (e.g., teacher-designed classroom tests, portfolios, peer assessment, student self-assessment, teacher observation, projects, standardized tests)
- interpreting assessment results, and using results to plan and modify instruction
- evaluating the appropriateness of an assessment instrument or approach in a given situation
- applying strategies for communicating assessment results to students, parents/guardians, and others and for documenting student progress

0009 The teacher understands how to structure and manage a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction and engagement in learning.

For example:

- applying principles of effective classroom management to establish an atmosphere of cooperation, trust, and mutual support
- analyzing relationships between given classroom management strategies and student learning, attitudes, and behavior
- demonstrating knowledge of factors that affect students' engagement in learning and instructional strategies that promote student learning and achievement (e.g., relating lessons to students' interests and life experiences, providing opportunities for students to exercise choice in learning, encouraging students' use of the home language)
- recognizing how aspects of the physical environment (e.g., spatial arrangements, resources, classroom displays) may affect student learning, and applying procedures for ensuring a safe and healthy learning environment
- demonstrating knowledge of strategies for managing the instructional environment to promote productivity and optimize students' time on task (e.g., managing transitions and classroom routines, handling unanticipated situations, minimizing distractions, managing time and materials)

SUBAREA III—THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

This section focuses on the role of teachers as professionals in a complex environment. It addresses strategies teachers can use to ensure ongoing professional development and improvement in their own teaching. It also addresses ways to work collaboratively with others to create an effective school, as well as the rights and responsibilities of all those involved in education in New Mexico.

0010 The teacher understands the importance of reflecting on his/her own practice and utilizes resources and opportunities for enhancing professional development and effectiveness.

For example:

- applying strategies for self-assessment with regard to instructional effectiveness; rapport with students, parents/guardians, and colleagues; and cultural, gender, and other biases
- demonstrating knowledge of how to use varied resources and opportunities (e.g., journals, colleagues, professional associations, in-service training programs, continuing education) to promote professional growth
- applying strategies for collaborating with other members of the school community (e.g., other teachers, mentors, supervisors, support personnel) to enhance skills and solve problems
- demonstrating knowledge of how to evaluate and respond to feedback (e.g., from supervisors, students, parents/guardians, colleagues)

0011 The teacher fosters positive interaction with all school personnel, parents/ guardians, and the community to actively engage them in support of students' learning and well-being.

For example:

- applying strategies for collaborating with colleagues (e.g., other teachers, mentors, supervisors, special needs professionals, administrators, support staff) to address student needs and enhance the learning environment
- applying strategies for initiating and maintaining effective communication with all parents/guardians
- demonstrating knowledge of how to conduct parent conferences and develop partnerships with parents/guardians to promote student achievement
- recognizing how to use community resources (e.g., businesses, cultural institutions, social agencies) to enhance teaching and learning
- applying strategies for conflict resolution in varied educational contexts

0012 The teacher understands rights and responsibilities in various educational contexts and demonstrates knowledge of local, state, and federal educational laws and guidelines.

For example:

- applying knowledge of teachers' rights and responsibilities in various situations (e.g., in relation to students with suspected or identified disabilities, choice of curriculum materials, student discipline, suspected child abuse, suspected substance abuse, the expression of personal views)
- applying knowledge of laws related to students' rights (e.g., in relation to ensuring equal access to education, providing an appropriate education for students with special needs, maintaining confidentiality)
- applying knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians in various situations (e.g., in relation to student records, school attendance)
- applying knowledge of constitutional guarantees and legislature affecting the educational environment (e.g., in relation to free speech, bilingual/ESL instruction, Americans with Disabilities Act, due process)



Sample Test Directions

A sample of the general directions for the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) is shown in the box below.

You should have in front of you:

- (1) a test booklet for the assessment for which you registered (check the assessment name on the front cover);
- (2) a Teacher Competency Answer Document;
- (3) a Written Response Booklet B; and
- (4) a No. 2 lead pencil.

IF YOU ARE MISSING ANY OF THESE MATERIALS, NOTIFY YOUR TEST ADMINISTRATOR. REMOVE ALL OTHER MATERIALS FROM YOUR DESK.

TEST DIRECTIONS

This test consists of two sections: 1) a section with selected-response questions and 2) a constructed-response section.

Each question in the first section of this booklet is a selected-response question with four answer choices. Read each question carefully and choose the ONE best answer. Record your answer on the first two pages of the Teacher Competency Answer Document in the space that corresponds to the question number. Completely fill in the circle having the same letter as the answer you have chosen. *Use only a No. 2 lead pencil.*

Sample Question:

1. What is the capital of New Mexico?
 - A. Albuquerque
 - B. Las Cruces
 - C. Santa Fe
 - D. Silver City

The correct answer to this question is C. You would indicate that on the Teacher Competency Answer Document as follows:

1. Ⓐ Ⓑ ● Ⓓ

Try to answer all questions. Even if you are unsure of an answer, it is better to guess than not to answer a question at all. You will NOT be penalized for guessing.

The second section of this booklet consists of four constructed-response assignments: three restricted-response assignments and one extended-response assignment. You will be asked to provide a written response to each assignment. Directions for completing your written responses to the constructed-response assignments appear immediately before the assignments.

You may use the margins of the test booklet for scratch paper, but all of your answers, including your responses to the constructed-response assignments, must be recorded in the appropriate sections of your answer documents. Answers that are in the test booklet will not be scored.

The words "End of Test" indicate that you have completed the test. You may go back and review your work, and be sure you have answered all questions before raising your hand for dismissal. Your test materials must be returned to a test administrator when you finish the test.

FOR TEST SECURITY REASONS, YOU MAY NOT TAKE NOTES OR REMOVE ANY OF THE TEST MATERIALS FROM THE ROOM.

This testing session will last four hours. You may work at your own pace. If you have any questions, please ask them now before beginning the test.



DO NOT GO ON UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.



Sample Selected-Response Questions

This section presents sample selected-response questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels). To demonstrate how the test competencies may be assessed, each sample question is preceded by the competency that it measures. On an actual test, the competencies will not be given.

Some of the questions on the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) will appear in Teacher Decision Sets. Each Teacher Decision Set starts with a stimulus (e.g., a description of a classroom, a plan for an instructional unit) and asks one or more questions related to that stimulus; then it presents further stimuli that lead to additional questions. A typical Teacher Decision Set includes two or more stimuli and five to nine questions that address a range of competencies. While Teacher Decision Sets often include descriptions of classes or lessons in which specific subject matter is being taught, questions focus on general professional knowledge and skills and do not require knowledge of specific content areas.

You may see several types of questions within a Teacher Decision Set. Among the sample selected-response questions, you will find a sample Teacher Decision Set that contains commonly used question formats.

The sample selected-response questions are designed to illustrate the nature of the test questions. They should not be used as a diagnostic tool to determine your individual strengths and weaknesses. The selected-response questions require you to demonstrate more than the ability to recall factual information. They ask you to think critically about the information, to analyze it, to consider it carefully, or to apply it to a hypothetical situation.

Work through each question carefully before referring to the answer key, which is located at the end of the section.

Competency 0001

The teacher understands developmental processes and variations and uses this knowledge to provide instruction that promotes students' learning and development.

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

Competency 0002

The teacher understands how factors in the home, the school, and the community may affect students and uses this knowledge to create a classroom environment in which all students can grow and learn.

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

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

Rather than simply presenting concepts to her students, a middle school teacher often attempts to guide students to arrive at the concepts themselves. For instance, instead of telling students what an adverb is, she might present them with pairs of sentences containing examples and nonexamples, as in:

Example: The sun shone brightly.
Nonexample: The bright glare made it hard to see.

After students have had the opportunity to observe and think about several such pairs, they talk about what they have noticed about the targeted words, discuss their generalizations about them, and ultimately create their own definition of the concept.

Competency 0003

The teacher understands learning processes and applies knowledge of strategies that foster students' active engagement in learning.

3. Major advantages of the instructional approach described include which of the following?
- I. promoting students' recall of previously learned information and ideas
 - II. helping students see themselves as constructors of knowledge
 - III. motivating students by relating instruction to their everyday lives and needs
 - IV. actively engaging students' higher-level cognitive processes
- A. I and II only
 - B. I and III only
 - C. II and IV only
 - D. III and IV only

Competency 0003

The teacher understands learning processes and applies knowledge of strategies that foster students' active engagement in learning.

4. In the context of this lesson, the teacher could most effectively promote the development of students' metacognitive skills by:
- A. suggesting possible thinking approaches for students to use before they begin working on the lesson.
 - B. pointing out at the end of the lesson that their arrival at an accurate definition demonstrates the effective use of deductive logic.
 - C. asking students to attempt to articulate the reasoning they used as they worked through the lesson.
 - D. praising students for their successful solution to the lesson's problem and encouraging them to reflect on why they were successful.

Competency 0008

The teacher understands how to use varied assessment strategies to learn about students, plan instruction, monitor student progress, and modify the teaching/learning process to enhance student learning and development.

5. Which of the following methods of assessment would be most effective in providing the teacher with information about whether students have internalized and can apply the concept developed in this lesson?
 - A. having each student independently prepare a definition of the concept
 - B. asking students to create their own examples and nonexamples of the concept
 - C. providing students with examples of the concept and asking them to use the examples correctly in original sentences
 - D. having students select examples and nonexamples of the concept from a page of paired sentences

Competency 0003

The teacher understands learning processes and applies knowledge of strategies that foster students' active engagement in learning.

6. A teacher asks students to complete the following graphic organizer as they do a reading assignment on food chains.

Food Chain		
Where organisms at this feeding level obtain food:	Feeding Level:	Examples of organisms at this feeding level:
_____	_____	_____
_____	↕	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	↕	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____

Having students complete this graphic organizer as they read is most likely to promote their learning by:

- A. prompting them to think consciously about their own thinking processes.
- B. helping them identify key concepts and the relationships among them.
- C. highlighting for them key interdisciplinary connections involving the topic.
- D. guiding them to recognize their preconceptions about the topic.

Competency 0004

The teacher understands and is sensitive to diverse student populations, creates learning opportunities and environments that respond to differences among students, and fosters an appreciation of and respect for diversity.

7. In a classroom that includes a culturally diverse group of students, learning is most likely to be enhanced if the teacher ensures that:
 - A. concepts related to cultural differences are de-emphasized and the ideas of cultural homogeneity and conformity are stressed.
 - B. each student is encouraged to examine issues and materials primarily from the perspective of his or her own cultural background.
 - C. opportunities for recognizing and valuing cultural similarities and differences are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.
 - D. student discussions related to aspects of culture focus on factual information rather than individual perceptions.

Competency 0005

The teacher understands how to plan instruction and uses this knowledge to design appropriate and effective student learning opportunities.

8. At the beginning of each school year, a teacher creates a form for each student and fills in as much information as possible. The teacher adds information to each form as the year progresses. One student's form is shown below.

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

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

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

Competency 0006

The teacher understands multiple approaches to instruction and uses this knowledge to facilitate learning and encourage students' development.

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

Competency 0007

The teacher understands and uses effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, learning, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the learning environment.

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

TEACHER DECISION SET BEGINS HERE

Students in Mr. Rivera's middle school class have been discussing their town's landfill crisis as part of a health unit on the obligations of individuals and societies to care for the environment. One day the students return from lunch commenting on the amount of waste they saw in the cafeteria that day and noting that all the garbage generated by the school is contributing to the landfill problem. One student, Kahlil, remarks, "If they'd feed us stuff we like better, maybe there'd be less to throw out." Other students join in, talking about how wasteful it is to serve food that nobody likes and wondering what might be done about the waste.

Once the class settles down, the teacher remarks that the students have made some very interesting observations and poses the following questions to the class:

Is the amount of food you saw wasted today typical?

Kahlil has suggested that if the school served lunches that students like, there would be less waste. Do you agree or disagree with Kahlil's suggestion, and why?

What kinds of information could you collect to support your opinions?

Competency 0006

The teacher understands multiple approaches to instruction and uses this knowledge to facilitate learning and encourage students' development.

11. The primary role that Mr. Rivera has taken in the instructional process so far has been to:
 - A. encourage students to generate questions about issues that are meaningful to them.
 - B. prompt students to assess their own understanding of instructional content.
 - C. promote students' use of higher-order thinking in a real-world context.
 - D. provide students with information that can serve as a basis for future learning.

Competency 0007

The teacher understands and uses effective communication techniques to foster active inquiry, learning, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the learning environment.

12. Mr. Rivera's rephrasing of Kahlil's hypothesis is likely to be most useful for:
 - A. providing a framework for subsequent student discussion.
 - B. encouraging student recall of related information.
 - C. checking students' understanding of Kahlil's original statement.
 - D. providing students with clues about the answer to the preceding question.

As the students discuss the issue of cafeteria waste, they decide to try to determine how much food and other waste comes from the school cafeteria and whether Kahlil's hypothesis about the relationship between student food preferences and cafeteria waste is valid. Mr. Rivera asks the class, "How could we organize this research project?" The students respond enthusiastically, suggesting a variety of possible ways to implement such a project and finally deciding on the specific plan they will use.

Competency 0005

The teacher understands how to plan instruction and uses this knowledge to design appropriate and effective student learning opportunities.

13. What is likely to be an important advantage of having students play a key role in the planning process for this project?
 - A. It will ensure the development of a project plan best suited to address the academic needs of individual students.
 - B. It will give students a sense of ownership in regard to their own learning.
 - C. It offers the teacher an opportunity to explore student preconceptions regarding the research topic.
 - D. It enhances students' recognition of their own strengths and areas for improvement.

After a two-week data collection period, the students have gathered a great deal of information about how much food is thrown out in the cafeteria each day and what food preferences students have. Mr. Rivera has the students compile their data and discuss the trends they see. One student, Miriam, observes, "From the information we have, I'll bet we could predict how much waste there would be if different combinations of foods were served."

Competency 0001

The teacher understands developmental processes and variations and uses this knowledge to provide instruction that promotes students' learning and development.

14. When Mr. Rivera suggests that the class share its research results with the school principal, all the students agree that this would be a good idea. Mr. Rivera then asks the students to consider the possible effects their study could have on the cafeteria. Having students think about this issue is most likely to help them:
- A. develop a sense of involvement and responsibility in relation to the larger school community.
 - B. recognize the need for precision and accuracy in carrying out any research effort.
 - C. gain an appreciation of their own ability to make decisions effectively.
 - D. recognize the value of establishing and maintaining standards of behavior within the school environment.

Competency 0006

The teacher understands multiple approaches to instruction and uses this knowledge to facilitate learning and encourage students' development.

15. Miriam's observation suggests that the data collection activity has been successful in encouraging her to:
- A. think independently and creatively.
 - B. integrate ideas from a variety of content areas.
 - C. engage in continuous self-monitoring and self-assessment.
 - D. recognize the benefits of working cooperatively to achieve goals.

TEACHER DECISION SET ENDS HERE

Competency 0008

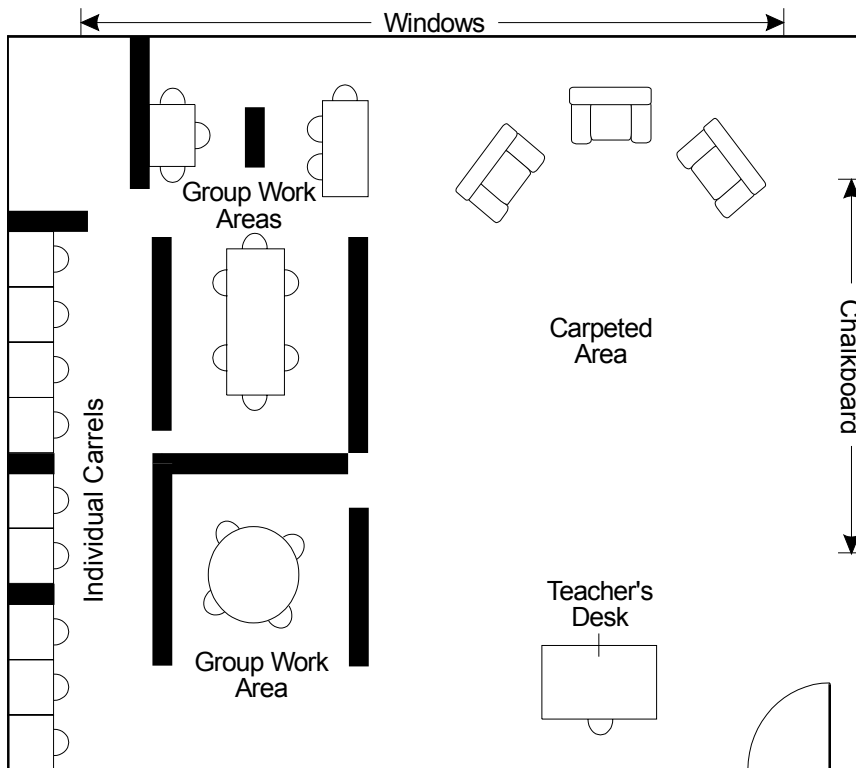
The teacher understands how to use varied assessment strategies to learn about students, plan instruction, monitor student progress, and modify the teaching/learning process to enhance student learning and development.

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

Competency 0009

The teacher understands how to structure and manage a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction and engagement in learning.

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



This classroom arrangement is most likely designed primarily to:

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

Competency 0010

The teacher understands the importance of reflecting on his/her own practice and utilizes resources and opportunities for enhancing professional development and effectiveness.

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

Competency 0011

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

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

Competency 0012

The teacher understands rights and responsibilities in various educational contexts and demonstrates knowledge of local, state, and federal educational laws and guidelines.

20. A student in a high school science class uses a wheelchair. Although the student is physically capable of participating fully in all planned activities, the design of the laboratory will make some equipment inaccessible to him. In this situation, the teacher and the school have a legal obligation to do which of the following?
- A. Provide the student with individual tutorials that address the same instructional goals that peers will address in laboratory activities.
 - B. Revise instructional plans to avoid any class activities that will present access problems for the student.
 - C. Offer the student separate but equal laboratory activities whenever peers are engaged in activities that involve access problems.
 - D. Make arrangements that allow the student access to equipment or other facilities needed for him to participate as fully as possible in class activities.



Answer Key for the Sample Selected-Response Questions

1. B
2. C
3. C
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. C
8. D
9. D
10. B
11. C
12. A
13. B
14. A
15. A
16. D
17. A
18. D
19. B
20. D



Information About the Constructed-Response Assignments

Each candidate's written responses to the Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) constructed-response assignments will be scored using a method known as focused holistic scoring. In this method scorers judge the overall effectiveness of each response in meeting specified criteria. Each response is scored by at least two scorers and is assigned a score based on a holistic scale. The score points on the holistic scoring scale reflect the extent to which the candidate demonstrates the knowledge and skills included in the set of performance characteristics that have been defined as important for the assignments. Although this method *focuses* on the specific performance characteristics, it is *holistic* in that each assigned score describes the overall effectiveness of these characteristics working in concert in response to the assignment.

Performance Characteristics—Restricted-Response and Extended-Response Assignments

PURPOSE	The candidate fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding to the given task and demonstrating an understanding of relevant professional knowledge.
APPLICATION OF PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE	The candidate accurately and effectively applies relevant professional knowledge.
SUPPORT	The candidate supports the response with appropriate examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.

Scoring Scale—Restricted-Response Assignments

The three points of the scoring scale correspond to varying degrees of performance. The following statements describe typical responses at each score point.

Score	Score Point Description
3	<p>The "3" response reflects a thorough understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response completely fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding fully to the given task. • The response demonstrates an accurate and effective application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides strong supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects an adequate understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response generally fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding adequately to the given task. • The response demonstrates a generally accurate and reasonably effective application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides adequate supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects limited or no understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially fulfills or fails to fulfill the purpose of the assignment by responding in a limited or inadequate way to the given task. • The response demonstrates a limited or ineffective application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides limited or no supporting examples, evidence, or rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
U	<p>The "U" (Unscorable) will be assigned to responses that are off topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, or not of sufficient length to score.</p>
B	<p>The "B" (Blank) will be assigned to written response sheets that are completely blank.</p>

Scoring Scale—Extended-Response Assignment

The four points of the scoring scale correspond to varying degrees of performance. The following statements describe typical responses at each score point.

Score	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response completely fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding fully to the given task. • The response demonstrates an accurate and effective application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides strong supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response generally fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding adequately to the given task. • The response demonstrates a generally accurate and reasonably effective application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides adequate supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a limited understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response partially fulfills the purpose of the assignment by responding in a limited way to the given task. • The response demonstrates a limited application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides limited supporting examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects little or no understanding of relevant professional knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response fails to fulfill the purpose of the assignment by responding in an inadequate way to the given task. • The response demonstrates an ineffective application or no application of relevant professional knowledge. • The response provides inadequate or no supporting examples, evidence, or rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.
U	<p>The "U" (Unscorable) will be assigned to responses that are off topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, or not of sufficient length to score.</p>
B	<p>The "B" (Blank) will be assigned to written response booklets that are completely blank.</p>

Sample Directions for the Restricted-Response Assignments

A sample of the directions for the restricted-response assignments for the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) is shown in the box below.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE RESTRICTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENTS

This section of the test consists of three restricted-response assignments. You are to prepare a written response of up to approximately 150 words on each assigned topic. ***The assignments can be found on the following pages.*** You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your responses to the assignments.

Read each assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize each response. You may use any blank space provided on the following pages to make notes, write outlines, or otherwise prepare your responses. ***However, your final responses must be written in the Teacher Competency Answer Document on the appropriate Written Response Sheet. Be sure to write your written response to each assignment in the appropriate area of the corresponding Written Response Sheet.***

Your response to each assignment will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- **Purpose**—You fulfill the purpose of the assignment by responding to the given task and demonstrating an understanding of relevant professional knowledge.
- **Application of Professional Knowledge**—You accurately and effectively apply relevant professional knowledge.
- **Support**—You support the response with appropriate examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.

The assignments are not intended to assess writing ability. However, your responses must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. The final version of each of your responses should conform to the conventions of edited American English.

Be sure to write about the assigned topics. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Your written responses must be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes you think will improve your written responses.

Record your written response to each assignment in the Teacher Competency Answer Document on the appropriate Written Response Sheet. The length of each response is limited to the lined space available on the Written Response Sheet for that assignment.

Sample Restricted-Response Assignment

21. Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

A fourth grader expresses frustration and anxiety about his inability to do the same math problems that most of his peers are able to do with ease. He tells his teacher that he is "just not as smart as the other kids" and will never be able to do math. Identify one teaching strategy the teacher could use to help this student view himself as a successful learner. Then explain why the strategy you identified would be effective for this purpose.

A Very Good Response to the Sample Restricted-Response Assignment

If a fourth grader is frustrated about his inability to do math problems, my first job as his teacher is to create opportunities for him to succeed. A strategy that would be effective in this situation would be a program of individualized, incremental learning steps coupled with rewards and recognition for progress. After carefully evaluating his current level of knowledge, I would incorporate a number of different techniques to help build his skills and confidence. An example would be the use of games or puzzles that involve increasing levels of math skills. The games would be of high interest level and allow the student to proceed at his own pace and receive immediate feedback and reinforcement for his success. The emphasis would be on steady progress toward the desired level of achievement. This strategy would be effective because it concentrates on the specific needs of the student while affording him some control in his own education and progress. He can be successful moving at his own pace without the worry of competition from more advanced learners.

Sample Directions for the Extended-Response Assignment

A sample of the directions for the extended-response assignment for the New Mexico Assessment of Teacher Competency (Elementary/Secondary Levels) is shown in the box below.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE EXTENDED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT

This section of the test consists of one extended-response assignment. You are to prepare a written response of 300–600 words on the assigned topic. ***The assignment can be found on the following page.*** You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response to the assignment.

Read the assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize your response. You may use any blank space provided on the following pages to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. ***However, your final response must be written in Written Response Booklet B.***

Your response to the assignment will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- **Purpose**—You fulfill the purpose of the assignment by responding to the given task and demonstrating an understanding of relevant professional knowledge.
- **Application of Professional Knowledge**—You accurately and effectively apply relevant professional knowledge.
- **Support**—You support the response with appropriate examples, evidence, and rationales based on relevant professional knowledge.

The assignment is not intended to assess writing ability. However, your response must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English.

Be sure to write about the assigned topic and use multiple paragraphs. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Your written response must be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes you think will improve your written response.

Record your written response to the assignment in the separate Written Response Booklet B. The length of your response is limited to the lined space available in Written Response Booklet B.

Sample Extended-Response Assignment

22. **Read the information below; then complete the exercise that follows.**

You are a new teacher at a secondary school in New Mexico. During the first two weeks of school, it becomes evident that there are serious peer interaction problems in one of your classes. Several students frequently make hurtful remarks to other members of the class about such issues as their clothing, behavior, and schoolwork. Also, the students in the class tend to interact within very limited social groups (i.e., cliques). In an essay, identify a subject area and grade level for which you are prepared to teach; then:

- examine reasons why it is important for you, as the teacher, to take steps to address the kinds of peer interaction problems described;
- describe two strategies you would use to address the peer relations issues in this class; and
- explain why these strategies would be effective in improving the classroom environment.

The audience for this writing task is a group of educators. Be sure to specify a subject area and grade level in your essay and frame your ideas so that an educator certified at your level will be able to understand the basis for your response.

A Very Good Response to the Sample Extended-Response Assignment

The atmosphere in a classroom must be pleasant and welcoming to be conducive to learning. This atmosphere is created not only by the teacher-student relationship but also by student-student interaction. When students feel that they are excluded from the group or are the object of hurtful remarks, they cannot be fully open to educational experiences. Defense mechanisms prevent them from interacting with others. Those who are the perpetrators of such behavior are also less open to learning because their attention is given to putting down their classmates. This type of peer interaction problem is likely to occur in a 9th grade English class where adolescents are still trying to find themselves and their place in society. To address this problem I would employ two different strategies: one environmental, the other instructional.

The environment of a classroom can be crucial to student interaction. If the student numbers are small and the desks movable, I would have the students sit in a circle, like knights at a round table. However, if the class size is large or the desks fixed, I would have the students sit, at first, in alphabetical order. Several times during the term, I would change the order of the seats, letting the students think I have strange whims. Either of these arrangements would promote peer interaction and discourage clique seating. In addition, I would often incorporate group work into my class, being sure that each group includes students from different cliques. Early in the term I would establish "Rules of the Road" that specify exactly what type of behavior is expected of young men and women during whole-class and small-group activities. The rules would be clearly stated in a positive manner and posted as a reminder. Youngsters are much more secure in themselves when they know exactly what is required of them. Finally I would model this behavior for them. I would show respect to each individual, value their opinions, praise their efforts, and include everyone in class discussions. I would never criticize a student in front of the class but speak my concerns privately to each one. Embarrassing a student only defeats the purpose of changing behavior.

In addition to creating an effective classroom environment, I would offer students an instructional experience to open their minds to their own behavior. I would prepare a unit on the novel Lord of the Flies by William Golding. This unit would work on several levels, increasing reading, writing and oral skills, as well as getting students to think in more universal terms. In the course of classroom discussion, I would introduce the concept of tribalism, which is the attitude that only members of the tribe, group, class, race, etc. have any rights; anyone outside

(continued on next page)

A Very Good Response to the Sample Extended-Response Assignment *(continued)*

the circle is considered somehow less human and not to be respected. I would have the students explore tribalism found in the novel as well as examples in modern life, particularly teenage life, without ever outrightly condemning individual attitudes. To reinforce group effort I would assign reports on symbolism in the novel to be given orally by carefully chosen, heterogeneous groups of 3-4 students. Then I would have them write a final essay comparing tribalism in the novel with that found in modern life. My aim is that by examining this aspect of human behavior, the students will grow socially as well as intellectually.