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ABOUT THE ORELA PROGRAM

This section of the study guide provides general information about the Oregon Educator Licensure Assessments® (ORELA®) program, information about how the tests are developed and administered, and suggestions to help candidates prepare to test.

Complete registration and testing information for the ORELA program can be found in the current ORELA registration bulletin, available on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com.

The Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) and the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson are also available to answer any questions you may have. Select "Contacts" from the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com for contact information.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Background and Purpose

Ensuring the presence of high-quality teachers in all classrooms is a vital element of the state's educational system. In order to secure that presence, the TSPC established a four-tier licensure structure for educators, aligned with the development levels of students. After preservice preparation (and/or receiving a transitional license), every educator must meet the standards for an initial license, which authorizes the educator to work with a specific authorization level in the Oregon school system and recognizes the competencies the educator has demonstrated. Under Oregon laws, an educator must hold the appropriate Oregon license prior to beginning employment in a public school or Education Service District.

The TSPC has contracted the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson to develop and administer licensure tests in the ORELA program. The ORELA program includes the Administrator, English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Multiple Subjects, and Protecting Student and Civil Rights in the Educational Environment Examinations.

General Description of the Examinations

The ORELA tests are criterion referenced and objective based. Criterion-referenced tests are designed to measure a candidate's knowledge and skills in relation to an established standard of performance (a criterion) rather than in relation to the performance of other candidates. The tests are designed to help identify those candidates who have the level of knowledge and skills required to perform satisfactorily as Oregon educators.

Refer to Section 2 of this study guide for detailed information about test content and design.

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Test Development Process

Creating the Oregon Educator Licensure Assessments is a complex, ongoing process. The major steps in the process are outlined below.

Task	Description
Develop the Test Framework	<p>The content of each test is documented in the test framework. The test framework consists of test subareas that each include a set of test objectives, along with a set of descriptive statements that further elaborate the content of each test objective.</p> <p>During preparation of the test framework, key state and national documents were consulted. The content of the test objectives was determined by input from Oregon educators, the TSPC, and applicable Oregon and national standards (e.g., the Oregon Content Standards and Benchmarks, Oregon Grade-Level Foundations, Oregon Grade-Level Standards, Common Curriculum Goals, Standards for Competent and Ethical Performance of Oregon Educators, Discrimination and the Oregon Educator, English Language Proficiency Standards). The content of the Multiple Subjects Examination is aligned with the Oregon focus areas for student learning and teacher preparation.</p> <p>Committees of Oregon educators reviewed the test framework and made revisions, as necessary, to ensure that the test framework was accurate, free of bias, job related, and important for the job of an educator in Oregon.</p>
Validate Test Content	<p>A content validation survey involving randomly selected practicing Oregon public school educators and educator preparation program faculty was conducted for each test framework to ensure that the test framework reflects the knowledge and skills considered to be important for performing the job of an educator in Oregon.</p>
Develop Test Items	<p>Next, test items were developed to assess the content defined by the test framework. Committees of Oregon educators were convened to review and approve the test items. Field testing of test items was conducted throughout the state to ensure that the test materials were accurate and reasonable.</p>
Set Passing Scores	<p>A committee of Oregon educators convenes following the initial test administration(s) to recommend the passing score for each test or subtest. The final passing scores are determined by the TSPC.</p>

Test Administration

The ORELA is offered several times a year at a number of testing sites across the state. For current information about test dates, test site areas, fees, and registration procedures and policies, refer to the current ORELA registration bulletin, available on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com.

The Protecting Student and Civil Rights in the Educational Environment Examination is conducted in a two-hour test session. Test sessions for all other ORELA examinations are four hours in length. Examinees are permitted to work at their own pace. The test schedule has been developed to allow sufficient time for examinees to complete an entire examination (up to two subtests) in one test session. Subtests are not individually timed, and examinees who are taking two subtests may spend as much of the testing time as they need on each subtest. Examinees are free to leave at any time during the test session once their materials have been collected and they have been released by the test administrator.

Score Reports

For score report dates, refer to the current ORELA registration bulletin, available on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com.

Unofficial scores will be available on the Internet at 5:00 p.m. Pacific time on the score report date for each test administration. To access unofficial scores, select "Score Reporting" on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com.

Official scores will be sent by U.S. mail on the score report date (approximately four weeks after the test date).

Each score report provides information about passing status and a total score for each test or subtest taken. Each score report is accompanied by an explanation of how to read the score report. A score report explanation is also available by selecting "Score Reporting" on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com.

PREPARING TO TAKE THE TEST

Planning Your Course of Study

Below are suggestions for preparing for the test.

To . . .

Do the Following

Assess your content knowledge

Read the test framework.

The test framework is the only source identifying the information covered by the test or subtest(s) you are taking.

- 1. Read through the entire framework to get a general picture of the material the test covers.**
- 2. The objectives included in the framework form the foundation and focus for the test items. The descriptive statements that follow each objective (indicated by bullets) are included to provide examples of possible content covered by the objective. Read each objective and its descriptive statements carefully to get a more specific idea of the knowledge and skills you will be required to demonstrate on the test.**
- 3. Once you have become familiar with the objectives, make a list of the objectives about which you feel you know the least.**



Practice your test-taking skills

Answer the sample test items.

After you have become familiar with the test objectives, review the test directions and try to answer the sample test items provided in the applicable study guide sections for your examination. Set aside several hours for this exercise. If possible, take the sample test items in a quiet room that simulates the testing environment. As you answer the sample test items, time yourself to get an estimation of how long it may take you to complete the actual test.



Develop a study plan**Focus your studies.**

1. **Identify the most appropriate resources.** These may be textbooks from courses you have taken. You may also wish to consult your class notes and other assignments; textbooks and other resource documents currently in use in Oregon public schools and districts; and publications from local, state, and national professional organizations.
2. **Develop a study schedule.** You may wish to review a book on study skills development, or consider studying with other people who will be taking the test by forming or joining a study group.

Planning for the Day of the Test

The following are tips to help you prepare for the day of the test.

Start early

Make sure you leave plenty of time to get to the test center. Report to your assigned test site no later than the reporting time listed on your admission ticket. Testing is scheduled to begin approximately one half-hour after reporting time.

Arrive on time so that you are relaxed and ready to begin the test when instructed to do so.

**Dress comfortably**

Wear layers of clothing that you can easily remove or add on (for example, a sweater or sweatshirt). This will allow you to make personal adjustments for fluctuations in room or body temperature.

Wear soft-soled shoes so that you will not disturb other examinees when you leave your seat.

**Be prepared to test**

Bring your admission ticket with you to the test site on the day of the test. Your admission will be delayed if you do not have a ticket.

Make sure you bring proper identification. Refer to the current registration bulletin, available on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com, for identification requirements.

Be sure to have several sharpened No. 2 pencils with erasers (no pens). Pencils will not be supplied at the test site.

Test-Taking Tips

The following tips for taking standardized tests are offered as suggestions that may contribute to your success and confidence during the test session.

Follow directions

At the beginning of the test and throughout the test session, follow all directions carefully, including oral directions read by the test administrator and written directions in the test booklet.

The test booklet contains directions for responding to the test items. If you do not understand something about the directions, raise your hand and ask a test administrator.



Pace your work

The test schedule is designed to allow sufficient time for examinees to complete an entire examination (up to two subtests).

Do not make any other commitments for this time period that may cause you to work more quickly than you should.

Before starting the test, flip through your test booklet(s) to review the number of test items and to set a pace for answering them.

Do not spend a lot of time on a test item that you cannot answer promptly; skip that item and move on. **If you skip a test item, mark it in your test booklet so that you can return to it later and be sure to skip the corresponding row of answer choices on your answer sheet.**

**Read carefully**

Read the directions and the test items carefully.

Read the test items closely to understand what they ask.

Read all response options.

Remember that the test items call for the "best answer." Read and evaluate all choices to find the best answer.

Do not skim the test items in an effort to save time; you may misread key words and select the wrong answer or spend more time than needed on a test item.

Read the test items, but don't read *into* them. The test items are designed to be straightforward, not tricky.

**Mark your answers carefully**

Mark your answers on the separate answer document provided. **DO NOT MARK YOUR ANSWERS IN THE TEST BOOKLET.**

Your answers to the multiple-choice items will be scored by a machine; therefore, the answer you select for each question must be clearly marked and the only answer marked.

If you change your mind about an answer, erase the old answer completely.

Do not make any stray marks on the answer sheet.

You may use any available space in the test booklet for notes, but your answers must be clearly marked on your answer sheet.

Answers to constructed-response items, if applicable, must be recorded in the appropriate section of the answer document.

If you write responses to constructed-response items in the test booklet, they will not be scored.



Choose wisely

As you read through the multiple-choice item response options, try to find the best answer. If you cannot quickly determine the best answer, try to eliminate as many of the options as possible. Then, select from among the remaining answer choices.

Your score on each test will be based on the number of multiple-choice items you have answered correctly, in combination with your scores on the constructed-response items, if applicable.

There is no penalty for incorrect multiple-choice item answers; therefore, it is better to select an answer than not to respond at all.

**Check your accuracy**

Use any remaining time at the end of the test session to check your work.

Go back to the test items that gave you difficulty and verify your work on them.

Check the answer sheet to be sure that you have marked your answers accurately and have completely erased changed answers.

**Follow the rules**

Review the Rules of Test Participation contained in the current registration bulletin, available on the ORELA Web site at www.orela.nesinc.com.

Cellular phones, personal digital assistants, and all other types of electronic information or communication devices are strictly prohibited in the testing facility.

Examinees are not permitted to take any test materials or handwritten or printed notes from the testing room, or to disassemble, copy, or reproduce the test materials in whole or in part, by hand or with the use of any device of any nature.

Violation of these rules, or those stated in the Rules of Test Participation in the current registration bulletin, may result in the voiding of your test results.