



Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators®



GACE® Study Companion

Curriculum and Instruction

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About the Assessment

Assessment Name	Curriculum and Instruction
Grade Level	P–12
Test Code	300
Testing Time	2 hours and 45 minutes
Test Duration	3 hours and 15 minutes
Test Format	Computer delivered
Number of Selected-response Questions	100
Question Format	The test consists of a variety of short-answer questions such as selected-response questions, where you select one answer choice or multiple answer choices (depending on what the question asks for), questions where you enter your answer in a text box, and other types of questions. You can review the possible question types in the <i>Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Test.</i>
Number of Constructed-response Questions	3

The GACE Curriculum and Instruction assessment is designed to measure the professional knowledge of educators in curriculum and instruction roles in the state of Georgia.

The testing time is the amount of time you will have to answer the questions on the test. Test duration includes time for tutorials and directional screens that may be included in the test.

The questions in this assessment assess both basic knowledge across content areas and the ability to apply principles.

The total number of questions that are scored is typically smaller than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions also include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. By including pretest questions in the assessment, ETS is able to analyze actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions and determine whether they should be included in future versions of the test.

Content Specifications

This assessment is organized into content **subareas**. Each subarea is further defined by a set of **objectives** and their **knowledge statements**.

- The objectives broadly define what an entry-level educator in this field in Georgia public schools should know and be able to do.
- The knowledge statements describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.
- Some tests also include content material at the evidence level. This content serves as descriptors of what each knowledge statement encompasses.

See a breakdown of the subareas and objectives for this assessment on the following pages.

Test Subareas

Subarea	Approx. Percentage of Test
I. Curriculum and Instruction	23%
II. Research	12%
III. Students as Learners	14%
IV. Assessment	14%
V. Professional Practices	12%
VI. Analysis (constructed response only)	25%

Test Objectives

Subarea I: Curriculum and Instruction

Objective 1: Understands the foundational components of an effective curriculum development process

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to design, implement, and evaluate curriculum to promote student learning
- B. Understands the philosophical frameworks that undergird curriculum design
- C. Understands content standards and how these are organized in the curriculum
- D. Understands how to align curriculum across local, state, and national standards within and across subject areas
- E. Knows resources, including technology, to support best teaching practices and to enhance student learning
- F. Knows how to use performance data and student work to evaluate curriculum
- G. Is familiar with strategies to refine curriculum

Objective 2: Understands the impact of instructional practices on student learning

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to use best practices to promote student learning
- B. Understands content pedagogy to plan, implement, and assess the important ideas within a content body of knowledge to benefit student learning
- C. Understands how to design and modify learning environments that promote learning based on best practices and student performance data
- D. Understands when and how to differentiate instruction based on diverse student needs
- E. Understands how to use appropriate resources, including technology, to promote student learning
- F. Understands culturally responsive pedagogy
- G. Understands how to evaluate and modify instruction based on a variety of data, educational research, and continuous self-assessment

Subarea II: Research

Objective 1: Knows how to use a variety of research methods to inform educational practices

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Knows how to use quantitative, qualitative, and/or mixed research methods to investigate educational problems
- B. Knows how to articulate research findings in a variety of forums

Objective 2: Understands how to apply research and data to promote student learning

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to apply current research and data to demonstrate content knowledge to promote student learning
- B. Knows how to apply research to inform curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student learning, classroom processes, and/or institutional practices

Subarea III: Students as Learners

Objective 1: Understands educational and developmental theories and the factors that influence learning

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands developmental theory and the impact on learning
- B. Knows how cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, economic, and physical development influence learning
- C. Understands the theoretical foundations of how students learn

Objective 2: Understands that a number of variables affect how students learn and perform

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to meet the diverse needs of students
- B. Understands areas of exceptionality and the impact on student learning
- C. Understands the influence of language and culture on learning

Subarea IV: Assessment

Objective 1: Understands assessment design and evaluation strategies to inform curriculum and instruction

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands the principles of assessment design
- B. Understands the role of formal and informal assessment to inform instructional practice
- C. Understands the purpose of feedback to promote student learning
- D. Knows how to provide feedback to improve student learning
- E. Understands how to analyze and evaluate assessment results to inform instruction and to facilitate student learning
- F. Knows how to conduct program evaluations to determine the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional practice
- G. Understands how to interpret assessment results
- H. Understands how to communicate pertinent assessment information to a variety of audiences

Objective 2: Understands how to select and apply a variety of assessment methods and tools to promote continuous improvement

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to select from a variety of assessment formats to address specific learning goals and to evaluate student performance; i.e., essay, selected response, portfolio, observation, performance, conference, etc.
- B. Understands how to use diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to differentiate instruction
- C. Understands the distinction between norm-referenced and criterion-referenced scoring
- D. Understands the terminology related to testing and scoring; i.e., validity, reliability, mean, median, mode, raw score, scaled score, percentile, etc.
- E. Understands how to use assessment data to identify longitudinal trends, achievement gaps, and to establish goals to promote continuous improvement

Subarea V: Professional Practices

Objective 1: Understands a variety of professional development practices and resources that promote professional growth and influence student learning

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to establish and implement high standards to promote academic rigor and intellectual inquiry
- B. Knows a variety of professional development practices and resources to promote continuous learning
- C. Understands behaviors associated with mentoring, coaching, and content facilitation to support professional growth
- D. Knows how to facilitate professional learning experiences whose goals are aligned with those of the school and/or district
- E. Knows the principles of adult learning and the implications for professional development
- F. Understands how to scaffold and differentiate professional learning experiences in response to individual, team, grade level, department, school, and/or district needs

Objective 2: Understands a variety of strategies to promote leadership and student learning

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Knows leadership strategies to promote and use the skills, expertise, and knowledge of others to promote student learning
- B. Understands how to model collaboration, leadership, and professionalism by serving as an advocate for the profession

Subarea VI: Analysis

Objective 1: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to design, implement, and evaluate curriculum to promote student learning
- B. Understands how to align content across local, state, and national standards within and across subject areas
- C. Knows how to use performance data and student work to evaluate curriculum
- D. Understands how to use best practices to promote student learning
- E. Understands how to evaluate and modify instruction based on a variety of data, educational research, and continuous self-assessment
- F. Understands the role of formal and informal assessment to inform instruction
- G. Understands how to analyze and evaluate assessment results to inform instruction and to facilitate student learning
- H. Knows how to conduct program evaluations to determine the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional practice
- I. Understands how to interpret assessment results
- J. Understands how to communicate pertinent assessment information to a variety of audiences
- K. Understands how to select from a variety of assessment formats to address specific learning goals and to evaluate student performance
- L. Understands how to use assessment data to identify longitudinal trends, achievement gaps, and to establish goals to promote continuous improvement

Objective 2: Research and Students as Learners

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Knows how to use quantitative, qualitative, and/or mixed research methods to investigate educational problems
- B. Knows how to apply research to inform curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student learning, classroom practices, and/or institutional practices
- C. Knows how to articulate research findings in a variety of forums
- D. Understands how to meet the diverse needs of students
- E. Understands how to use assessment data to identify longitudinal trends, achievement gaps, and to establish goals to promote continuous improvement

Objective 3: Professional Practices

The beginning Curriculum and Instruction educator:

- A. Understands how to establish and implement high standards to promote academic rigor and intellectual inquiry
- B. Knows a variety of professional development practices and resources to promote continuous learning
- C. Understands behaviors associated with mentoring, coaching, and content facilitation to support professional growth
- D. Knows leadership strategies to promote and use the skills, expertise, and knowledge of others to promote student learning
- E. Understands how to model collaboration, leadership, and professionalism by serving as an advocate for the profession

Practice Questions

The practice questions in this study companion are designed to familiarize you with the types of questions you may see on the assessment. While they illustrate some of the formats and types of questions you will see on the test, your performance on these sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual test. Fundamentally, the most important component in ensuring your success is familiarity with the content that is covered on the assessment.

To respond to a practice question, choose one of the answer options listed. Be sure to read the directions carefully to ensure that you know what is required for each question. You may find it helpful to time yourself to simulate actual testing conditions. A correct answer and a rationale for each sample test question are in the section following the practice questions.

Keep in mind that the test you take at an actual administration will have different questions, although the proportion of questions in each subarea will be approximately the same. You should not expect the percentage of questions you answer correctly in these practice questions to be exactly the same as when you take the test at an actual administration, since numerous factors affect a person's performance in any given testing situation.

-
1. Which of the following should be the primary consideration guiding the selection of instructional materials to meet curriculum needs and achieve instructional improvement?
 - A. The relevance of the materials to identified goals
 - B. The availability of the materials within a short period of time
 - C. The adaptability to other types of materials currently in use
 - D. The cost of the materials that is consistent with funds allocated in the budget

Answer and Rationale

2. Research findings about classroom management suggest that one of the most effective ways to maximize the amount of time students spend on academic activities is for the teacher to take which of the following actions?
 - A. Teach, model, and reinforce rules and procedures
 - B. Review classroom rules and procedures on the first day of school
 - C. Post rules and procedures in various places in the classroom as a visual reminder for students
 - D. Have students discuss what rules and procedures they think would be appropriate

Answer and Rationale

3. Before differentiation of instruction can occur in a classroom, a teacher must first
 - A. talk with each student's previous teacher.
 - B. identify the needs of each student.
 - C. talk with students to determine their curricular likes and dislikes.
 - D. informally observe the students during the first few weeks of school.

Answer and Rationale

-
4. In playing the role of change agent, an educational leader must help those affected by a change to develop an understanding of the change, make a commitment to the change, and learn new skills required by the change. Acceptance of the change and its effectiveness are most dependent on the
- A. responses of the individuals and groups who make up the informal communication network of the school community.
 - B. ability of the educational leader to delegate responsibility to others in order to focus on the change and its implications.
 - C. positive personality traits of the educational leader.
 - D. education and experience of the educational leader.

Answer and Rationale

5. Although all of the following are important, which must be emphasized when redesigning a district's curriculum?
- A. Including a variety of electives
 - B. Integrating technology applications
 - C. Grouping students by ability through multitrack plans
 - D. Ensuring the continuous participation of teachers

Answer and Rationale

6. Which of the following is claimed to be the greatest advantage of team teaching?
- A. A decrease in teacher preparation time and more effective handling of discipline problems
 - B. Better use of the talents and knowledge of teachers and the opportunity for collaboration
 - C. A savings in the school budget and better use of instructional aids
 - D. More attention to individual differences and increased emphasis on independent study

Answer and Rationale

-
7. The key to successful conflict management is to
- A. intervene actively and assume responsibility for the outcome.
 - B. use an appropriate strategy and intervene at the appropriate time.
 - C. passively withdraw for a time to develop an appropriate strategy.
 - D. use only strategies that are democratic.

Answer and Rationale

8. A supervisor of curriculum is updating information on the district’s Web page to inform parents and community members about the progress of the new reading initiative. In this and all written communication, the curriculum supervisor should primarily ensure that the message is
- A. worded in a businesslike manner.
 - B. appropriate for the intended audience.
 - C. spelled out in detail.
 - D. focused on a single idea.

Answer and Rationale

9. A curriculum director in a community with a large population of non-English-speaking families is planning to send a letter to community members asking for volunteers to serve as interpreters during parent-teacher conferences, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, and special district events. When explaining their role to the interpreters, the curriculum supervisor should primarily emphasize
- A. laws that guarantee students’ access to equal education.
 - B. the district’s goals and objectives for English-language learners (ELLs).
 - C. the role of the community in supporting the success of district programs.
 - D. the importance of keeping all information they learn confidential.

Answer and Rationale

-
10. A reflective professional-development experience aimed at improving teaching and learning should begin with which of the following activities?
- A. Having the participants examine their beliefs, values, and assumptions about teaching and learning
 - B. Asking the participants to review feedback from their students about the effectiveness of their teaching
 - C. Engaging the participants in critical conversations with colleagues about teaching and learning
 - D. Having the participants familiarize themselves with the theoretical foundations of teaching and learning

Answer and Rationale

11. A district has hired a consultant to perform an audit of the middle school's instructional program. The results of the audit have been given to the director of curriculum and instruction. Which of the following methods is the most appropriate first step in developing a plan to address the areas for growth identified in the audit?
- A. Meeting with teachers in each content area to discuss changes to their curriculum
 - B. Holding a parent-teacher meeting to share the results of the audit
 - C. Defining the identified problems for the faculty and parents by sharing the data appropriate for each group
 - D. Surveying area schools for comparative data in student achievement

Answer and Rationale

-
12. The principal of an elementary school has asked the school-level instructional coach to provide support for a first-year teacher who is struggling to deliver instruction and maintain order in the classroom. The instructional coach has scheduled a conference to identify specific behaviors that the teacher can work on to improve practice. This conference will be most helpful to the teacher if the instructional coach
- A. provides the teacher with literature that targets the areas of difficulty.
 - B. collaborates with the teacher to analyze the most pressing problems and offers ongoing support.
 - C. models a lesson so the teacher can see how discipline problems should be handled.
 - D. suggests that the teacher observe grade-level colleagues to gain ideas for addressing current classroom problems.

Answer and Rationale

13. The primary purpose of scaffolding student learning is to
- A. reinforce the desired student performance.
 - B. assist the students in a task until independent progress is possible.
 - C. encourage the development of self-regulatory skills.
 - D. enable the student to visualize ideas.

Answer and Rationale

14. To determine how well students in an eighth grade class are reading compared to other students in the nation, a teacher should examine the results of which of the following types of tests?
- A. A norm-referenced reading test
 - B. A criterion-referenced reading test
 - C. An aptitude test
 - D. An informal reading inventory

Answer and Rationale

-
15. Which of the following is a type of test score to show a student's relative position among a group of students in the same grade who are tested at the same time?
- A. Percent correct
 - B. Percentile rank
 - C. Raw score
 - D. Composite score

Answer and Rationale

16. In Ms. Short's seventh-grade English class, English is the second language for 11 of the 25 students. They represent four different language groups and have a wide range of English proficiency. One of Ms. Short's goals for the class is for students to develop speaking and listening skills, both in formal presentations and informal discussions. To address the goal, she plans to have pairs of students interview and then introduce each other to the rest of the class. Which of the following has the potential for helping students for whom English is a second language perform well in the activity?
- A. Presenting a model of an interview and an introduction in which a student from the previous year interviews Ms. Short and then introduces her
 - B. Providing a set of written guidelines on conducting an interview and introducing another person
 - C. Having students discuss among themselves what completing the activity successfully will require
 - D. Providing the rubric that will be used to evaluate both the interview and the introduction

Answer and Rationale

-
17. Dan, a fifth-grade student, has a very limited attention span and has difficulty paying attention during classroom lectures. One of the objectives in his Individual Education Program (IEP) is “Given a 10-12 minute lecture/oral lesson, Dan will take appropriate notes as judged by the teacher.”

Which of the following actions by the teacher will best help Dan to meet the identified objective by the end of the school year?

- A. Grading his notes on the lecture/oral lesson material and incorporating the grade into Dan’s overall class grade
- B. Allowing Dan to tape-record a lecture/oral lesson, rather than taking notes, and then encouraging Dan to listen to the tape at home to review the material
- C. Providing Dan with a graphic organizer, or skeleton outline, of the lecture so he can fill in the missing information as the lecture proceeds
- D. Seating Dan next to a student he likes and allowing him to ask the student relevant questions as the lecture/oral lesson proceeds

Answer and Rationale

18. Which of the following is most likely to be effective as a summative assessment?
- A. Maintaining anecdotal records about a student’s reading behaviors
 - B. Reviewing a student’s daily journal writing
 - C. Observing students during independent mathematics work
 - D. Analyzing a student’s collection of original poems upon the completion of a poetry unit

Answer and Rationale

Questions 19-20 are based on the following scenario.

Lincoln Elementary School, along with other elementary schools in the district, has adopted a new science program. The superintendent has charged the director of curriculum, Mr. O'Mara, with ensuring the program's successful implementation. Mr. O'Mara's first goal is to plan for a series of professional-development workshops for the upcoming school year.

19. In drafting a plan to identify topics for professional development, which of the following steps should Mr. O'Mara take first?
- A. Contacting other districts using the same science program for suggestions
 - B. Writing grants to purchase resource materials for the teachers
 - C. Having teachers complete an assessment to identify their areas of need
 - D. Observing teachers to gather anecdotal evidence of instructional need

Answer and Rationale

20. Mr. O'Mara recognizes that it is critical to have a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of any professional-development program. Which of the following strategies would provide him with the most valuable feedback?
- A. Asking teachers to complete an evaluation checklist at the conclusion of each session
 - B. Asking teachers to complete an evaluation checklist at the conclusion of the series of sessions
 - C. Appointing a committee to rate the effectiveness of the program as the school plans future professional development
 - D. Examining data on student performance at a specified time after the professional-development series has concluded

Answer and Rationale

Answer Key and Rationales

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
1	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. Instructional materials need to support identified goals to meet curriculum needs and achieve improvement in instruction. Options B and C are not correct as these options do not link to meeting curricular needs and improving instruction. Option D is not correct. While the cost of materials is an important consideration, the relevance of the materials to identified goals for curriculum and instruction is the primary consideration.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
2	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. Generating rules and procedures and then teaching, modeling, and reinforcing them is the most effective strategy to maximize the amount of time students spend on academic activities. Options B, C, and D are incorrect as these strategies do not involve teacher modeling to ensure student understanding and do not address reinforcement of appropriate behavior which is a critical component of effective classroom management.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
3	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. Options A, C, and D are valid strategies a teacher can use to learn more about the students. However, these strategies are subsets of option B which addresses the importance of knowing the students' strengths and areas for growth prior to planning instruction.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
4	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. Change is a process, not an event, and patience, understanding, and sensitivity go a long way to ensure that a change is embraced by the individuals who are affected by the change. Options B, C, and D illustrate issues that are peripheral to the process, whereas option A acknowledges the impact the informal communication system has on the change process.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
5	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. The question provides several answers that are related to curriculum development and delivery. However, option D is the only answer that is correct in the context of the question. When curriculum is being redesigned, the continuous participation by teachers is essential.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
6	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. This question identifies several positive outcomes of team teaching; however, only one choice is absolutely correct. Teams can try to develop more consistent methods of dealing with discipline problems (option A), for using instructional aides (option C), or for paying attention to individual differences (option D), but this is not guaranteed. The greatest advantage of team teaching is the combined use of the teachers' knowledge, talents, and experiences, and the opportunities for collaboration that are promoted through team teaching.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
7	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. The key to successful conflict management is an individual's skill to select and use an appropriate strategy to promote resolution of the conflict and to intervene at the appropriate time. Assuming responsibility for the outcome (option A) takes responsibility away from the individuals who may be involved. Passively withdrawing (option C) does not promote resolution to a conflict. Option D is incorrect because not all conflict resolution strategies are democratic in nature.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
8	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. The question addresses the need for clear communication between the supervisor of curriculum and district stakeholders. Options A, C, and D provide guidelines that promote communication. However, it is most important that the message is understood by the intended audience (option B).</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
9	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. This question focuses on the importance of protecting the rights and confidentiality of students and staff. Options A, B, and C relate to information that can be shared. The nature of the information shared in a parent-teacher conference and in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings is confidential. The curriculum director needs to ensure that interpreters have a clear understanding of the need for confidentiality (option D).</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
10	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. The question focuses on the initial step for self-reflection among individuals participating in a professional development experience. Prior to asking the participants to consider student feedback (option B), engaging in critical conversations (option C), and familiarizing themselves with the theoretical foundations of teaching and learning (option D), the individuals initially need to examine their beliefs, values, and assumptions about teaching and learning.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
11	C	<p>Option (C) is correct. The question addresses the importance of using data to improve instructional programs. Option C is correct because the most appropriate initial step is to define the problem and explain the data that is appropriate for the teachers and the parents. Options A, B, and D are follow-up steps that would prove useful as a later step in the development of the plan, but not as the initial step.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
12	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. Collaborating with the teacher to analyze current problems and providing ongoing support will promote self-reflection and facilitate a change in the teacher’s approach to classroom management and instruction. Providing the teacher with literature that targets the problems does not promote a change in behavior since there is no guarantee that the teacher will effectively implement strategies identified in the literature. Without follow up, modeling a lesson (option C), and observing grade-level colleagues (option D) may be of little or no value.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
13	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. The ultimate goal of scaffolding is for students to have a firm enough grasp of the content or skill so they can perform tasks independently. In order for this to happen, the teacher introduces a new concept to students and gives the students all the assistance that they will require in the beginning, gradually reducing the assistance until the students are able to perform the tasks and skills on their own.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
14	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. A norm-referenced reading test compares the performance of each student to the performance of a local or national norm group. A criterion-referenced test (option B) is designed to measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined criteria. An aptitude test (option C) is designed to measure an individual’s overall performance across a broad range of mental capacities. An informal reading inventory (option D) is designed to determine a student’s reading instructional needs.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
15	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. A student's percentile rank indicates the percent of students in a particular group that received lower raw scores on a test than the raw score of the student. It shows the student's relative position, or rank, among a group of students in the same grade who were tested at the same time of year (fall, midyear, or spring).</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
16	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. When working with students whose first language is not English, teachers must keep in mind that reading, writing, listening, and speaking are all parts of language learning. Modeling the interview allows the students to observe a variety of speaking and listening skills and to note cultural differences, such as tone of voice and eye contact. Providing written guidelines (option B), having students discuss the activity (option C), and providing the rubric (option D) are strategies that a teacher could use after modeling an effective interview and introduction.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
17	C	<p>Option (C) is correct. The information provided about Dan indicates that the teacher must choose a strategy to help him in two ways: to keep his attention focused on the learning, and to help him follow what is going on in the lesson. Providing Dan with a graphic organizer is a strategy that will keep him on task and will support his achievement of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) objective.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
18	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Analyzing a student's collection of original poetry is an example of summative assessment. The action is designed to evaluate the student's understanding of poetry at the completion of the unit. Options A, B, and C are examples of formative assessment. Formative assessments are ongoing assessments, reviews, and observations in a classroom. Teachers use formative assessment to inform instruction.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
19	C	<p>Option (C) is correct. When deciding on professional development topics to support the successful implementation of a new program, it is important to gather information from the teachers about the areas for which they need support. Option A will not provide information to address district teacher needs. Option B is a step that could be taken at a later time. Option D does not include teacher input and is based on observation which may be subjective.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
20	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. This question focuses on how to evaluate the effectiveness of a professional development program. The most effective way to evaluate a professional development program is to gather and analyze the impact on student learning. Option D is correct as this is the only option that addresses student learning. Options A and B are subjective, limiting feedback to the opinions of the teachers. Option C lacks the necessary data, such as student performance, to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Constructed-response Questions

The purpose of this section is to describe the constructed-response questions that appear on the GACE Curriculum and Instruction assessment and to explain the criteria used to score each constructed-response question. The test includes three constructed-response questions. Unlike the selected-response questions, the constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by providing in-depth written responses.

Preparing for the Constructed-response Questions

When preparing for the constructed-response questions, read the sample questions and scoring guide carefully. You may wish to draft a response to each sample question by reading the question and planning, writing, and revising your essay. You should use a total of about 15 minutes for each constructed-response question. Also, because no reference materials will be available during the test, it is recommended that you refrain from using a dictionary, a thesaurus, or textbooks while writing your practice responses.

Once you have written your practice responses, reread the scoring guide, and then read the sample responses provided for each score level. Rationales that explain how the responses characterize the score point description are provided for each of the responses. After you have read through these materials, review your own responses in light of the score point descriptions. You may also wish to review your responses and the score scale with staff in your preparation program.

Scoring Guide

Readers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide.

Score	Description
3	<p>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the important information presented in the scenario and any supporting documents. The response is well-developed, demonstrates a clear understanding of the issues presented, and synthesizes the important information related to the issues presented in the scenario.</p> <p>A typical response in this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates detailed, specific, and convincing evidence that shows an understanding of the issues presented and provides reasonable strategies for resolution• Responds appropriately to all parts of the questions• Prioritizes, outlines, or organizes steps or actions in a logical and insightful manner• When required, provides a strong explanation and rationale for the response
2	<p>Demonstrates a basic/general understanding of the important information presented in the scenario and any supporting documents. The response demonstrates an application or resolution to the issues presented in the scenario in a general manner.</p> <p>A typical response in this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides general evidence of an understanding of the issues presented in the materials• Identifies reasonable ways to resolve the issues, but fails to provide sufficient details to describe the resolution• Responds appropriately to most parts of the questions• Prioritizes, outlines, or organizes steps or actions in a general manner, but fails to provide sufficient detail• May contain minor errors in terminology or process that detract from the overall understanding of the role of an educator responsible for curriculum and instruction• When required, provides an adequate explanation or rationale for the response

Score	Description
1	<p>Demonstrates a limited understanding of the important information presented in the scenario and any supporting documents. The response analyzes the issues in the scenario in a manner that is clearly limited or flawed.</p> <p>A typical response in this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates limited evidence of an understanding of the issues presented in the materials and presents unreasonable ways to resolve the issues • Fails to respond appropriately to some parts of the question • Prioritizes, outlines, or organizes steps or actions unclearly or with gaps in logic • May contain serious misconceptions in terminology or process that detract from the overall understanding of the role of an educator responsible for curriculum and instruction • When required, provides a simplistic explanation or rationale for the response
0	<p>Demonstrates little or no understanding of the important information presented in the scenario and any supporting documents. The response fails to address the issues presented in the scenario.</p> <p>A typical response in this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates little or no evidence of an understanding of the issues presented in the prompt or materials and provides unreasonable ways to resolve the issues • Fails to respond to any parts of the question or rephrases the question • Fails to prioritize, outline, or organize steps or actions • May contain mostly serious misconceptions in terminology or process that detract from the overall understanding of the role of an educator responsible for curriculum and instruction • When required, provides no explanation or no rationale for the response <p>Note: The mere presence of specific words or phrases related to curriculum and instruction that might be used in an adequate response does not by itself indicate knowledge.</p>

Constructed-response Question 1: Professional Practices

General Directions

Plan to use approximately 15 minutes to complete this question.

Read the constructed-response question carefully before you begin to write your response to ensure that you address all components. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

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

Sample Question

A new director of curriculum in a suburban school district with six elementary schools has been asked to support the continuing implementation of a non-traditional mathematics program. The program was implemented district-wide three years ago amidst considerable concern from parents and staff. Frequent evaluation of the program has shown that students' conceptual understanding is exceptional, but their computation performance varies from year to year and consistently falls below conceptual understanding. While significant concerns still linger among parents and staff, parent satisfaction has increased by 20% in the last year and dissatisfaction has declined by one-third.

Identify AND describe three steps the curriculum director can take to gain further support for the mathematics program and decrease the dissatisfaction levels.

Sample Responses and Rationales for Question 1

Sample Response Earning a Score of 3

As the new director of curriculum, there are several steps that I would take to gain further support and decrease the level of dissatisfaction with the new mathematics program.

First, in order to help parents understand the program better, I would collaborate with the elementary principals to plan monthly mathematics nights. These events, to be held at each elementary school, would allow parents to attend with their children and participate together in a lesson presented by the teachers. The parents would get a better understanding of the mathematics program and learn how they can help their children at home.

Another step I would take would be to survey the elementary teachers to determine if they need additional professional development. If teachers feel their needs are being met, they will not only be more effective, but they will also do more to support the program. After the survey results were analyzed, there are many professional development approaches that I would use, such as providing mathematics coaches for teachers who need additional support, allocating funds for teachers to attend relevant conferences, and scheduling district-sponsored professional development workshops.

Finally, I would write a monthly mathematics newsletter to explain mathematics concepts, outline relevant Internet resources for parents to access, and provide ideas on how to do fun mathematics activities at home. I would also encourage teachers to write a “Math Gram” at the beginning of each unit to communicate the focus of each new unit and to provide tips on how the parents could support their children’s learning at home.

Rationale for the Score of 3

From the beginning, this response clearly and specifically focuses in on the key portion of the question by addressing “steps to gain further support and decrease the level of dissatisfaction with the new mathematics program.” Each step is logically and insightfully identified and described, and there is a logical rationale for the actions proposed.

The steps outlined above demonstrate that the test taker understands the core issues and can develop appropriate steps that will increase both parent and teacher support of the new program. Including opportunities for professional development as a step to increase program satisfaction also demonstrates an understanding of job-embedded, ongoing professional development. All actions are designed to increase the relationship and communication between parents and teachers, and to involve parents in their children’s work with the mathematics program.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 2

As a new curriculum director I would need to first educate myself about the progress of the students over a three-year period. I would review the evaluation data that shows the students' level of conceptual understanding and the students' computation performance. Familiarizing myself with the data would be beneficial for the development of a plan of action.

I would then plan a meeting with representatives of each elementary school. This would give me the opportunity to discuss the program and to learn about any concerns the teachers might have. This too would help me to develop a plan of action to support the mathematics program and to decrease dissatisfaction levels.

Rationale for the Score of 2

The response identifies two steps a new curriculum director could take to gain support for the mathematics program and to decrease satisfaction levels — analyze data and meet with a representative group of teachers. While the identified steps provide a systematic approach for action plan development, not much detail is given on how the curriculum director would use the analysis of the evaluation data and the information gleaned from the discussion with teachers to establish the foundation for the development of an action plan. The response fails to provide detailed, specific, and convincing evidence that shows an understanding of the steps required to resolve the issues presented in the scenario. By identifying two steps with no detailed explanation, the response demonstrates a resolution to the issues in a general manner.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 1

Moving from a traditional computation-based mathematics program to a non-traditional concept-based mathematics program can be very divisive. Teachers can resist change, especially experienced staff who feel they have been successful using the traditional approach. Parents want to be able to help their children with homework and class assignments. They expect to be able to use the mathematics strategies they were taught in order to help their children. As a result, the biggest challenge is getting the parents to understand and support the new mathematics program.

The new curriculum director can improve parent support and understanding by providing opportunities for training. Working with the principals, a parent workshop or mathematics fun night could be scheduled at the beginning of the school year at each elementary school. These activities would allow the parents to view the materials and learn some ways to help their children at home.

Rationale for the Score of 1

Most of this response focuses on rephrasing the information provided in the background of the question and it states the obvious — that “getting parents to understand and support the new mathematics program” is a challenge. The response then cites one step the curriculum director could take: arranging training or providing math fun nights. While the action of allowing parents to view the materials and learn how to help their children provides some communication with the parents and gives them some exposure to the material, the one-time events will have limited impact on their understanding of the program and may not actually increase their support of it. By only providing one step, this response has only given a partial answer to the question. In addition, the limited description of the step and its rationale does not demonstrate full understanding of how to develop support from the parents.

Constructed-response Question 2: Research and Students as Learners

General Directions

Plan to use approximately 15 minutes to complete this question.

Read the constructed-response question carefully before you begin to write your response to ensure that you address all components. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

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

Sample Question

Ms. Riley is a third-year teacher in an urban elementary school. She has a heterogeneously mixed class of 26 ten- and eleven-year-olds. At the beginning of the second month of school, she introduces a long-term project called “Literature Logs.” She plans the project to support her long-term goals. The following information relates to the project.

Document 1

Literature Log Project Plan

Long-term goals:

- Improve reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Address students’ individual differences
- Build a positive classroom community

Objectives:

1. Students will use writing to link aspects of a text with experiences and people in their own lives.
2. Students will write accurate summaries of what they have read.

Document 1

Project assignment:

Independent Reading Assignment

Literature Logs:

- You are expected to read independently for about 25-30 minutes every school night.
- You may choose the book.
- You are also expected to write four entries in your literature log every two weeks.
- Each entry should be about one handwritten page in your log.
- At the beginning of each entry you are to write the following:
 - the title and author of the book you are reading
 - the number of pages you are writing about
 - a summary of the part of the book you have just read
- In addition to writing a summary, you are also to include one or more of the following:
 - similar things that have happened in your life
 - what you think might happen next in the story
 - dilemmas the characters are facing and how they solve them or how you would solve them

Assessment:

Each week, each student's literature log will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Number of pages read during the week
- Number of entries in the literature log during the week
- Ability to write effective summaries of what has been read

Document 2

A conversation with Kenny

Ms. Riley: Kenny, in my grade book I noticed I don't have a check for your literature log. But I'm sure you've been reading since I've seen you read at least two books a week since the beginning of the year.

Kenny: I read three books last week.

Ms. Riley: I noticed how much you enjoyed reading one of them at least — you were laughing as you read during silent reading. Did you choose one you wanted to write about in your literature log?

Kenny: Well, right now I am reading an interesting one that takes place in a museum.

Ms. Riley: Oh, what book is that?

Kenny: It's a long name, *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankenweiler*. I just started it last night.

Ms. Riley: Oh, I know that book. It's very good.

Kenny: Great, because I have a question.

Ms. Riley: Is it a question that could help with your reading?

Kenny: Well, someone keeps explaining things to Saxonberg and I don't know who is explaining. I don't know who Saxonberg is either.

Ms. Riley: You know, Kenny, I think if you read a few more chapters you will probably find out, and then you can write about it in your literature log.

Kenny: Well, I can tell you about it tomorrow. Although the book has a long name, it's a small book. I'll finish it tonight.

Ms. Riley: I'd really love to see it written in your literature log or I won't be able to fill in that you've completed your homework.

Kenny: That's O.K. — I don't read to get credit. I just read for fun.

Question

In Document 2, Kenny's conversation with Ms. Riley, Kenny reveals characteristics of himself as a learner that could be used to support his development of literacy skills.

- Identify ONE characteristic of Kenny as a learner, and then suggest ONE research-based strategy Ms. Riley might use to address that characteristic in a way that will support the development of his literacy skills.
- Describe how the research-based strategy you suggested addresses the characteristic of Kenny as a learner and how the strategy could support Kenny's development of literacy skills. Base your response on the principles of differentiated instruction.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 3

Kenny is an avid reader. He loves to read, but doesn't want to take the time to write about what he's read. Ms. Riley needs to implement a research-based strategy that will engage Kenny in critical thinking and will enhance the development of his literacy skills. Since her long-term goals include developing speaking as well as writing skills, she might offer him an alternate way of recording his thoughts, such as tape-recording his comments about the book. This will provide Kenny with the opportunity to talk about the book - something it appears he likes to do. To address her goal of developing critical thinking skills, she might give him a few analyses of books by reviewers and ask Kenny to support or refute the reviews from his reading of the books.

Rationale for the Score of 3

The response begins by identifying an appropriate characteristic of Kenny as a learner, and then presents and describes an appropriate strategy Ms. Riley might use to address that characteristic in a way that would address her first long-term goal — improving the students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. By suggesting that Ms. Riley provide Kenny with an alternate way to record his thoughts, the response shows an understanding of differentiation. Suggesting that Ms. Riley allow Kenny to tape-record his comments provides an alternate approach for him to express the required learning. The response identifies a strategy to promote critical thinking skills which is another long-term goal of the literature log project. The response is well-developed and provides appropriate strategies to support Kenny's development of literacy and critical thinking skills. The response receives full credit.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 2

Kenny is a very interesting learner. He obviously loves to read; Ms. Riley's comments that she has seen him read at least two books a week, and he himself says he just reads "for fun." But he candidly admits he doesn't "read to get credit," and so he isn't concerned about the assignment Ms. Riley has given, nor about meeting her objectives. Students like Kenny are a challenge: he loves reading (good for him!) but doesn't want to jump through Ms. Riley's hoops. She has to be creative to figure out how to challenge him! Perhaps Ms. Riley could pair Kenny with another student of his ability to share his literature log entries since she wants to see Kenny write about what he has read. Requiring Kenny to share a summary of what he has read with another student might provide the motivation he needs to meet the requirements of the literature log project.

Rationale for the Score of 2

The response analyzes Kenny as a learner with appropriate commentary, but demonstrates a resolution to the issues presented in the scenario in a general manner. While pairing Kenny with another student to share a summary of what he has read might motivate Kenny to write in his literature log, the response is not fully developed and does not explain how the strategy would support the development of Kenny's literacy skills.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 1

There isn't really enough information given to do an analysis of Kenny as a learner. While the dialogue between Kenny and Ms. Riley suggests that Kenny is an avid reader and reads just for fun, more information about his current literacy skills is needed. Kenny is a student who is not concerned about meeting the objectives of the learning log project. Perhaps Ms. Riley should schedule a conference with Kenny's parents to discuss the project, to outline her expectations, and to talk about ways they could collectively support the development of Kenny's literature skills.

Rationale for the Score of 1

Saying that "more information is needed" is neither an acceptable response nor a viable excuse for not responding to all parts of the question. While it is true that more information could and would be sought to do a full analysis of Kenny or a complete plan for addressing his needs, there is sufficient information in the short conversation presented to warrant the identification of "one characteristic of Kenny as a learner" and one strategy to address that characteristic. This response demonstrates a limited understanding of the scenario and fails to respond appropriately to the question.

Preparation Resources

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the GACE assessment in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions of these materials to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Assessment

This guide explains how to navigate through a GACE assessment and how to answer different types of test questions. This free download is available in the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Reducing Test Anxiety

This guide provides practical help for people who suffer from test anxiety. Designed specifically for GACE test takers, but useful to anyone who has to take tests, this guide reviews the major causes of test anxiety and offers practical advice for how to counter each one. Download this guide for free from the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Study Tips: Preparing for a GACE Assessment

This document contains useful information on preparing for selected-response and constructed-response tests. The instruction, tips, and suggestions can help you become a better-prepared test taker. See the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare for this free download.

Journals

ASCD Education Update, Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Curriculum Update, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Educational Leadership, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, Journal of the Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education.

Teaching PreK-8, Early Years, Inc.

The Reading Teacher, International Reading Association.

Other Resources

Bennett, Christine I. (2010). *Comprehensive Multicultural Education: Theory and Practice*, Seventh Edition. Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.

Campbell, L., Campbell, B., and Dickinson, D. (2003). *Teaching and Learning Through Multiple Intelligences*, Third Edition. Needham, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.

Deal, T. E., and Peterson, K. D. (2009). *Shaping School Culture: Pitfalls, Paradoxes, and Promises*, Second Edition. San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

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- Evertson, Carolyn M., and Emmer, Edmund T. (2008). *Classroom Management for Elementary Teachers*, Eighth Edition. Needham, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.
- Imbeau, Marcia, and Tomlinson, Carol Ann (2010). *Leading and Managing a Differentiated Classroom*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Jensen, E. (2005). *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*, Second Edition. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Johnson, D. W., and Johnson, F. (2009). *Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills*, Tenth Edition. Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.
- Johnson, D. W., and Johnson, R. (1999). *Learning Together and Alone: Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning*, Fifth Edition. Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.
- Marzano, Robert (2003). *What Works in Schools: Translating Research Into Action*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Marzano, Robert. (2000). *What Works in Classroom Instruction*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Marzano, Robert, Pickering, Debra, and Pollock, Jane (2004). *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Marzano, Robert, Waters, Timothy, and McNulty, Brian (2005). *School Leadership That Works*. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McTighe, Jay, and Tomlinson, Carol Ann (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design: Connecting Content and Kids*. ASCD Premium and Select Member Book.
- McTighe, Jay, and Wiggins, Grant (2006). *Understanding by Design*, Second Edition. Merrill Education/Prentice Hall.
- Wong, H. K., and Wong, R. T. (2009). *The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher*, Twelfth Edition. Mountain View, Calif.: Harry K. Wong Publications, Inc.

Online Resources

Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) — www.eric.ed.gov

Editorial Projects in Education — www.edweek.org/ew/marketplace/books/publications.html

Georgia Department of Education — www.doe.k12.ga.us

U.S. Department of Education — www.ed.gov