

PENNSYLVANIA
STATE POLICE

STANDARD
STUDY
GUIDE

GUARDIAN
SELECTION
INVENTORY

GSI



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INTRODUCTION

This study guide will help you prepare to take the Guardian Selection Inventory (GSI). The test was developed to identify people who will do well in law enforcement careers. This guide will provide you with information about the test. It will help you prepare to take the test, improve your cognitive skills, and decrease test-related anxiety.

This guide was created for the GSI by the publisher of the test. No other source of information will be as informative or accurate about the content and structure of the test.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

This study guide will give you basic information about how to take the test. Read this guide carefully more than once so you will know the instructions in advance. Preparing for the test will increase your self-confidence. Self-confidence, in turn, can increase your chances of getting a high score.

This study guide will also discuss the types of questions that will be on the test. The skills and abilities measured by the test will be defined. You will also find sample questions and an answer key. Read the definition of each skill or ability and then try the sample questions. After you have answered the sample questions, check your answers with the answer key.

You will also be given some important test-taking tips that should help improve your chances of doing your best on the test.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Do not memorize the sample questions and answers. Any question that has been used in this study guide will not be used again. You may run into questions that will be similar. However, you will not be tested with any of these exact questions. These questions will give you good practice, but they will not give you the answers to any of the questions on your test.

TEST OVERVIEW

The GSI has 207 multiple-choice questions. It will measure your cognitive abilities, situational judgement, and behavioral characteristics and attitudes.

When you get to the test site on the day of the test, you will need to follow the check-in process. Listen carefully and follow all instructions. Please read all instructions before starting the test and make sure you understand them.

You should plan to spend a total of about three hours and 45 minutes at the testing site, between checking in, reading the test instructions, taking the test, and checking out. The test will last three hours. Be sure to keep track of time. This will ensure that you can complete the full test. If you finish early, use the extra time to look over your work and check your answers. There is no bonus for finishing early. We suggest that you use all of your time to perfect your test.

WHAT DOES THE TEST MEASURE?

The test measures skills and abilities needed to be a successful law enforcement officer. The test has four sections. The sections measure cognitive ability, situational judgement, and behavioral characteristics and attitudes. The section breakdown of the test is as follows:

- **Section 1:** Behavioral Characteristics and Attitudes (85 questions)
- **Section 2:** Behavioral Characteristics and Attitudes (48 questions)
- **Section 3:** Cognitive Ability (50 questions)
- **Section 4:** Situational Judgement (24 questions)

It is important to note that the test does not measure job knowledge or any skills that require training. You will not need any law enforcement knowledge or skills to do well on the test.

SECTIONS 1 & 2: BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTITUDES

Sections 1 and 2 measure behavioral characteristics and attitudes that are needed to be an effective law enforcement officer. Section 1 has two parts. For Part 1 of Section 1, you will indicate your level of agreement with each statement. For Part 2 of Section 1, you will choose which one of two statements most closely reflects your beliefs or attitudes. For Section 2, you will indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

SECTION 3: COGNITIVE ABILITIES

Section 3 of the test measures eight cognitive abilities:

Cognitive Abilities	
Pattern Recognition	Inductive Reasoning
Selective Attention	Grammar
Deductive Reasoning	Reading
Ordering of Information	Vocabulary

These cognitive abilities have been shown to be essential for success as a law enforcement officer based on our analysis of the job.

TEST OVERVIEW

SECTION 4: SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT

Section 4 of the test measures your situational judgement. Situational judgement is your ability to respond in an appropriate and effective way to challenges at work. You will be presented with scenarios that reflect the types of challenges one could face at work. Each scenario has two responses. Each response has an action or actions one could take in the scenario. You will be asked to rate how likely it is you would take the action or actions to respond to the scenario.

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS/ATTITUDES MEASURES

Sections 1 and 2 of the test measure behavioral characteristics and attitudes. Section 1 contains two parts: Part 1 and Part 2. The items in Part 1 of Section 1 will ask you to rate your level of agreement with a number of statements using the agreement scale shown below.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

When answering this type of question, you should consider the statement that is presented. You should then choose a response that reflects your initial reaction about your level of agreement or disagreement. Your first reaction is usually the most accurate response.

For Part 2 of Section 1, you will be presented with two statements. You will be asked to choose the statement you MOST agree with. Again, you should go with your initial reaction to make sure that your responses are accurate.

The items in Section 2 will be similar to the items in Section 1 – Part 1. You will determine your level of agreement with a variety of statements using the same agreement scale presented above.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

SECTION 1 – PART 1 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

This section contains a series of statements that you must rate based on your personal opinion. Read each statement and then choose a response based on the scale below.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. I am sometimes nervous around friends whom I have not seen for a long time.
2. I enjoy trying to make others feel comfortable in new situations.
3. When I am uncertain of how to do a task, I will usually ask for help.

Discussion

You may agree with item 1. You would choose answer option “D” for item 1. You may disagree with item 2. You would choose answer option “B” for item 2. Finally, you may strongly disagree with item 3. You would choose answer option “A” for item 3.

SECTION 1 – PART 2 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

For the following items, please review the response options and choose the response that most closely reflects your beliefs or attitudes.

1. A. I am more assertive than most of my friends.
B. Others would describe me as timid.
2. A. When I get home from work or school, I usually feel stressed.
B. I do not bring my feelings about work or school home with me.

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS/ATTITUDES MEASURES

Discussion

Assume that for item 1, you agree with statement A, “I am more assertive than most of my friends.” You choose option “A” for item 1. Next, assume that for item 2, you agree with statement B, “I do not bring my feelings about work or school home with me.” You would choose option “B” for item 2.

SECTION 2 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The questions that follow require that you select the answer that best reflects your views and opinions. Please read each statement, and then provide an honest response using the scale below.

In the context of the questions that follow, *CULTURE* describes how a group of people tend to behave, what they believe and value, the way they speak or dress, and the way they talk and behave with one another.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. It is important to be aware of the differences between people from all kinds of cultures.
2. I find engaging with other cultures to be pointless.
3. It is acceptable to simply tolerate other cultures.

Discussion

You may agree with item 1. You would choose answer option “D” for item 1. You may disagree with item 2. You would choose answer option “B” for item 2. Finally, you may strongly agree with item 3. You would choose answer option “E” for item 3.

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS/ATTITUDES TIPS

Respond to each statement honestly based on how much you agree or disagree with it. Your response should reflect how you feel about the statement. You should respond honestly to each statement. A good tip for answering these types of items is to put down the first response that feels right. Overthinking the statement or looking for hidden meaning can cause you to misunderstand the statement. This could cause you to respond in a way that does not reflect your true beliefs.

RESPONDING HONESTLY

You should respond honestly to these items. Do not respond in a way that you think will make you look good. Responding honestly according to your personal thoughts, feelings, or beliefs is the best strategy. Trying to look good by only choosing the extreme parts of the scale (using only “Strongly Disagrees” and “Strongly Agrees”) is a bad strategy and may lead to your test being flagged for review.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

Section 3 of the test measures cognitive abilities. Cognitive abilities are the abilities of our brains to perceive, reason, understand, and interact with things in the world. The test measures deductive reasoning, ordering of information, inductive reasoning, grammar, vocabulary, reading, pattern recognition, and selective attention. Knowing what the abilities are and practicing where your skills are weaker will help you do well.

This study guide will describe each cognitive ability and the types of items in this section. It will also describe how each might be used on the job. These descriptions, along with sample questions, will help you prepare for the test.

DEDUCTIVE REASONING

Deductive reasoning is the ability to apply rules and guidelines to make decisions in a situation. It involves applying general rules to specific problems to find logical answers.

Law enforcement officers learn state, local, and constitutional laws. They also learn the elements of crimes. They apply this information to situations on the job. Applying rules, policies, procedures, and laws to specific situations on the job involves deductive reasoning.

The sample question will help you assess your deductive reasoning ability and learn the right method for solving this type of question.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

SAMPLE QUESTION 1

Please use the following information to answer Sample Question 1.

Department Library Policies

Use of library materials	Check out and return policy	Responsibilities
All books must be borrowed from and returned to the library of the police department.	A person may borrow books from the library for a period of no more than 14 days. The borrowed book must be returned to the library.	The County Training Officer will maintain the books within the library and manage their use.
The library has multiple study guides for police department exams. These guides may not be checked out of the library.	Books may NOT be loaned to another person while checked out under any circumstances.	Any person who borrows books from the library will be responsible for that material.
	When a book is returned to the library, the borrower must record the return date on the appropriate form.	

1. **Officer Schultz borrowed a book from the library. One day before the book is due, he gives the book to his coworker, Officer Lane, who wants to read it next. According to the information above, are Officer Schultz's actions a violation of the policy?**
- No; since Officer Schultz gave the book to Officer Lane a day before it was due, he did not keep the book longer than the policy allows.
 - No; since Officer Lane is Officer Schultz's coworker, he can take the book from Officer Schultz once he has finished reading it.
 - Yes; Officer Schultz must return the book to the library and record the return date on the appropriate form. Officer Lane can then check out the book under his own name.
 - Yes; Officer Schultz must first check to make sure nobody has placed a hold on the book before he can loan it to Officer Lane.

Discussion

Before you read the information in the table, read the question carefully. This question is asking you to decide whether Officer Schultz has violated the policy based on some facts described in the question. Knowing that you are trying to decide if a violation occurred, you can read the table with this in mind. It may also be helpful to make notes using the scratch pad function about key words and phrases within the table that are in line with the facts given in the question.

Based on the question, Officer Schultz borrowed a book from the library and then gave the book to Officer Lane one day before it was due. With this in mind, we can read the table to find the answer to the question. The first column, "Use of library materials," does not contain any information that would help us answer the question.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

The second column, “Check out and return policy,” contains relevant information. In fact, the second row states that “Books may NOT be loaned to another person while checked out under any circumstances.” This answers the question, “are Officer Schultz’s actions a violation of departmental policy?” The answer to this is “Yes.” Based on this, answer options “a” and “b” are wrong since they both state that “No,” Officer Schultz’s actions were NOT a violation of the policy.

Now, we are left with options “c” and “d.” We have to decide which of the two is correct. Option “c” states that “Officer Schultz must return the book to the library and record the return date on the appropriate form. Officer Lane can then check out the book under his own name.” Based on the last row under “Check out and return policy,” it is true that when a book is returned to the library, the borrower must record the return date on a form. It then follows that once the book is returned, Officer Lane can check it out. Based on this information, option “c” is correct. However, you should still review option “d” to make sure it is not a better answer.

Option “d” states that if no one has a hold on the book, Officer Schultz can loan it to Officer Lane. This goes against the “Check out and return policy” in the second row which states that “Books may NOT be loaned to another person while checked out under any circumstances.” Based on this, option “d” is not correct. Option “c” must be the correct answer.

Correct answer: C

DEDUCTIVE REASONING TIPS

For deductive reasoning questions, you will be given a table with definitions, rules, or policies. You will then be given a specific situation related to the information in the table. You will have to choose the best answer based on the question asked.

A common mistake made when responding to deductive reasoning questions is to try to answer the question without using the information in the table. Often candidates will assume that they already know the information in the table. They will use their own knowledge to answer the question. This might lead you to answer the question without reading the full table. Remember, the information in the table is *all* that you need to answer the question. Do not use prior knowledge of the topic to choose an answer. If you do not use the information in the table, there is a chance that you will choose the wrong answer.

The test will contain questions like Sample Question 1. In each case, the information in the table is all you need to answer the question. These questions should be answered using the method described here.

ORDERING OF INFORMATION

Ordering of information is the ability to choose the best order for a set of events. It involves placing events in a logical and meaningful order. This involves deciding the order of each event in a scenario to make a correct timeline.

Law enforcement officers use ordering of information when they collect facts and accounts from witnesses. They must put together the order of events based on different information. It is also used in following the correct steps to perform first aid or following a procedure to operate equipment.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

The sample question will help you assess your ordering of information ability and learn the right method for solving this type of question.

SAMPLE QUESTION 2

For this item, you will be presented with a series of statements about an event. The statements are not in order. Please choose the answer option that contains the correct order of statements. You may take notes using the scratch pad feature to help keep yourself organized.

Please use the information below to answer the question that follows.

Joe witnesses a traffic accident. His description of the accident includes the following statements. The statements are not in order.

1. The driver of the van approached the traffic jam, slammed on the brakes, and swerved into the intersection to avoid hitting the other cars.
2. The van then continued through the intersection into oncoming traffic in the opposite lane.
3. I moved to the right lane so the van could pass me, but then I noticed a traffic jam ahead.
4. I called 911 when the van and car crashed. Both the car and van were destroyed.
5. When the van entered the opposite lane, traffic on that side came to a halt, but only after the van was hit by a car.
6. I was driving on Route 5 when I noticed a black van speed up behind me.

2. Which of the following is the correct order of the above statements?

- a. 6, 3, 1, 2, 5, 4
- b. 6, 3, 2, 5, 1, 4
- c. 6, 5, 3, 2, 1, 4
- d. 6, 3, 2, 1, 5, 4

Discussion

To answer this question, you must first read all six statements. While reading, you may wish to make notes using the scratch pad feature noting which step comes earlier or later in the process. If you find the two or three steps that come earlier, the two or three steps in the middle, and the two or three steps that come later, you can then go back and order these statements in smaller groups. This takes a complex task and breaks it into smaller pieces.

These statements provide events that took place during a traffic accident. After reading all the statements, you will find that the statements in total can describe the scene prior to the accident, during the accident, and just after the accident. Based on this, you can make some quick notes to try to put them into groups. Statements 1, 2, and 3 must have occurred before the accident, because we know from reading the other statements that the van was involved in the accident. You should write “before” in your scratch pad referencing these first three statements. Statement 4 occurred after the accident, because the witness says both the car and van were destroyed. You should write “after” referencing

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statement 4. Statement 5 occurred during the accident, because it states exactly how the accident happened. Statement 6 occurred before the accident, as it tells us that the van was speeding.

You have four statements that come before the accident, one during the accident and one after the accident. Since your goal is to place these events in order, you can order statement 4 as the last event. This is because it is the only one that occurred after the accident. You can also order statement 5 as the second to last event. This is because it is the only one that occurred during the accident. This quick review allows you to dismiss answer options “b” and “c” because they do not list statement 5 as the second to last event.

Look at the statements that come before the accident. This includes statements 1, 2, 3, and 6. You should try to put these in order. You will see that statement 6 is likely the first event because this statement has Joe first noticing the speeding van behind him. Because the van is speeding up behind Joe, it would make sense that the next event would have Joe switching lanes so the van could pass. Statement 3 fits as the second event. Statement 1 would be the third event. This is because it has the van approach the traffic jam mentioned in statement 3 and swerve into the intersection. This statement also points to the fourth statement as the van continues through the intersection into oncoming traffic. This leaves statement 2 to be the fourth in the series. So, of these first four statements, we can order them as follows: 6, 3, 1, and 2. The whole sequence is 6, 3, 1, 2, 5, 4. Option “a” is the correct response based on this order of the six statements.

Once you have found the correct order, read the statements in order and make sure the order makes sense. If it does, you have found the correct answer.

Correct answer: A

ORDERING OF INFORMATION TIPS

The most common mistake with these questions is not reading all the steps before starting to put them in order. You cannot decide the order of statements until you read all of them. Another mistake is not reviewing the steps in order after you think you know their order. This last check helps you make sure that the order makes sense. Sometimes you will find that it makes sense to switch one or two of the steps to make the order flow better.

The ordering of information items on the test will all follow the same format as Sample Question 2. These questions should be answered using the method described here.

INDUCTIVE REASONING

Inductive reasoning is the ability to combine pieces of information, or specific answers to problems, to form general rules or conclusions.

Law enforcement officers use this ability when they take in pieces of information about a crime scene or incident. They must then decide how to react based on that information. This ability is used when investigating if rules or laws have been broken.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

The sample question will help you assess your inductive reasoning ability and learn the proper method for solving this type of question.

SAMPLE QUESTION 3

Please use the information presented to answer Sample Question 3.

Officer Web has been called to the scene of a traffic accident. Four people provide information to Officer Web. Their accounts are below:

Marvis Smith: “I was sitting in my car on the side of the road when I heard a loud crunching sound. I looked up to see that a red truck had rear-ended a white car. I saw both drivers exit their vehicles. They started yelling at each other. Then, the driver of the truck got back into his vehicle. He began to drive right toward me. He nearly struck a person and another car with his truck before completely losing control. He crashed into a different car across the street. I thought about offering to help, but it turned out that the person who was nearly hit was an off-duty law enforcement officer.”

Hailey House: “I was studying for my final exams at a coffee shop on Plymouth Avenue and Harvard Drive. I saw an ambulance pass by with lights and sirens. I’m a volunteer EMT, so I left the shop to investigate. I saw what appeared to be a multi-car accident about two blocks down. Upon my arrival at the scene, a paramedic and an off-duty law enforcement officer were treating a man near a red truck. He didn’t appear to be very cooperative. I would guess that he was drunk.”

Travis Quin: “I was walking down Warrenville Road when the accident occurred. I don’t really remember who was at fault, but I think the car hit the truck. Then both drivers exited their vehicles. They began yelling at each other. The truck driver got back into his truck and began to drive off. The truck came flying onto Plymouth Avenue and almost hit a man. It then hit another car before stopping. I heard a volunteer EMT say that the truck driver was drunk. I wouldn’t be surprised at all if it were true.”

Andrew Mavros: “I was stopped at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Grand Street when I heard a loud crack. I turned left onto Washington Avenue toward the sound, which I believed to be from a car accident. As I neared the Plymouth Avenue intersection, I saw that a red truck had rear-ended a white car. I figured I would find somewhere to park and offer to help. As I exited my car I was nearly run over by the truck as the driver attempted to flee the scene. I watched him hit another car and then stop, so I went over to help him.”

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3. Based on the witness statements, which of the following conclusions is TRUE?

- a. The truck driver was drunk.
- b. The initial accident was caused by the white car.
- c. Andrew Mavros is the off-duty police officer.
- d. The truck driver tried to hit a person.

Discussion

This question measures inductive reasoning, or your ability to combine information to make a conclusion about what happened. In this case, you need to consider the accounts of four different people. You need to use them to piece together one clear picture about what happened.

The best strategy to use in responding to inductive reasoning questions, or any question that requires you to read a lot of information, is to first review the question. The question asks you to decide which of the four conclusions is true. To answer this question, you have to read the whole passage and use the details from each person to figure out what happened. You should take notes in the scratch pad feature as you read each person's account. This will make it easier to combine the information. Below are some notes you may come up with as you read each person's account:

Marvis Smith:

- saw red truck rear-end white car
- drivers were yelling at each other
- truck driver returned to vehicle and almost hit an off-duty police officer
- truck driver crashed into another car across street

Hailey House:

- saw an ambulance from the coffee shop at Plymouth Avenue and Harvard Drive
- is a volunteer EMT
- saw a paramedic and an off-duty law enforcement officer treating a man near a red truck at the scene
- guesses that the man was drunk

Travis Quin:

- walking on Warrenville Road when accident occurred
- doesn't remember, but thinks car hit the truck
- drivers were yelling at each other
- truck struck another car on Plymouth Avenue before stopping
- heard volunteer EMT say the truck driver was drunk

Andrew Mavros:

- saw red truck had rear-ended white car near Washington Avenue and Plymouth Avenue
- was almost hit by truck as the driver attempted to flee the scene
- saw truck hit another car
- went to go help truck driver

After reading the passage and taking notes, you can assess each of the answer options to determine which is true. First, we consider option "a." You should look at your notes and find that both Hailey and Travis mentioned the driver may be drunk. However, Hailey only *guessed* that the truck driver was drunk. Plus, Travis only says that he heard a volunteer EMT (who we know to be Hailey, based on her account)

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say that the truck driver was drunk. Based on this, we cannot conclude that the truck driver was truly drunk. Option “a” is incorrect.

Next, we should consider option “b.” Based on our notes, three people made statements about who was at fault for the accident. Travis states that he doesn’t remember who was at fault, but he *thinks* the car hit the truck. However, the two other witnesses who saw the outcome of the initial accident, Marvis and Andrew, both say they saw the red truck had rear-ended the white car. Based on this information, we cannot conclude that the initial accident was caused by the white car. It is more likely that it was caused by the red truck. Option “b” is incorrect.

Now look at option “c.” Both Marvis and Hailey mentioned an off-duty police officer. Marvis stated that the truck driver almost hit an off-duty police officer. Hailey stated that she saw an off-duty law enforcement officer helping a man near a red truck at the scene. Combined with Andrew’s statements that he was the person who was almost hit by the truck and that he went to help the truck driver after he hit a second car, we can conclude that Andrew Mavros is the off-duty law enforcement officer that both Marvis and Hailey saw. This makes option “c” is the correct answer.

Although option “c” is correct, we should still read option “d” to eliminate it. Option “d” states that the truck driver tried to hit a person. Based on the witness accounts, there is no information that confirms this. We are not given any information as to the truck driver’s motives, so option “d” cannot be correct. Option “c” is the best answer.

Correct answer: C

INDUCTIVE REASONING TIPS

For this type of item, there will be a large amount of information that you must combine. You should take notes to understand what is being described. People make mistakes on this type of question because they are rushing and do not have a clear picture of the situation.

You should not draw conclusions based on a single person’s account. You should combine the information from all people to draw conclusions and answer the questions. Do not rely on guesses made by witnesses. You should only rely on the facts.

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GRAMMAR

Grammatical ability is a person's knowledge of word usage, spelling, and punctuation.

Law enforcement officers often communicate in writing. They must be able to correctly spell common words, use and pair parts of language (e.g., nouns, verbs), punctuate sentences, and compose meaningful sentences.

The sample question will help you assess your grammatical ability and learn the right method for solving these questions.

SAMPLE QUESTION 4

For Sample Question 4, please choose the word or phrase that correctly completes the sentence.

4. The police _____ retired after working for the department for 30 years.
- a. cheif
 - b. cheef
 - c. chief
 - d. cheaf

Discussion

This question measures your ability to recognize proper spelling. To the extent that you understand how to spell, you should be able to recognize which answer option correctly completes the sentence.

In order to answer this question, you should first read the sentence and answer options and see if the correct answer stands out to you. If so, try inserting what you believe to be the correct spelling into the sentence. Then re-read it to make sure that it is accurate. If you cannot choose the correct answer right away, carefully read the answer options to determine which ones contain errors. Move through each option using this method. Make sure you can come up with a spelling rule that is clearly broken in each instance. Through this process of elimination, you should end up with only the correct answer remaining.

In this question, the only correct answer is "c." Specifically, the word "chief" is spelled correctly. Each of the other answer options presents misspellings of the word "chief." By using your knowledge of basic spelling, you can conclude that the correct answer is option "c."

Correct answer: C

GRAMMAR TIPS

All of the grammar items on the test will ask you to choose the answer option that correctly completes a sentence. To answer this type of question, you will need to know common grammar, spelling, and punctuation rules. There are many rules about the English language. It may be helpful to read a book that teaches high school-level (8th to 10th grade) grammar and style rules. It may also be helpful to read a writer's style manual. They may be available to check out from your local public library. Please note that the test will only ask questions about conventional and commonly-accepted practices. Also, any

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misspelled words in the questions will be commonly used words that most people who meet the educational requirements of the job should be able to spell.

Following is a brief summary of common and important grammar rules. This list does not include every grammar rule. It outlines common rules and errors with which you should be familiar.

Use of Apostrophes and Quotation Marks

- If you are trying to communicate the possessive form of a singular noun, generally you add “’s” to the word.

INCORRECT: The childs bike was stolen from her front yard.

CORRECT: The child’s bike was stolen from her front yard.

- If the noun is plural, generally, you add the apostrophe after the “s.”

INCORRECT: The twins’s parents allowed both of them to attend the party.

CORRECT: The twins’ parents allowed both of them to attend the party.

- The possessive form of “it” does not contain an apostrophe (the apostrophe is reserved for the contraction of “it is”).

INCORRECT: Sandra had to replace her radio after it’s speaker stopped working.

CORRECT: Sandra had to replace her radio after its speaker stopped working.

- Possessive pronouns (e.g., hers, yours) do not use apostrophes.

INCORRECT: Meghan is known for her landscaping skills. Her’s is the biggest garden on the block!

CORRECT: Meghan is known for her landscaping skills. Hers is the biggest garden on the block!

- When contracting words, the apostrophe is intended to take the place of the missing letter(s) (e.g., “it’s” for “it is,” “wouldn’t” for “would not”).

INCORRECT: Josh could’nt go to work today because he was feeling sick.

CORRECT: Josh couldn’t go to work today because he was feeling sick.

- Generally, a quote contained within a sentence is preceded by a comma outside the quotation marks and/or is followed by a comma inside the quotation marks.

INCORRECT: Mark said “I really hate when the air conditioner stops working.”

CORRECT: Mark said, “I really hate when the air conditioner stops working.”

OR

INCORRECT: “I really hate when the air conditioner stops working” Mark said.

CORRECT: “I really hate when the air conditioner stops working,” Mark said.

Subject-Verb Agreement and Verb Tense Agreement

- The number (singular or plural) of the subject dictates the number of the verb.

INCORRECT: The girls runs to school.

CORRECT: The girls run to school.

OR

INCORRECT: The dog chase the bus.

CORRECT: The dog chases the bus.

- When the subject is a pronoun, the pronoun number and verb number must agree.
INCORRECT: People stare at him as he patrol the neighborhood.
CORRECT: People stare at him as he patrols the neighborhood.
- He/she/his/her coincide with singular nouns and they/their coincides with plural nouns.
INCORRECT: Officer Summers took their lunch break at noon.
CORRECT: Officer Summers took her lunch break at noon.

OR

INCORRECT: Officer Ortega and Sergeant Byrd parked his squad car in the shade.

CORRECT: Officer Ortega and Sergeant Byrd parked their squad car in the shade.

- The verb tense (present, past, future) should remain consistent within a summary or description.
INCORRECT: Austin left his house to go to work. He gets in his car and started driving down the road. As he was stopped at an intersection, he heard brakes squealing and sees a white truck run the red light. It crashed into a blue car and flees the scene.
CORRECT: Austin left his house to go to work. He got in his car and started driving down the road. As he was stopped at an intersection, he heard brakes squealing and saw a white truck run the red light. It crashed into a blue car and fled the scene.

Commonly Misused Words

- Numerous words are commonly confused or misused including, whether/weather, affect/effect, then/than, their/there/they're and to/too.
INCORRECT: Before approaching the suspect, Officer Butler debated weather or not he should call for backup.
CORRECT: Before approaching the suspect, Officer Butler debated whether or not he should call for backup.

OR

INCORRECT: Sergeant Cohen was called too the scene of a burglary.

CORRECT: Sergeant Cohen was called to the scene of a burglary.

OR

INCORRECT: Officers Griffin and Hubbard returned from they're lunch break to find a vandalized squad car.

CORRECT: Officers Griffin and Hubbard returned from their lunch break to find a vandalized squad car.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

READING

Reading is the ability to read and understand written words and sentences.

Law enforcement officers must read and understand a large amount of training materials. They regularly complete training on the job that is presented in a written format. Law enforcement officers also have to read and understand policies, instructions, and plans.

The sample question will help you assess your reading ability and learn the right method for solving this type of question.

SAMPLE QUESTION 5

Please use the following passage to answer Sample Question 5.

The City of Mayfield started a new training program to help retailers at the Mayfield Mall prevent people from stealing from their stores. Due to a small budget, the program could not reach all stores at the mall. Instead, data on stolen items were studied to determine the stores that were most likely to be targeted. A committee was formed to identify the most likely targets, create a program, and oversee the training program.

The committee first considered available research. This led to the finding that over 40% of stolen items over the last few years were taken from clothing stores. The data also showed that, from the time the criminals entered the store to the time they left the store with their stolen items, 68.7% of events ended in five minutes or less. However, police tended to respond to these events within 10 minutes, on average. Based on this data, the committee thought that training clothing store employees at the mall on how to prevent people from stealing products would have a large impact on the crime statistics overall.

The committee surveyed store managers and lower-level employees regarding their comfort level with preventing people from stealing. Managers reported high comfort levels. This meant they were aware of methods to prevent theft from their stores and they were very comfortable stopping people they suspected of stealing. However, lower-level employees reported low comfort levels. Based on this survey and the available research, the committee decided that clothing store employees would be the best target group for the training program. A number of large clothing stores in the mall were then contacted to seek participation for a free training program.

Through a joint effort between the committee and the Mayfield Police Department, a program was launched to teach clothing store employees ways to prevent people from stealing. It also taught them what to do if they saw someone trying to steal from the store. After the program, a follow-up survey showed that clothing store employees reported higher comfort levels with preventing people from stealing. The City of Mayfield declared that the program was a success and voted to expand the program to target other types of stores in the mall.

5. The main idea of the passage is that _____.
- the number of products stolen from the mall may be reduced by training mall employees what to do if someone is stealing
 - most stolen items over the last few years were taken from clothing stores in the Mayfield Mall
 - a study revealed that store managers were well trained on how to stop people from stealing from their stores
 - a committee launched a program that increased clothing store employees' comfort levels with preventing people from stealing from their stores

Discussion

This question measures your reading ability, or your ability to read a passage and decide what the main idea of the passage is. In order to do this, you have to select the answer option that best describes what the author is trying to communicate.

The best strategy to use in responding to reading questions, or any question that requires you to read a lot of information, is to first review the question. After you review the question, read the passage and keep in mind the question that you are trying to answer. Take your time reading the passage. Rushing or skipping over sections will make it hard to arrive at the correct answer. Worse, you might need to read the passage again. Slow down and read for understanding the first time.

As you read each paragraph it is helpful to make short notes to summarize the theme of each paragraph. Following are sample notes you might keep to summarize each paragraph:

- Paragraph 1: The City of Mayfield formed a committee to identify a target group for a new program to help retailers at the Mayfield Mall prevent people from stealing from their stores.
- Paragraph 2: The committee found research that showed a large percentage of stolen items were taken from clothing stores, most criminals entered and left the stores within five minutes or less, and police responded to these incidents within 10 minutes.
- Paragraph 3: The committee found that lower-level employees reported low comfort levels with preventing people from stealing. Combined with the other research, they decided clothing store employees would be the best target group for the program.
- Paragraph 4: The program was launched and was declared a success after clothing store employees' comfort levels with preventing stealing increased.

The question asks you about the main idea of the passage. By reviewing your summary notes, you can combine the key information from the passage to arrive at a conclusion.

By combining the summary notes, we arrive at the following conclusion: a committee formed by the City of Mayfield (Paragraph 1) reviewed research and surveyed store managers and employees before launching a program to increase clothing store employees' comfort levels with preventing people from stealing (Paragraphs 2 and 3); the program was launched and declared a success (Paragraph 4). Now that

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

you know that these are the key points from the passage, you can review the answer options to see which one best fits.

Option “a” is incorrect. While it is implied by the passage, it is never stated that the number of products stolen from the mall may be reduced by training mall employees. This option is also too specific. It focuses on a single fact that is implied by the passage. It is important to consider the passage as a whole when determining the main idea.

Option “b,” “most stolen items over the last few years were taken from clothing stores in the Mayfield Mall,” is incorrect. Like option “a,” this option is much too specific. The program’s focus on clothing stores is a key piece of information, but it does not tell the entire story of the passage.

Option “c,” “a study revealed that store managers were well trained on how to stop people from stealing from their stores,” is mentioned in the passage in Paragraph 3. However, like “a” and “b,” this option is too specific. It does not consider the information presented throughout the entire passage. It instead focuses on a single fact. Option “c” is incorrect.

Option “d” fits the conclusion we made from combining our summary notes about the passage. It mentions the key points from the passage and summarizes them into a general conclusion about the passage: “a committee launched a program that increased clothing store employees’ comfort levels with preventing people from stealing from their stores.”

Based on this analysis, you should select “d” as the correct answer.

Correct answer: D

READING TIPS

For the reading questions, you will read a passage. You will then answer questions that ask you to choose the main idea of the passage or recall details from the passage. To answer the questions correctly, you must understand the meaning of the passage.

The most common error is to select an answer that “sounds right,” because the information comes from the passage. However, this information may not be relevant or correct based on the question asked. You must carefully read and understand the passage and the question. When you are asked about a passage’s main idea, be careful not to focus too much on specific facts from the passage. Think about all of the information and combine it to produce a statement summarizing the entire passage.

Reading questions will contain a passage and questions that are highly similar to the question you see here.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary items measure your understanding of the meaning of words.

Law enforcement officers must be able to understand the meaning of the words in written policies, instructions, and plans they receive on the job.

Vocabulary questions on the test will be part of a reading passage (see Sample Question 5). The sample question will help you assess your vocabulary and learn the right method for solving these types of questions.

SAMPLE QUESTION 6

Please use the following passage (this is the same passage that was presented in Sample Question 5) to answer Sample Question 6.

The City of Mayfield started a new training program to help retailers at the Mayfield Mall prevent people from stealing from their stores. Due to a small budget, the program could not reach all stores at the mall. Instead, data on stolen items were studied to determine the stores that were most likely to be targeted. A committee was formed to identify the most likely targets, create a program, and oversee the training program.

The committee first considered available research. This led to the finding that over 40% of stolen items over the last few years were taken from clothing stores. The data also showed that, from the time the criminals entered the store to the time they left the store with their stolen items, 68.7% of events ended in five minutes or less. However, police tended to respond to these events within 10 minutes, on average. Based on this data, the committee thought that training clothing store employees at the mall on how to prevent people from stealing products would have a large impact on the crime statistics overall.

The committee surveyed store managers and lower-level employees regarding their comfort level with preventing people from stealing. Managers reported high comfort levels. This meant they were aware of methods to prevent theft from their stores and they were very comfortable stopping people they suspected of stealing. However, lower-level employees reported low comfort levels. Based on this survey and the available research, the committee decided that clothing store employees would be the best target group for the training program. A number of large clothing stores in the mall were then contacted to seek participation for a free training program.

Through a joint effort between the committee and the Mayfield Police Department, a program was launched to teach clothing store employees ways to prevent people from stealing. It also taught them what to do if they saw someone trying to steal from the store. After the program, a follow-up survey showed that clothing store employees reported higher comfort levels with preventing people from stealing. The City of Mayfield declared that the program was a success and voted to expand the program to target other types of stores in the mall.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

6. The underlined word “regarding” in the passage most closely means _____.
- a. under
 - b. about
 - c. against
 - d. above

Discussion

This question measures your ability to use context clues within a passage to determine the meaning of a word. If you are familiar with many words and their meanings, you should be able to choose which answer option most closely defines the given word.

To answer this question, you should first find the word within the passage. The underlined word “regarding” can be found in the first sentence of the third paragraph. Read the sentence containing the underlined word. You should try to determine the definition of the word based on the context in which it is presented. Then read the answer options and see if the correct answer stands out to you.

If you cannot choose the correct answer right away, replace the underlined word with each answer option and read the sentence. Try to decide if the sentence makes sense with the answer option replacing the underlined word. Cross out answer options that you know are wrong. Then you can make your best guess.

In this question, the definition of the underlined word “regarding” is “with respect to or concerning.” The definition of option “a,” under, is “below or beneath.” The definition of option “b,” about, is “on the subject of.” The definition of option “c,” against, is “in opposition to.” The definition of option “d,” above, is “in a higher place.”

In this question, the correct answer is “b.” Specifically, the word “about” is the closest match to the word “regarding.” By using the context of the sentence and your knowledge of vocabulary, you can conclude that the correct answer is option “b.”

Correct answer: B

VOCABULARY TIPS

The vocabulary items on the test will ask you to choose the correct definition of an underlined word within a passage. This type of question will require you to know a variety of words and their meanings. The more words you know, the better your chances of doing well. Following are some ways you can increase your vocabulary knowledge:

- **Review study aids or books developed for standardized test preparation.** These types of books may be available to check out from your local public library.
- **Read whenever you can.** Vocabulary building is easiest when you come across words while reading. Whether it is books, magazines, or online articles, written passages will often contain words you do not know. When you come across a word you are not familiar with, you should

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

look up its definition. Doing this will help you expand your vocabulary. It will also help you become familiar with the definitions of more words.

- **Play word games.** Playing word games can be a fun way to expand your vocabulary. By doing a quick internet search for “word games,” you can find a number of fun online games and phone apps you can use to learn words you may otherwise not come across in your daily life. You might also enjoy visiting “word-of-the-day” websites and/or subscribing to “word-of-the-day” email feeds.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

PATTERN RECOGNITION

Pattern recognition is the ability to find the underlying rule, process, or change that is present in a set of materials. It involves finding a graphic or visual pattern when parts of the pattern are presented.

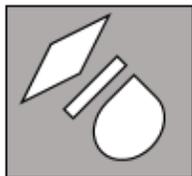
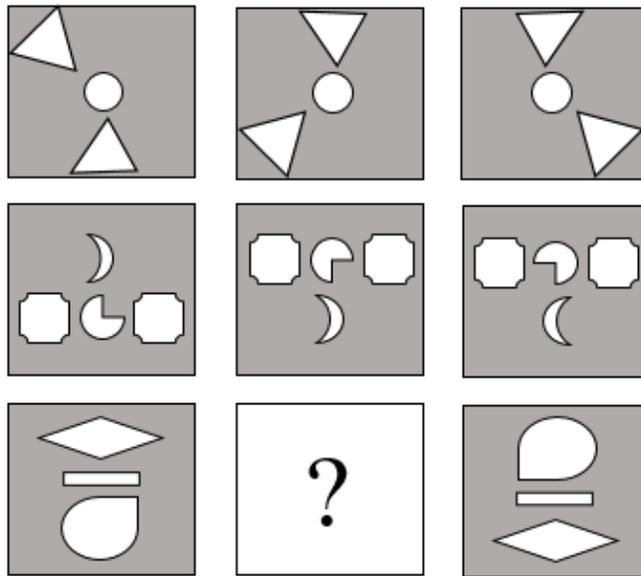
Law enforcement officers use this ability when analyzing cases to look for patterns or similar crimes. They may look for patterns in victim descriptions, methods of entry, or types of goods taken.

The sample question will help you assess your pattern recognition ability and learn the right method for solving this type of question.

SAMPLE QUESTION 7

For the following item, a unique pattern is presented. Please select the tile that fits into the blank “?” box and completes the pattern.

7.



a.



b.



c.



d.

Discussion

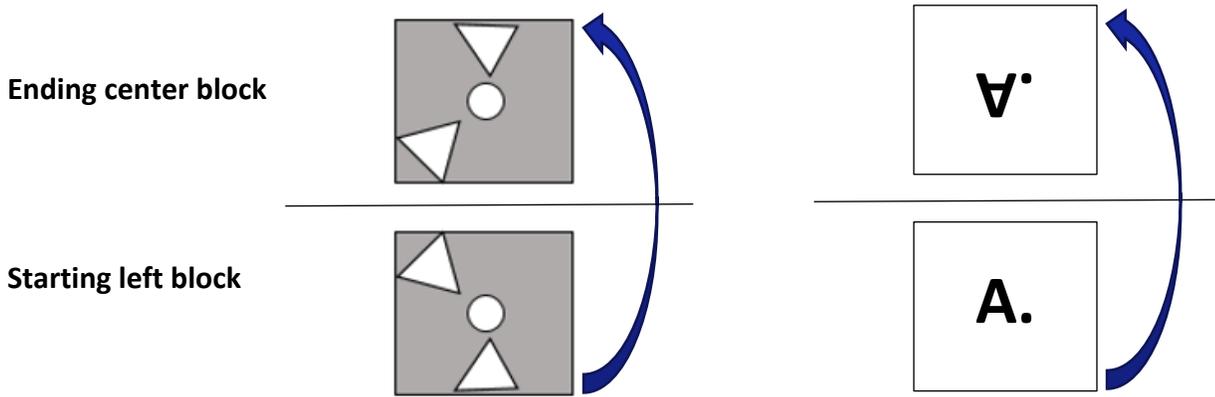
This question measures pattern recognition, or your ability to identify a visual pattern when parts of the pattern are presented. In this case, you need to consider the presented pattern. You must then choose the shape that fits into the blank space containing the question mark.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

Begin by determining the direction of the pattern in the presented image (does the pattern move from left to right or up and down across the image?). In this image, the pattern moves from left to right, as each row has its own set of similar blocks. Next, try to find the change from one item in the sequence to the next. It could be helpful to make a note about the type of change that has been made.

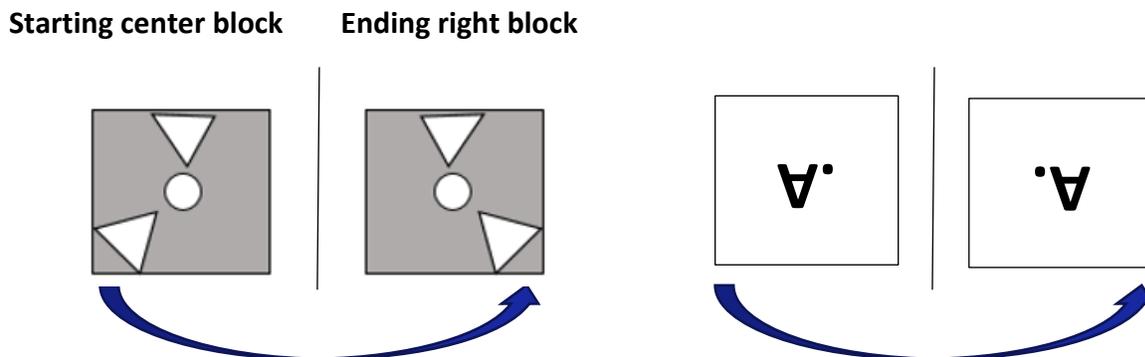
In the pattern above, start with the top row. From the left image to the center image, the tile has been flipped vertically (up and down).

Step 1: Imagine flipping the starting image or folding the image across the line to get to the center image. A simpler example image demonstrates the concept.



Next, from the center image to the right image, the tile has been flipped horizontally (from left to right).

Step 2: Imagine flipping the starting center block or folding the image across the line to get to the right image. A simpler example image demonstrates the concept.



To confirm that this is the pattern that exists throughout the image, next you should look at the second row. From the left image to the center image, the tile has been flipped vertically (up and down), as in Step 1. From the center image to the right image, the tile has been flipped horizontally (left to right), as in Step 2. This is the same pattern as the first row. This confirms that this is the pattern that should be copied in the third row.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

Note that the center image in the third row contains a question mark. This means that you should choose the answer that would fit into this center tile. Based on the previous two rows, we know that the center image should be the left image, flipped vertically. Now look at the shape before the blank shape. In your mind, apply the change you noted to this shape. Imagine what the image should look like. Then select it from the answer options.

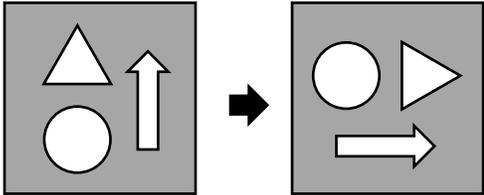
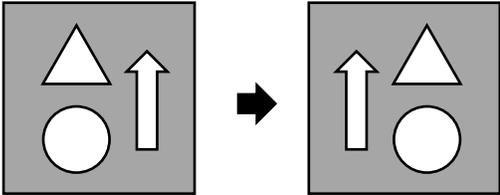
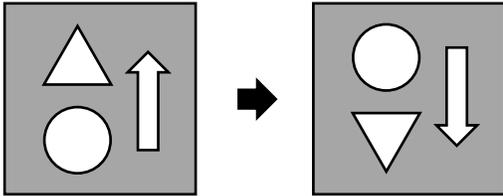
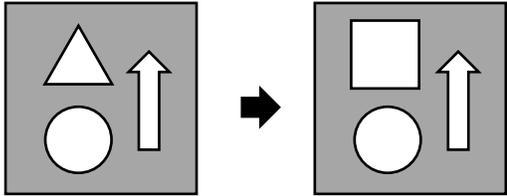
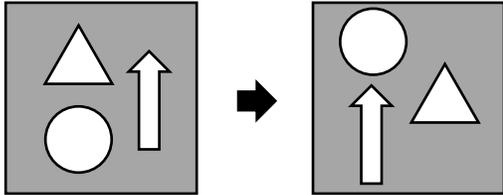
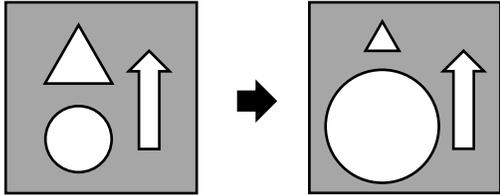
Option “b” is the answer option that presents the left image, flipped up and down, and thus correctly completes the presented pattern. Option “b” is correct.

Correct answer: B

PATTERN RECOGNITION TIPS

With pattern recognition items, you should start small. Find the change that occurs from the first shape in the pattern to the next. Next, find the change that occurs for the next set of shapes. Some possible patterns to look for include: rotation, flipping horizontally (left to right) or vertically (up and down), changes in shape, shifts in position, and changes in size. The following table presents examples of each of these types of change.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

Type of Change	Example
Rotation	
Flipping horizontally (left to right)	
Flipping vertically (up and down)	
Change in shape	
Shift in position	
Change in size	

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

For some items, you will find that the pattern moves from left to right from one shape to the next. For other items, the pattern will move up and down through the image. Before trying to identify the right answer, first make sure you have correctly found the pattern within the image.

A common mistake is to not pay close enough attention to the differences between answer options. It can be hard to skim each option, especially when they are similar. Skimming the answer options may save time and eliminate incorrect options. However, you may miss small differences. When the wrong strategy is used, people often fail to notice the small differences that identify which answer options are wrong.

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

SELECTIVE ATTENTION

Selective attention is the ability to concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted.

Law enforcement officers use selective attention to pick out a pattern, person, or object hidden in a group. Law enforcement officers use selective attention to pick out a suspect's face from a crowd. They also use selective attention when looking for a specific license plate in traffic.

The sample questions will help you assess your selective attention ability and learn the right method for solving these types of questions.

SAMPLE QUESTION 8

Please use the image below to answer Sample Question 8.



8. Which of the following license plate numbers appears in the above image?
- a. RNA 2341
 - b. GSM 0235
 - c. MLC 5733
 - d. GSM 0521

COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

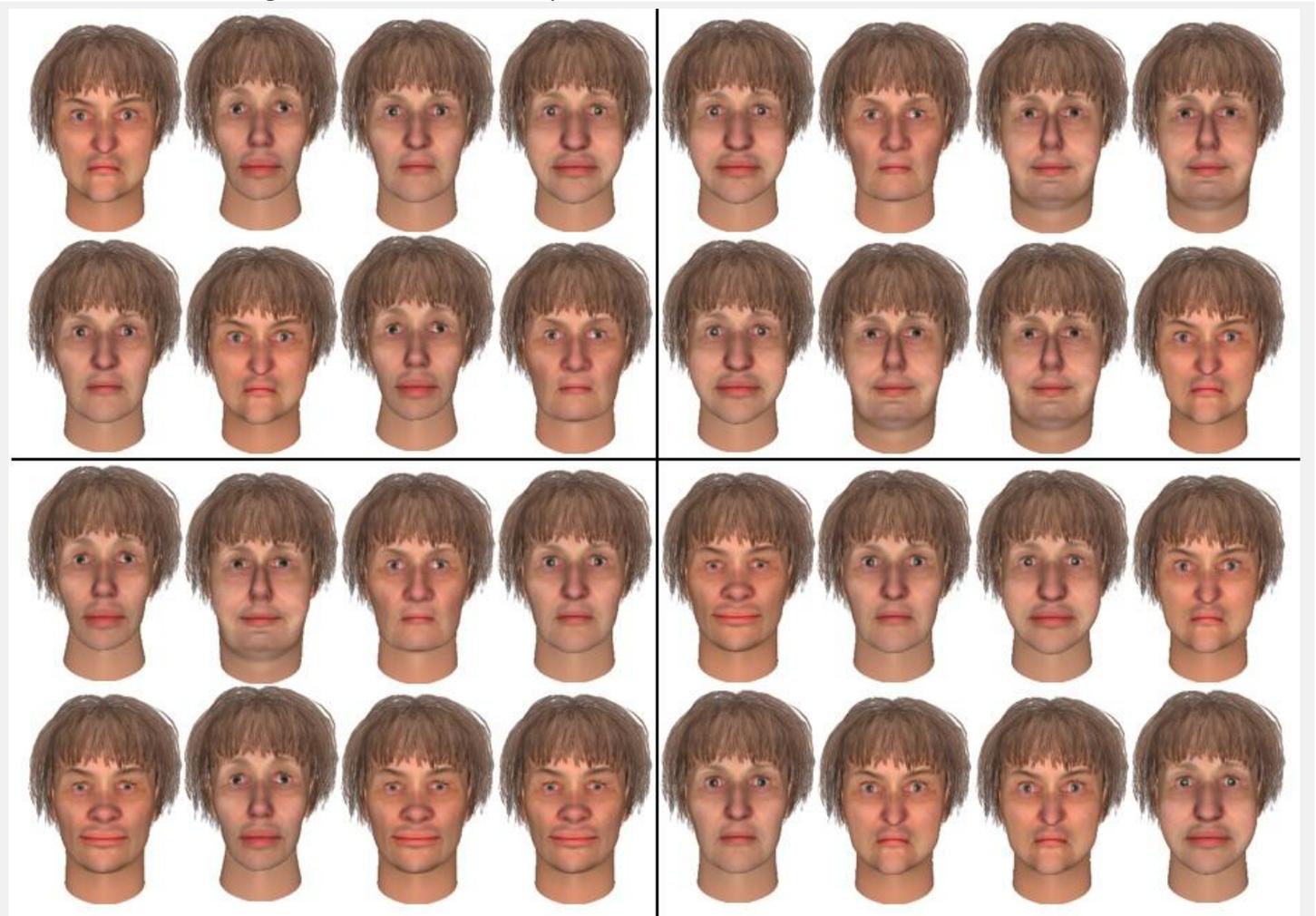
Discussion

To answer this type of question, scan the image for each answer option. Read each license plate number in the image while searching for option “a.” Then do the same for options “b,” “c,” and “d.” The right answer is “b.” The license plate number “GSM 0235” is found on the third license plate in the second row of the image. None of the other license plate numbers are included in the image.

Correct answer: B

SAMPLE QUESTION 9

Please use the image below to answer Sample Question 9.



9. How many times does the following face appear?

- a. One time
- b. Two times
- c. Three times
- d. Four times



COGNITIVE ABILITY MEASURE

Discussion

For this type of selective attention item, you should search the image to count how many times the target image appears. You should first notice that, compared to the other faces in the image, this face has a narrower upturned nose, a larger mouth, and a thinner face. Comparing these details to the other faces in the image may make it easier to find the target face amongst the others. Further, it may be helpful to break the task down. You can do this by looking at each of the four sections of the image separately.

Start by looking in the top left section. In this section, the target image appears two times (the second image in the top row and the third image in the bottom row). The target image does not appear in the top right section. In the bottom left section, the image appears twice (the first image in the top row and the second image in the bottom row). Finally, the target image does not appear in the bottom right section.

Adding up the two instances in the top left section and the two instances in the bottom left section, we get a total of four instances of the target image. Therefore, option “d” is the correct answer.

Correct answer: D

SELECTIVE ATTENTION TIPS

The most common mistakes on selective attention items that are similar to Sample Question 8 occur because people are rushing through the items. When you rush, you may fail to notice small differences that give away which answer choices are incorrect. When you are presented with license plate numbers in the answer options or question stems, make sure you read the entire number. You should also make sure you read the entire plate numbers that are found within the image. Some numbers might start or end the same way but have slight differences in the middle. If you are skimming over the image, you might not notice these differences.

The most common mistake on the selective attention items similar to Sample Question 9 is failure to count all of the instances of the target within the presented image. Searching the four sections of the image separately will break the task down into simpler pieces. This will allow you to focus on smaller portions when searching. In doing so, you are less likely to skip over an instance of the target image within the picture. You should also pay close attention to the details of each face in the image to be sure that you are counting the correct face. The faces may vary in different ways, including the following:

- Shape of the face overall—some may be wider, narrower, taller, or shorter than others
- Size, shape, and/or tilt of eyes
- Size and/or shape of nose
- Size and/or shape of mouth and lips
- Size and/or shape of chin and jawline
- Size of forehead
- Facial expression

SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT MEASURE

Section 4 is the situational judgement measure of the test. This section measures how you typically make judgements in response to challenges at work. You will be presented with scenarios that reflect the types of challenges you could encounter in the work environment. Each scenario will be followed by two responses. Each response contains an action or actions taken in response to the situation. **You are not being asked to choose the best response. Instead, you will be asked to rate EACH response using the scale below.**

I definitely would not respond this way	I probably would not respond this way	I probably would respond this way	I definitely would respond this way
A	B	C	D

Select *A* if you believe you **definitely would not** respond to the scenario as indicated in the “response.” You would choose *A* if you believe the chance you would respond to the scenario, as indicated in the “response,” is extremely low / very unlikely.

Select *B* if you believe you **probably would not** respond to the scenario as indicated in the “response.” You would choose *B* if you believe the chance you would respond to the scenario, as indicated in the “response,” is low.

Select *C* if you believe you **probably would** respond to the scenario as indicated in the “response.” You would choose *C* if you believe the chance you would respond to the scenario, as indicated in the “response,” is high.

Select *D* if you believe you **definitely would** respond to the scenario as indicated in the “response.” You would choose *D* if you believe the chance you would respond to the scenario, as indicated in the “response,” is extremely high / very likely.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Sample Scenario: You are a new officer. You are confronted with a difficult task and there is no one available to assist you with this task. The task urgently needs to be completed and, while difficult, it can be safely completed individually.

1. Do your best to immediately address the task to the best of your ability.

- a. I definitely would not respond this way
- b. I probably would not respond this way
- c. I probably would respond this way
- d. I definitely would respond this way

2. Ignore the urgency of the task and wait until a more senior officer can assist you.

- a. I definitely would not respond this way
- b. I probably would not respond this way
- c. I probably would respond this way
- d. I definitely would respond this way

SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT MEASURE

DISCUSSION

Please note that you may choose each rating more than once per scenario. For example, if you believe you definitely would respond to the scenario as described in responses 1 and 2, you will choose answer option “D” for both responses 1 and 2.

SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT TIPS

The scenarios in this test will be described within the context of the law enforcement officer job. However, you do not need to know anything about law enforcement practices or rules to answer these questions. Simply rate each response option based on how likely you are to respond to the situation using the action(s) described. While these are hypothetical situations, you should rate each response as though they are real actions taken in response to real events.

Law enforcement officers must use situational judgement in performing daily work activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, interacting with coworkers and the public, responding to emergencies or dangerous situations, making arrests, and questioning suspects and witnesses.

GENERAL TEST-TAKING TIPS

TIPS FOR THE DAY OF THE TEST

- **Your physical well-being.** Get a good night's sleep before the test. Try to make sure that you are in the best possible condition both physically and mentally on the day of the test.
- **Arrive early.** Try to arrive early at the test site. You may need to make plans for such things as childcare and a ride to the test site. It would also be wise to expect traffic delays in traveling to the test site. You should plan on extra travel time to make sure you arrive early even with delays. Give yourself enough time to settle in at the test site. If you arrive late, you may not be allowed to take the test.
- **Confidence.** The more confident you are in your abilities, the more likely you are to do well on the test. Try to stay focused so that you don't end up reading sentences and answer choices over and over again. You want to take control of the test by feeling confident in your skills. Try to relax but focus on the test you are about to take.
- **Attitude.** This test is an opportunity for you to show your skills and abilities. A positive attitude can help you perform better. There are a few ways to fine-tune your attitude about taking this test:
 - Look at this test as a challenge but try not to get "stressed out" by thinking about it too much.
 - Remember that by using this study guide and practicing your strategies, you can be more prepared for the test.

GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR TAKING THE TEST

- **Carefully read the test instructions.** Be sure that you pay close attention to all test instructions. It is important that you fully understand the directions before the test begins.
- **Keep track of time.** There will be a timer on the screen of your computer. It is important that you keep track of your time so that you are able to pace yourself throughout the test. You do not want to run out of time and have unanswered questions. Since your score on the test will be based on the total number of correct answers, you will want to work both quickly and efficiently. It is also important that you keep track of time so that you are able to use a few minutes to guess on unanswered questions at the end of the test.
- **Remain calm.** It is important that you remain calm throughout this test so that you are able to work most effectively. You can't let yourself become nervous or confused by a few difficult questions. There are going to be times when you are not going to know the answer, and neither will other people taking the test. If you believe that you have not done well on any particular type of question, try to stay calm and focus on doing your best for the rest of the test.
- **Read each question carefully.** Be sure that you understand what the question is asking you.
- **Read for meaning.** Don't get stuck on words or sentences you do not understand. You may be able to get the main idea from a sentence or paragraph without understanding the individual words or sentences.
- **Try to answer the question correctly before you look at the answers given.** If you know the answer, compare it to the available choices and pick the choice closest in meaning to the answer you have in mind.
- **Answer the section's easy questions first before answering the rest of the section's questions.** It is important that you answer the section's easy questions first and flag the tough questions for later. By doing so, you will have more time to spend on the tough questions of the section, if needed.
- **Don't waste time on questions you can't answer.** If you believe that you are not able to answer a question, flag the question, and then skip it. It is better to skip a hard question than to spend a lot of time on it and not be able to complete other test questions.

GENERAL TEST-TAKING TIPS

- **Flag skipped questions.** You will have the ability to flag questions that you have skipped so that you can come back to them later in the test. Flagging questions that you have skipped in your exam will help you make sure that you have answered all of the questions by the time the test has ended.
- **Use a process of elimination.** If you can't answer a question, use a process of elimination to narrow your options. First, eliminate any answers that are clearly wrong. Then decide how you feel about the remaining choices. If you believe that some answers are more correct than others, flag the question. Later in the test, you may be able to come back to these questions and answer them without having to read the entire question again.
- **Guessing.** It is important that you try to get as many points as possible on the test. Points are given for correct answers only. Because no points are deducted for guessing or incorrect answers on this test, you should try to answer every question. By leaving yourself enough time at the end of the test to respond to unanswered questions using your "best guess," you will increase the chances of getting a few of them correct.
- **Extra time.** If you finish the test before the time limit is over, review your answers and make any changes that are necessary. Also make sure that you have submitted an answer for all questions.

RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS

You will select your answers on the computer screen. Blank answers will be scored as incorrect. Points are not deducted for marking wrong answers. It is in your best interest to answer all questions on the test. If you do not answer all questions, it could have a harmful effect on your test score. It is better to guess on a test question than to leave it blank.

If you are having trouble choosing the correct answer for a question, it may be helpful to skip the question, flag it, and come back to it as time allows. This will keep you from wasting time on questions that you are less likely to respond to correctly.

QUICK TIPS FOR ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

- Read the entire question carefully and try to answer it first without reading the answer choices.
- Look for any key words in the question that may help you select the correct answer from among the choices. Some common key words are: many, most, least, less, more, good, best, first, last, never, always, any, not, except, false, and true.
- Always read all of the answer options carefully before jumping to the conclusion that one must be the best.
- You will only be able to select one answer for each question.
- Use the process of elimination if the correct answer does not stand out to you. Eliminate answers that are clearly wrong and narrow your choice to the ones that directly answer the question. Then select the answer that best answers the question.
- Do not be influenced by the length of the answer choices. The longest answer is not necessarily correct.
- Do not select an answer choice just because it includes technical language.
- Determine the best answer using only the information supplied in the question, without making assumptions. The correct answer is the one that works best for the situation described.

GENERAL TEST-TAKING TIPS

STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING ERRORS

Four common causes for choosing incorrect responses are outlined below. Suggestions for avoiding these errors are also outlined. Reading through this section can help you identify and correct any major weaknesses in your test-taking behavior.

1) SKIPPING QUESTIONS AND GUESSING ERRORS.

Reason: You may have missed a question because you skipped it and failed to come back to it later.

Suggestion: Be sure you flag skipped questions on the exam and remember to go back to them before the end of the test period. There will be a review screen at the end of the exam that notifies you of any skipped questions and allows you to view the flagged questions.

Reason: You may have lost track of the time and not known that the test period was about to end before you could select any remaining unanswered questions.

Suggestion: Be sure to check the time on your screen often (time goes by quickly during a test) so that you can keep track of how much time you have left. Leave time at the end of the test so that you are able to go back to any unanswered questions and complete them.

Reason: You may have been forced to guess for questions at the end of the test because you spent too much time working on tough questions rather than skipping them and saving them for later.

Suggestion: If you did skip tough questions, it may be because you failed to narrow down the number of alternatives in the question.

2) MISREADING A QUESTION OR ANSWER.

Reason: This may occur because you missed a key word or phrase.

Suggestion: When choosing an answer, make a note of key words and phrases that stand out. Once you have made a note the key words and phrases, check the details of the possible answers with the details you noted, one by one. Always keep in mind that you are looking for the best possible answer with the most accurate details.

GENERAL TEST-TAKING TIPS

3) NOT KNOWING THE MEANING OF KEY WORDS.

Reason: This is a problem with vocabulary.

Suggestion: When you come to a word you do not know, reread the sentence to determine the general meaning of the sentence. This is known as “reading for meaning.” The meaning of the unknown word should become clearer as you begin to understand the phrases and ideas that surround it.

4) ANSWERS THAT “LOOK” GOOD.

Reason: An incorrect answer may contain an exact phrase from the original question.

Suggestion: Beware of answers containing exact words or phrases from the question.

Reason: An incorrect answer may overstate information that was given in the question. For example, if the question says, “Some incidents...,” an incorrect answer may say, “All incidents...”

Suggestion: Stick to the facts described in the test question itself. Don’t be drawn to answers that stretch or exaggerate these facts or rules. This is the time to watch out for words such as “only,” “never,” “always,” “whenever,” “all,” etc.

FINAL TIPS

BEFORE THE TEST

- Prepare for the test. You will increase your chances of getting your best score if you spend some time preparing for the test. This includes reading this study guide (if necessary, reading the study guide multiple times to learn about the question types), trying to avoid becoming overly anxious about the test, and using good test-taking strategies.

ON THE DAY OF THE TEST

- Allow yourself enough time for traveling to the test site and locating your test room.
- Do **NOT** bring any device with a typewriter keyboard, such as a "Spell Checker," "Personal Digital Assistant (PDA)," "Address Book," "Language Translator," "Dictionary," or other similar device to the test site.
- Do **NOT** bring cell phones, headphones, or any electronic or other communication devices to the test site. The use of such devices at the test site in the test room, hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, or other areas could result in your disqualification.
- Do **NOT** bring books or reference materials to the test site.
- Do **NOT** bring this guide or sample test materials to the test site.

DURING THE TEST

- Read and follow all directions on your test materials.
- Keep track of the time and organize your work accordingly.
- Do not look at the screen of other people in the room or you may be disqualified.

AFTER THE TEST

- Continue to follow test security protocols by not copying or writing down test materials, and by not discussing the test.

COMMON SENSE SUGGESTIONS

- Get plenty of rest the night before.

GENERAL TEST-TAKING TIPS

- Dress comfortably. You should wear layers so you can adapt to the temperature in the testing room.
- Eat breakfast.
- Make sure you know where the test site is. If you are not sure where it is, get directions to the site before the test date.
- Leave yourself plenty of time to get to the test site just in case there is traffic, you have car trouble, or another problem arises.
- Your attitude and approach to the test will affect how well you perform. A positive attitude will help you do your best.

Good luck on the test and in your law enforcement career!



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