

Introduction

General Description of the ParaPro Assessment

The ParaPro Assessment [test codes 0075 (paper-based test) and 1755 (Web-based test)] is designed to assess skills and knowledge in reading, mathematics, and writing of prospective and practicing paraprofessionals and also to assess their ability to apply those skills and knowledge when assisting in classroom instruction. The test consists of 90 multiple-choice items, which are arranged into three sections by subject area: reading, mathematics, and writing. Each test item has four response options. You record your answer choice in the separate answer booklet by filling in the space corresponding to **A**, **B**, **C**, or **D**. No penalty is imposed for wrong answers. (You merely score a zero for that test question.)

You are given $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours to complete the test. The individual sections of the test are not timed, so you may allot your time among the three sections as you choose.

Students are not allowed to use calculators or mechanical pens or pencils during the test.

Allocation of the Test Content

According to the *ParaPro Assessment (0755) Test at a Glance*, the content categories for the test and approximate number of questions and percentage of the test for each content category are as follows:

Allocation of the Test Content		
Content Category	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percent of Test
I. Reading Skills and Knowledge	18	20%
II. Application of Reading Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction	12	13%
I. Mathematics Skills and Knowledge	18	20%
II. Application of Mathematics Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction	12	13%
I. Writing Skills and Knowledge	18	20%
II. Application of Writing Skills and Knowledge to Classroom Instruction	12	13%

As shown in the table, about 18 items in each subject area focus on basic skills and knowledge, and approximately 12 questions in each area focus on the application of those skills and knowledge to classroom situations.

Scoring of the Test

Your responses in the answer booklet are scored electronically. Fifteen of the test items (five in each of the three subject areas) are nonscorable items. These nonscorable items will not count toward your score, whether you answer them correctly or incorrectly; they are being tested out for future tests. You will not know which test items are nonscorable. Your raw point score is determined by the number of items you answer correctly from the remaining 75 scorable items.

Your score report for the test will show an overall scaled score ranging from 420 to 480. You can read *Understanding Your Praxis Scores* (www.ets.org/parapro) for more information about the scoring of the test.

The ParaPro Assessment and Requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act

The ParaPro Assessment is a national assessment designed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) that can be used by states and school districts to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which was signed into law in January, 2002. NCLB requires that paraprofessionals whose duties include instructional support and who were hired after January 8, 2002, meet standards of qualification. Passing the ParaPro Assessment is one of three ways paraprofessionals can meet the qualifications. The other two ways are completing two years of study at an institution of higher education and obtaining an associate's (or higher) degree.

The following is a list of states/districts that have adopted the ParaPro Assessment to meet NCLB requirements along with the current passing/qualifying score (in 2009), as given by ETS (www.ets.org/parapro), that has been established in each state/district*:

Arkansas 457	Nebraska 456
California, Fillmore Unified School District 458	Nevada 460
California, Oak Park Unified School District 458	New Jersey 456
California, Oakland Unified School District 460	New Mexico 457
California, The Help Group 458	North Dakota 464
California, Ventura County 458	Ohio 456
Colorado 460	Oregon 455
Connecticut 457	Pennsylvania, Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3 462*
Delaware 459	Pennsylvania, Chester Upland School District 459
District of Columbia 461	Rhode Island 461
Florida Consortium 464	South Carolina 456
Florida, Duval County Public School 457	South Dakota 461
Hawaii 459	Tennessee 456
Idaho 460	Texas Region 19 467
Illinois 460	Texas, Anthony Independent School District 467
Indiana 460	Texas, Fort Worth Independent School District 461
Kansas 455	Texas, North East Independent School District 465
Louisiana 450	Texas, South San Independent School District 465
Maine 459	U.S. Virgin Islands 466
Maryland 455	Utah 460
Massachusetts 464	Vermont 458
Michigan 460	Virginia 455
Minnesota 460	Washington 461
Missouri 458	Wyoming 462

*The passing/qualifying score set by each state/district may have changed. Contact your state or school district to verify the passing/qualifying score.

Frequently Asked Questions About the ParaPro Assessment

Q. What is the Praxis ParaPro Assessment?

- A.** The ParaPro Assessment is a test that states and school districts can adopt as a way for paraprofessionals to meet qualification standards required by the 2001/2002 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Q. Who administers the Praxis ParaPro Assessment?

- A.** The Praxis ParaPro Assessment is administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Q. When and where is the Praxis ParaPro Assessment given?

- A.** Currently (in 2009), the paper-based ParaPro Assessment is administered four times in an academic year (usually in September, January, March, and June) at locations throughout the United States. You can find information on test dates, site locations, fees, registration procedures, and policies in the current *The Praxis Series ParaPro Assessment Information and Registration Bulletin (ParaPro Registration Bulletin)*, which you can download from the ParaPro Website at www.ets.org/parapro.

The Internet-based test is administered only in participating school districts. For a particular district, contact the district's administrative office to find out whether the Internet-based ParaPro Assessment is offered in that district.

Q. How do I register to take to the test?

- A.** For the paper-based test, complete the registration form in the center of the *ParaPro Registration Bulletin* (or download a copy from the ParaPro Website at www.ets.org/parapro) and then mail the completed form and payment to ETS-ParaPro Assessment, Box 382065, Pittsburgh, PA 15251-8065.

For the Internet-based test, no preregistration with ETS is required. Contact a participating district's administrative office in your area for registration information.

Q. Are special testing arrangements available?

- A.** If you have a disabling condition (visual, physical, hearing, or so on), special testing arrangements and test materials can be made available for you. Complete the registration form and follow the instructions in the *ParaPro Registration Bulletin*.

If you are unable to take the test on Saturdays because of your religious convictions or because of duties as a member of the U.S. armed forces, you can request a Monday testing day by following the instructions in the *ParaPro Registration Bulletin*. A copy of your military duties or a letter from your clergy on the clergy's letterhead, verifying the religious basis for your request, must be included with your registration application.

If your primary language is not English (PLNE), you can request extended testing time by following the instructions in the *ParaPro Registration Bulletin*.

Keep in mind that if you are requesting nonstandard testing accommodations, you must register by mail through ETS and have your accommodations approved *prior to testing*. You should write your name and contact information on all correspondence to ensure proper handling of your documentation. Don't forget to make copies of everything before you mail it.

Q. May I change my registration if I need to?

- A.** Yes, you may change tests, test sites, or transfer registration to a later test date by completing the appropriate forms, which you can download from the ParaPro Website (www.ets.org/parapro). The current fee (in 2009) for this service is \$45. *Note:* If you registered for PLNE accommodations, you may *not* change your test center.

Q. What is the fee for the test?

- A.** The current fee (in 2009) for regular registration is \$45. The fee for late registration is an additional \$45 charge.

Q. What should I bring to the test site?

- A.** After you mail in your registration form, you should receive an admission ticket by one week before your scheduled test date. If you have not received your admission ticket by this time or if you have lost your admission ticket, contact ETS Customer Service at 1-800-772-9476.

Your admission ticket will include your name, the tests you are registered to take, the test date, the test site address, and the reporting time. Check the information on your admission ticket to make sure that it is correct. If there is an error on your admission ticket, you can make changes by following the instructions on the correction form attached to the ticket.

The day of the test, you should bring your admission ticket, a current, valid form of photo and signature identification (for example, driver's license or military identification), several sharpened Number 2 soft lead pencils, a good eraser, a blue or black ink pen, and a watch to help pace yourself during the exam (watch alarms and clocks on cell phones are not permitted). Calculators or mechanical pencils or pens cannot be used during the test. No personal items such as handbags, cell phones, PDAs, BlackBerry devices, any other electronic or photographic devices, study materials, or other aids will be permitted in the testing room.

When scheduling your test, make sure you use *exactly* the same name, as shown on the primary identification document that you will present at the test center. If the name shown does not match the name on your registration record, you will not be permitted to test, and you will not receive a refund from ETS.

Q. Is the ParaPro Assessment divided into timed sections?

- A.** No, you have $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours to complete the test. The individual sections of the test are not timed, so you may allot your time among the three sections as you choose.

Q. What is the passing score?

- A.** ETS does not set passing (qualifying) scores. Each state/district that elects to use the ParaPro Assessment for the purpose of qualifying paraprofessionals establishes its own passing score. Check the list of states/districts and their passing score requirements given earlier in this chapter. You also should check with your state or district to verify the passing score.

Q. When will I get my score report?

- A.** For the paper-based test, your score report will be mailed approximately four weeks after the test administration date. For the Internet-based test, your unofficial score report is available onscreen and can be printed at the end of the test. Your official score report will be mailed approximately two weeks after the test administration.

Q. How do I get more information about the ParaPro Assessment?

- A.** Check the ParaPro Website (www.ets.org/parapro). If new information on the ParaPro Assessment becomes available, it will be posted on this site.

How to Use This CliffsNotes Book

Here are some suggestions for developing an effective study program using this CliffsNotes book.

1. Set up a regular schedule of study sessions. Try to set aside approximately two hours for each session. If you complete one session per day (including weekends), it should take you about 4 to 6 weeks to work your way through the review and practice material provided in this book. Of course, if your test date is coming up soon, you might need to lengthen your study time per day.
2. Reserve a place for studying where you will have few distractions, so that you can concentrate. Make sure that you have adequate lighting and a room temperature that is comfortable—not too warm or too cold. Be sure that you have an ample supply of water to keep your brain hydrated, and you might also want to have some light snacks available. To improve mental alertness, choose snacks that are high in protein and low in carbohydrates (for example, nuts). Gather all the necessary study aids (paper, pencils, note cards, and so on) beforehand. Let your voicemail answer your phone during your study time.

3. Take Practice Test 1 in Part II of this book before you begin reading the review material to help you discover your strengths and weaknesses. Read the answer explanations for all the questions, not just the ones you missed, because you might have gotten some of your correct answers by guessing. Plan your study program so that you can spend more time on topics that your Practice Test 1 results indicate are weak areas for you.
4. Carefully study the review of the test areas in Part I of this book to refresh your memory about the key concepts for each of the content categories, being sure to concentrate as you go through the material. Work through the sample items at the end of the chapters and make sure you understand them thoroughly.
5. Make flashcards to aid you in memorizing key definitions and formulas and keep them with you at all times. When you have spare moments of time, take out the flash cards and go over the information you've recorded on them. This is a particularly important strategy for the ParaPro Assessment because *no notation, definitions, or formulas sheet is provided for your reference during the test*.
6. Take several brief 2 to 3 minute breaks during your study sessions to give your mind time to absorb the review material you just read. According to brain research, you remember the first part and last part of something you've read more easily than you remember the middle part. Taking several breaks will allow you to create more beginnings and endings to maximize the amount of material you remember.

Tip: It's best not to leave your study area during a break. Try stretching, closing your eyes for a few minutes, or getting a quick drink or snack.

7. Periodically review material you have already studied to reinforce what you have learned and to help you identify topics you might need to restudy.
8. When you complete your review, take Practice Test 2 in Part II of this book under the same conditions you expect for the actual test, adhering to the two-and-one-half-hour time limit. When you finish taking the test, carefully study the answer explanations for *all* the questions and do additional study, if needed.
9. Organize a study group, if possible. A good way of learning and reinforcing the material is to discuss it with others. If feasible, set up a regular time to study with one or more colleagues or friends. Take turns explaining the material to each other. This strategy will help you to clarify your own understanding of the material.

After completing your study program, you should find yourself prepared and confident to achieve a passing score on the ParaPro Assessment.

How to Prepare for the Day of the Test

There are several things you can do to prepare yourself for the day of the test.

1. Know how to get to the test center and how to get into the room where you will be testing at the test center.
2. Make sure you have dependable transportation that will get you to the test center and that you know where you should park (if you plan to go by car).
3. Keep all the materials you will need to bring to the test center—especially, your admission ticket and identification—in a secure place, so that you can easily find them on the day of the test.
4. The night before the test, try to get a good night's rest. Avoid taking nonprescription drugs or consuming alcohol as the use of these products might impair your mental faculties on test day.
5. On the day of the test, report to the testing center *no later than 7:30 A.M.* If you arrive late, you may not be admitted, and your test fee will be forfeited.
6. Dress in comfortable clothing and wear comfortable shoes. Even if it is warm outside, wear layers of clothing that can be removed or put on, depending on the temperature in the test center.
7. Eat a light meal. Select foods that you have found usually give you the most energy and stamina.
8. Drink plenty of water to make sure that your brain remains hydrated during the test for optimal thinking.
9. Make a copy of this list and post it in a strategic location. Check over it before you leave for the testing center.

Test-Taking Strategies for the ParaPro Assessment

Here are some general test-taking strategies to help maximize your score on the test:

1. When you receive the test, briefly close your eyes, breathe in and out slowly, and mentally visualize yourself working through the test successfully.
2. During the test, read and follow all the directions. If you do not understand something in the directions, ask the test administrator for clarification.
3. Work through each test section (reading, mathematics, or writing) at a steady pace. You should plan to spend about 50 minutes on each section of the test. Check your watch periodically to make sure you are not spending too much time on any one section.
4. Try to answer the test questions in each section in order. Skipping around can waste time and might cause mistakes on your answer sheet. However, if a question is taking too much of your time, place a large check mark next to it in the test booklet (*not* on the answer booklet), mark your best guess in the answer booklet, and move on.
5. Read each question entirely. Skimming to save time can cause you to misread a question or miss important information.
6. Write in the test booklet. Underline or circle key words or phrases, mark on graphs or diagrams, draw figures, and do scratch work in the test booklet. Remember, however, to mark your answer choice in the separate answer booklet. Answers marked only in the test booklet are not scored.
7. Use only the information in the question. Don't make assumptions or rely on your opinion when answering a question.
8. Be sure you are answering the question asked. Circle or underline what you are being asked, to help you stay focused on it.
9. Read all the answer choices before you select an answer. You might find an answer that immediately strikes you as correct, but this determination might have occurred because you jumped to a false conclusion or made an incorrect assumption.
10. Eliminate as many wrong choices as you can. Examine the answer choices and eliminate those that are off-topic or unreasonable.
11. Change an answer only if you have a good reason to do so. Be sure to completely erase the old answer choice before marking the new one.
12. If you are trying to recall information during the test, close your eyes and try to visualize yourself in your study place. This might trigger your memory.
13. Remain calm during the test. If you start to feel anxious, briefly close your eyes, breathe in and out slowly, and mentally visualize yourself in a peaceful place, to help you relax.
14. Record your answers in the answer booklet carefully. Since the test is scored electronically, it is critical that you mark your answer booklet accurately. As you go through the test questions, circle the letters of your answer choices in the test booklet. Then mark those answers in the answer booklet in bunches of 5 to 10 (unless time is running out, at which point you should start marking answers one by one).
15. Before turning in your answer booklet, check that you have marked an answer for every test question. You are not penalized for a wrong answer (you merely score a zero for that test question), so even if you have no clue about the answer, make a guess.
16. Before turning in your answer booklet, erase any stray marks in the answer booklet and brush off any loose eraser dust.
17. As you work through the practice tests provided in this book, consciously use the strategies suggested in this section as preparation for the actual ParaPro Assessment. Try to reach the point where the strategies are automatic for you.

You will benefit greatly from this *CliffsTestPrep* book. By using the recommendations in this chapter as you complete your study program, you will be prepared to walk into the testing room with confidence. Good luck on the ParaPro Assessment and on your future career as a paraprofessional!