

# Test Information Guide

## Field 02: Early Childhood Sample Open-Response Item

The following materials contain:

- Sample test directions for the open-response item
- A sample open-response item
- An example of a strong response to the open-response item
- The scoring rubric

## Sample Test Directions for Open-Response Items

This section of the test consists of two open-response item assignments. You will be asked to prepare a written response of approximately 150–300 words (1–2 pages) for each assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for each assignment. **You must write responses to both of the assignments.**

For each assignment, read the topic and directions carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize your response. You may use the erasable notebooklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. **However, your final response must be either:**

1. typed into the on-screen response box,
2. written on a response sheet and scanned using the scanner provided at your workstation, or
3. provided using both the on-screen response box (for typed text) and a response sheet (for calculations or drawings) that you will scan using the scanner provided at your workstation.

**Instructions for scanning your response sheet(s) are available by clicking the "Scanning Help" button at the top of the screen.**

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

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

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

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

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

Any time spent responding to an assignment, including scanning the response sheet(s), is part of your testing time. Monitor your time carefully. When your testing time expires, a pop-up message will appear on-screen indicating the conclusion of your test session. Only response sheets that are scanned before you end your test or before time has expired will be scored. Any response sheet that is not scanned before testing ends will NOT be scored.

## Sample Open-Response Item

### Objective 0008

Prepare an organized, developed analysis that relates child development to two or more of the following: language arts, mathematics, history and social science, and science.

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.

An important learning standard for first-grade students is to identify and explain the meaning of American national symbols (e.g., the American flag, the bald eagle, the White House, the Statue of Liberty).

Using your knowledge of U.S. history and child development, prepare a response in which you:

- describe the meaning of two American national symbols;
- summarize a learning experience that would help first-grade students learn to identify and explain the meaning of American national symbols; and
- explain why the experience fosters learning and development for first-grade students.

## Sample Strong Response to the Open-Response Item

The sample response below reflects a strong knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

Two symbols of great importance to the people of the United States are the flag and the White House. Both provide a good opportunity to help students understand the meaning of American national symbols.

The flag is an emblem of American nationality. Also called Old Glory, or the Star Spangled Banner, the flag of the United States of America consists of white stars on a blue field, with 13 alternate stripes, 7 red and 6 white. The 50 stars stand for the 50 states of the Union; the 13 stripes stand for the original 13 states.

Another national symbol is the President's home—the White House—located in Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States. During the twentieth century, as the United States became a major world power and the role of the president became more prominent in American life, the presidential mansion has come to symbolize for many the government of the United States.

A teacher could begin by taking a first-grade class outside the school building to see the flag and talk about its different components. Next, every child could draw a flag of their own. As a third activity, the teacher could read a story to the children about how the original American flag was first created.

In order to have children understand the importance of the White House as a national symbol, teacher and students could gather pictures of the White House to create a visual display. Then the teacher could read stories about some of the presidents and first ladies who have lived there. Finally the class could write a letter to the President describing what they had learned about the White House and the American flag.

Together, these activities would introduce children to the idea of national symbols, help them learn about the American Revolution, and encourage them to think about the values of the Revolutionary patriots. Drawing the flag and creating a display of images of the White House would help make these symbols concrete. Writing a letter to the president would enable children to engage in a cooperative activity while they reviewed what they had learned. The letter-writing activity would also reinforce the concept that national symbols like the flag and the White House function simultaneously in two ways: as real objects and places; and as fundamental ideas about our country and what it stands for.

## Scoring Rubric

### *Performance Characteristics*

The following characteristics guide the scoring of responses to the open-response item(s).

### *Scoring Scale*

The scoring scale below, which is related to the performance characteristics for the tests, is used by scorers in assigning scores to responses to the open-response item(s).

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