ParaPro Assessment (0755/1755)

Test at a Glance

Test Name	ParaPro Assessment
Test Codes	0755/1755
Time	2½ hours
Number of Questions	90
Format	Multiple-choice questions; use of a calculator is not permitted
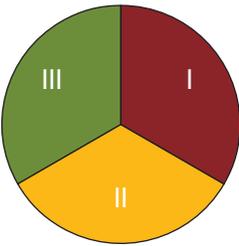
Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
I. Reading	30	33⅓%
II. Mathematics	30	33⅓%
III. Writing	30	33⅓%

About This Test

The ParaPro Assessment for prospective and practicing paraprofessionals measures skills and knowledge in reading, mathematics, and writing.

The test consists of 90 multiple-choice questions across the three subject areas of reading, mathematics, and writing. Approximately two-thirds of the questions in each subject area focus on basic skills and knowledge, and approximately one-third of the questions in each subject area focus on the application of those skills and knowledge in a classroom context.

This test may contain some questions that do not count toward your score.

Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

I. Reading

A. Reading Skills and Knowledge

Reading Skills and Knowledge questions measure the examinee's ability to understand, interpret, and analyze a wide range of text. Questions are based on reading passages—as well as graphs, charts, and tables—drawn from a variety of subject areas and real-life situations. The questions assess the examinee's ability to

- identify the main idea or primary purpose
- identify supporting ideas
- identify how a reading selection is organized
- determine the meanings of words or phrases in context
- draw inferences or implications from directly stated content
- determine whether information is presented as fact or opinion
- interpret information from tables, diagrams, charts, and graphs

B. Application of Reading Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

Reading Application questions are typically based on classroom scenarios in which students are involved in reading-related tasks, such as reading assigned passages or working on vocabulary development. Some questions concern *foundations of reading*: the knowledge and skills students need when they are learning the basic features of words and written text. These questions assess the examinee's ability to help students.

- sound out words (e.g., recognize long and short vowels, consonant sounds, rhymes)
- break down words into parts (e.g., recognize syllables, root words, prefixes, suffixes)
- decode words or phrases using context clues
- distinguish between synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms
- alphabetize words

Other questions are concerned with *tools of the reading process*: common strategies used in classrooms before, during, and after reading to aid students' reading skills. These questions assess the examinee's ability to

- help students use prereading strategies, such as skimming or making predictions
- ask questions about a reading selection to help students understand the selection
- make accurate observations about students' ability to understand and interpret text
- help students use a dictionary
- interpret written directions

II. Mathematics

A. Mathematics Skills and Knowledge

The Math Skills and Knowledge questions assess the examinee's knowledge of mathematical concepts and ability to apply them to abstract and real-life situations. The test questions do not require knowledge of advanced-level mathematics vocabulary. Examinees may not use calculators.

Three categories of math skills are tested:

- Number Sense and Basic Algebra
  - Perform basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, fractions, decimals
  - Recognize multiplication as repeated addition and division as repeated subtraction
  - Recognize and interpret mathematical symbols such as $+, <, >, \leq, \geq$
  - Understand the definitions of basic terms such as sum, difference, product, quotient, numerator, denominator
  - Recognize the position of numbers in relation to each other (e.g., $\frac{1}{3}$ is between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$)
  - Recognize equivalent forms of a number (e.g., $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{4}$; $\frac{1}{10} = 0.1 = 10\%$)
  - Demonstrate knowledge of place value for whole numbers and decimal numbers
  - Compute percentages
  - Demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts of exponents (e.g., $2^2 = 4$, $2^4 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 = 16$)

- Demonstrate knowledge of "order of operations" (parentheses, exponents, multiplication, division, addition, subtraction)
- Use mental math to solve problems by estimation
- Solve word problems
- Solve one-step, single-variable linear equations (e.g., find x if $x + 4 = 2$)
- Identify what comes next in a sequence of numbers

- Geometry and Measurement
  - Represent time and money in more than one way (e.g., 30 minutes $= \frac{1}{2}$ hour; 10:15 = quarter after 10; $0.50 = 50 cents = half dollar)
  - Convert between units or measures in the same system (e.g., inches to feet; centimeters to meters)
  - Identify basic geometrical shapes (e.g., isosceles triangle, right triangle, polygon)
  - Perform computations related to area, volume, and perimeter for basic shapes
  - Graph data on an *xy*-coordinate plane
- Data Analysis
  - Interpret information from tables, charts, and graphs
  - Given a table, chart, or graph with time-related data, interpret trends over time
  - Create basic tables, charts, and graphs
  - Compute the mean, median, and mode

B. Application of Mathematics Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

The Math Application questions assess the examinee's ability to apply the three categories of math skills listed in Section II (Mathematics) in a classroom setting or in support of classroom instruction. The questions focus on testing mathematical competencies needed to assist the teacher with instruction. The test questions do not require knowledge of advanced-level mathematics vocabulary. Examinees may not use calculators.

III. Writing

A. Writing Skills and Knowledge

Writing Skills and Knowledge questions assess the examinee's ability to identify

- basic grammatical errors in standard written English
- errors in word usage (e.g., their/they're/there, then/than)
- errors in punctuation
- parts of a sentence (e.g., subject and verb/predicate)
- parts of speech (nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions)
- errors in spelling

B. Application of Writing Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction

Writing Application questions are typically based on classroom scenarios in which students are planning, composing, revising, or editing documents written for a variety of purposes. Some questions are concerned with aspects of the writing process, the full range of activities used when composing written documents. These questions assess the examinee's ability to help students

- use prewriting to generate and organize ideas (including freewriting and using outlines)
- identify and use appropriate reference materials
- draft and revise (including composing or refining a thesis statement, writing focused and organized paragraphs, and writing a conclusion)
- edit written documents for clarity, grammar, sentence integrity (run-ons and sentence fragments), word usage, punctuation, and spelling

Some questions are concerned with *writing applications*, the application of writing for different purposes. These questions assess the examinee's ability to help students

- write for different purposes and audiences (including using appropriate language and taking a position for or against something)
- recognize and write in different modes and forms (e.g., descriptive essays, persuasive essays, narratives, letters)

Sample Test Questions

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case and fill in the corresponding lettered space on the answer sheet with a heavy, dark mark so that you cannot see the letter.

READING

Questions 1–2 are based on the following passage.

Early scientists believed that all dinosaurs, like most reptiles, laid and then immediately abandoned their eggs. The newly hatched young were left to take care of themselves. However, the recent discovery of a group of nests has challenged this belief. The nests, which contained fossilized baby dinosaurs that were not newborn, provided evidence that dinosaur parents actually cared for their young. For some time after birth, the babies would stay at the nest while the parents brought back plant matter for food. The young stayed at home until they were large enough to roam safely on their own.

1. The passage is primarily concerned with

   (A) contrasting dinosaurs with modern reptiles

   (B) explaining why dinosaurs became extinct

   (C) discussing recent findings about dinosaurs' behavior

   (D) providing new information about what dinosaurs ate

2. The discovery of a group of dinosaur nests challenged the idea that dinosaurs

   (A) fed their young with plant matter

   (B) hatched few eggs

   (C) migrated in search of food

   (D) deserted their young

JAPANESE AMERICAN BUSINESSES (1900–1909)
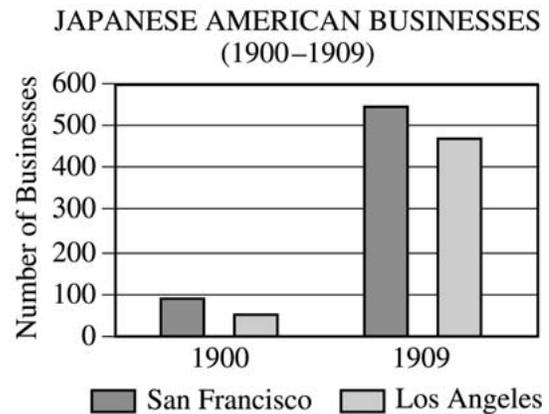
3. What conclusion can be drawn from the data presented in the graph above?

   (A) Japanese American businesses were more successful in California than in other states in 1909.

   (B) The number of Japanese American businesses in Los Angeles and San Francisco increased greatly from 1900 to 1909.

   (C) In 1909 there were more Japanese American businesses in Los Angeles than there were in San Francisco.

   (D) In 1909 most Japanese American businesses in Los Angeles and San Francisco were large companies.

4. American science-fiction writers produce a large number of novels for young people these days, yet few take advantage of the latitude allowed by the genre. Since the 1970s, young-adult science fiction has had little to do with the wonders of science, intergalactic travel, or new worlds in space. Most of the novels are cautionary tales about regimented, conformist societies or about the social order collapsed into barbarism. This change has resulted in science fiction that is, to me as a reader, much less interesting than science fiction used to be.

   Which sentence from the passage is most clearly an expression of opinion rather than a statement of fact?

   (A) "American science-fiction . . . the genre."

   (B) "Since the . . . in space."

   (C) "Most of . . . into barbarism."

   (D) "This change . . . to be."

Questions 5–6 are based on the following passage, which students are reading in small groups.

The environment in which people live often determines the kind of technology they use. For instance, ancient Mesopotamia had few plants suitable for making paper. But the area had lots of high-quality clay. People used the clay to store information.

Modern people store information on paper, computer disks, and CDs. Mesopotamians stored their data on clay tablets—pieces of smooth clay small enough to fit into the palm of an adult's hand. When a clay tablet was damp, people could scratch pictures and letters into its surface using a sharpened reed. When dried in the hot sun, the clay hardened, preserving the writing and the information.

5. The teacher wants students to understand why the Mesopotamians wrote on clay. What question could a paraprofessional ask a group of students about the passage that would best help the students understand why the Mesopotamians wrote on clay?

   (A) Why did the Mesopotamians make clay tablets small enough to fit in the hand?
   (B) What kinds of pictures and letters did the Mesopotamians scratch on clay?
   (C) Why didn't the Mesopotamians write on paper the way we do today?
   (D) How did the Mesopotamians learn to read and write?

6. The paraprofessional asks a group of students to describe the main purpose of the second paragraph. Which of the following four responses from the students is most accurate?

   (A) To explain how the Mesopotamians used clay to store information
   (B) To describe the different ways we store information today
   (C) To explain why the environment affects the kind of technology people use
   (D) To show that Mesopotamians made small clay tablets so they could carry them easily

MATHEMATICS

RESULTS OF SURVEY FOR A CLASS TRIP
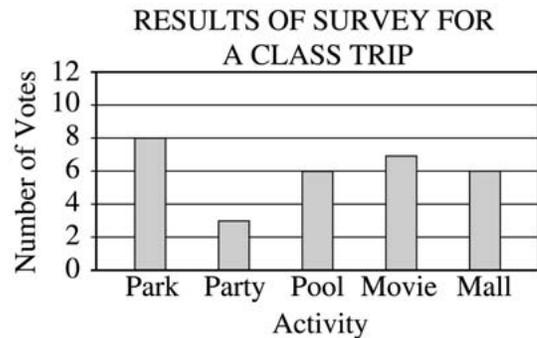
7. In the graph above, how many more votes were received for the park than the mall as an activity for a class trip?

   (A) 1
   (B) 2
   (C) 6
   (D) 14

8. What digit is in the hundredths place of the number 5,123.6487?

   (A) 1
   (B) 4
   (C) 6
   (D) 8

9. 445.76 × 9.634 is approximately equal to

   (A) 46
   (B) 446
   (C) 4,460
   (D) 44,600
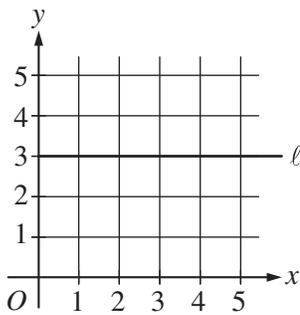
10. Which of the following is NOT a point on line ℓ shown on the graph above?

(A) (0, 3)

(B) (1, 3)
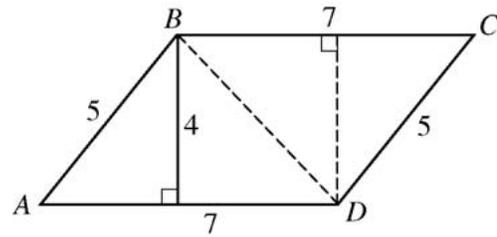
(C) (3, 0)

(D) (3, 3)

$$5 + 3 \times 8 + 9 = ?$$

11. A student wrote the incorrect number sentence above to solve the following problem:

"Multiply the sum of 5 and 3 and the sum of 8 and 9."

To correct the error, the student's number sentence should be changed to

(A) $(5 + 3) \times 8 + 9 = ?$

(B) $5 + 3 \times (8 + 9) = ?$

(C) $(5 + 3 \times 8) + 9 = ?$

(D) $(5 + 3) \times (8 + 9) = ?$

12. A paraprofessional is helping a student find the equation for the area of parallelogram *ABCD* shown above by pointing out to the student that the parallelogram can be divided into two congruent triangles. The area of the parallelogram is then the sum of the areas of the two triangles. Which of the following is the correct expression to use to find the area of parallelogram *ABCD* ?

(A) $\frac{1}{2}(7\times4) + \frac{1}{2}(7\times4)$

(B) $\frac{1}{2}(7\times5) + \frac{1}{2}(7\times5)$

(C) $(7\times5) + (7\times4)$

(D) $(7\times4)\times5$

WRITING

Directions for Questions 13 and 14: In each of the sentences below, four portions are underlined and lettered. Select the underlined portion that contains a grammatical construction, a word use, or an instance of punctuation that would be inappropriate in carefully written English. Note the letter printed beneath the underlined portion you select and completely fill in the corresponding lettered space on the answer sheet with a heavy, dark mark so that you cannot see the letter. No sentence has more than one error.

13. The role of technology in the nation's public schools
                                        A

    have been increasing steadily for more than 20 years.
     B   C   D

14. Jupiter, the largest planet in the solar system, spins
                  A

    very rapidly on it's axis, with the result that a day on
         B   C

    Jupiter lasts only 9 hours and 55 minutes.
          D

15. Because there were no refrigerators on the United States space shuttles, all of the food eaten by the astronauts had to be in a nonperishable form.

    In the sentence above, the underlined word is being used as

    (A) a noun
    (B) a verb
    (C) an adjective
    (D) an adverb

16. Which word is NOT spelled correctly?

    (A) compair
    (B) hardware
    (C) repair
    (D) scare

Questions 17–18 are based on the following rough draft written by a student.

How to Teach Your Dog to Sit
by Kiara

(1) First hold a dog biscuit so the dog pays attention. (2) Say "Sit!" (3) When you say it, use a loud and firm voice. (4) Move the hand holding the biscuit over the dog's nose, don't let him grab it. (5) You may have to give a light backwards tug on the dog's leash. (6) When the dog sits down, give him the treat and lots of praise. (7) Repeat this a few times, and he'll probably understand the command.

17. Kiara is writing an introductory sentence that summarizes the main points of the paragraph. What sentence would be the strongest introductory sentence for the paragraph?

    (A) Dogs are naturally very intelligent and obedient.
    (B) Your dog probably likes some dog biscuits better than others.
    (C) It is easy to teach your dog the command "Sit!"
    (D) Nobody likes a dog that can't play catch.

18. Kiara is learning how to use transition words (words that clarify the relationships between ideas). What transition word or words should Kiara use before the word "don't" in sentence 4 in order to clarify the meaning of the sentence?

    (A) but
    (B) because
    (C) for example
    (D) so

Answers

1. The correct answer is (C). The passage notes the "recent discovery of a group of nests" and then elaborates on what the discovery reveals about the behavior of dinosaurs toward their young.

2. The correct answer is (D). The belief challenged by the discovery of the group of nests is that dinosaurs "abandoned their eggs" and left their young to provide for themselves.

3. The correct answer is (B). (A) and (D) are incorrect because the graph does not offer information about Japanese American businesses in cities outside of California, nor does it offer information about the size of Japanese American businesses in Los Angeles and San Francisco. (C) is incorrect because the graph indicates that in 1909 there were fewer Japanese American businesses in Los Angeles than in San Francisco.

4. The correct answer is (D). The sentences referred to in options A, B, and C present facts about the number and subject matter of science fiction novels published today. In the last sentence, however, the author shifts to offering a personal opinion about science fiction today: it's not as interesting as it used to be.

5. The correct answer is (C). The question would encourage students to think about why the Mesopotamians did not have paper (they did not have many of the proper plants) and help the students better understand how the resources available to the Mesopotamians helped determine the materials they used for writing.

6. The correct answer is (A). The second paragraph is primarily concerned with describing the processes used by the Mesopotamians to write on clay tablets.

7. According to the graph, 8 votes were received for the park as an activity for a class trip and 6 votes were received for the mall. To determine how many more votes were received for the park than the mall, subtract the number of votes for the mall from the number of votes for the park.

$$8 - 6 = 2$$

Thus, 2 more votes were received for the park than the mall. The correct answer is (B).

8. The hundredths place of 5,123.6487 is 2 digits to the right of the decimal point as shown:

decimal point

5,123.6487

hundredths place

The digit in the hundredths place of the number is 4. The correct answer is (B).

9. To determine the approximate value of 445.76 × 9.634, round 445.76 to 446 and round 9.634 to 10. Then multiply 446 and 10.

$$446 \times 10 = 4,460$$

The approximate value is 4,460. The correct answer is (C).

10. To determine which point is not on the line ℓ, plot the points in options A through D on the graph.
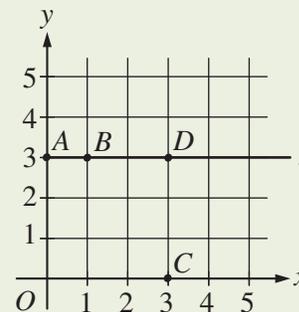
As can be seen on the graph, the point C (3, 0) is not on line ℓ.

The correct answer is (C).

11. The student's number sentence

$$5 + 3 \times 8 + 9 = ?$$

is incorrect because according to the order of operations, multiplication precedes addition; thus 3 and 8 would be multiplied first, then 5 and then 9 would be added to the product. In order for the sum of 5 and 3 and the sum of 8 and 9 to be calculated before multiplying, parentheses must be placed around 5 + 3 and 8 + 9. Thus the correct number sentence is:

$$(5 + 3) \times (8 + 9) = ?$$

The correct answer is (D).

12. The figure shown is a parallelogram. Parallelogram *ABCD* can be divided into two congruent triangles, *ABD* and *BCD*, as shown by the dotted line. Each triangle has an area of $\frac{1}{2}bh$, where *b* is the length of the base, and *h* is the height of the triangle. The height of a triangle is the line segment that is perpendicular to the base.

In the figure, the base *b* of each triangle has length 7 and the height of *h* each triangle is 4, and the area of each triangle is thus, $A = \frac{1}{2}(7 \times 4)$.

The area of parallelogram is the sum of the areas of the two triangles, thus the area of parallelogram *ABCD* is $\frac{1}{2}(7 \times 4) + \frac{1}{2}(7 \times 4)$.

The correct answer is (A).

13. The error in the sentence occurs at (B). The subject of the verb "have been increasing" is the "role of technology"; because "role" is a singular noun, the verb should also be singular: "has been increasing."

14. The error in the sentence occurs at (C). As presented in (C), the word "it's" is an error in usage. When used in the possessive form (the axis belongs to Jupiter), there is no apostrophe in the word "its." There is an apostrophe in "it's" only when the word is being used as a contraction of "it is."

15. The correct answer is (C). An adjective is a word that modifies a noun or pronoun, usually by describing, identifying, or quantifying. Here, "nonperishable" modifies "form" by describing the form of food eaten by the astronauts.

16. The correct answer is (A). The correct spelling is "compare."

17. The correct answer is (C). Kiara's paragraph is concerned with discussing what steps to take when teaching a dog to sit. (A) is too general; (B) concerns a minor element of the paragraph, not its primary focus; and (D) concerns playing catch, which is not discussed in the paragraph at all.

18. The correct answer is (A). The word "but" is used to emphasize the contrast expressed in the sentence: "Move the hand holding the biscuit over the dog's nose, but don't let him grab it."