

# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education

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David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education

Dear Candidate for Educator Licensure:

The Massachusetts Department of Education looks forward to welcoming bright, capable teachers and administrators who are entering the education profession. Being an educator requires a depth of knowledge and a range of skills. Educators must know their subject matter and be able to communicate effectively with students, parents, and others in the school community.

All Massachusetts educators who seek Massachusetts licensure are required to pass the Communication and Literacy Skills test and a subject matter test, where available. These tests have been carefully developed to measure subject matter knowledge expected of an educator in Massachusetts. This *Test Information Booklet* includes information that I hope you will find helpful in preparing for the tests.

In this booklet, you will find the following:

- 1) Suggestions for preparing to take the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure.
- 2) Suggestions for approaching the test items you are likely to encounter on the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure.
- 3) Description of the scoring process.
- 4) Test objectives for this subject matter test.
- 5) Sample multiple-choice items and a sample open-response item for the test.

Best wishes as you prepare to take the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education

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## ***Introduction***

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### **Purpose of the Test Information Booklets**

The Test Information Booklets are designed to help familiarize candidates with the format and content of the subject matter tests of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®) program. Familiarity with test format and content may be a component of test preparation. The primary means of preparing for the tests is, however, the candidate's college education in the field of study.

Administrators at educator preparation institutions, as well as education faculty and arts and sciences faculty members whose students are enrolled in programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) for educator preparation, may also find the information in these booklets useful as they help candidates prepare for the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL).

### **The Test Information Booklets**

This Test Information Booklet provides information about the test for History. Other booklets cover other test fields of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL).

The Test Information Booklets provide samples of test items that illustrate the types of test items that candidates may encounter while taking a subject matter test. Not all types of test items that may appear on a test are illustrated. Actual test items are not necessarily identical in wording or format to the sample items in this booklet.

## Further Information

Further information about Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) registration and test administration procedures is available in the current version of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure Registration Bulletin. Readers may view the registration bulletin via the Internet at [www.mtel.nesinc.com](http://www.mtel.nesinc.com) or [www.doe.mass.edu/mtel](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel) or obtain copies of the registration bulletin from schools of education at Massachusetts colleges and universities, from the Massachusetts Department of Education, or from the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure program.

### LICENSE REQUIREMENT INFORMATION may be obtained from:

The academic advisor or certification officer at the Massachusetts college or university educator preparation program in which you are enrolled. A list of certification officers can be found at [www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/directory.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/directory.html); choose "Higher Education Institutions."

**Massachusetts Department of Education  
Office of Educator Licensure  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148-5023  
Telephone: (781) 338-6600  
TTY—Net Relay: (800) 439-2370  
Walk-in service: 8:45 A.M.—4:45 P.M.,  
Monday through Friday, excluding holidays**

### Web sites such as:

#### [www.doe.mass.edu/educators](http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators):

At this site you will find regulations, guidelines, and applications. Choose "Licensure," and then choose the appropriate license category. Access "Online Help" and "Apply Online" through the ELAR system. First-time users must create an ELAR profile to apply online.

#### [www.doe.mass.edu/mtel](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel):

At this site you will find a list of subject matter tests offered for each license.

Please note that you must submit to the department a complete license application, including official transcript and fees, to receive an accurate determination of the license requirements you need to meet, including which tests to take.

**Teacher preparation and resource information, MTEL updates, and answers to frequently asked questions** may be found at the Department's web site ([www.doe.mass.edu/mtel](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel)). You may also address questions to:

**Massachusetts Department of Education  
Office of Educator Preparation and Quality, MTEL Unit  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148-5023  
Telephone: (781) 338-6668  
E-Mail: [testhelp@doe.mass.edu](mailto:testhelp@doe.mass.edu)**

Questions regarding **test registration, deadlines and forms, test administration procedures, admission tickets, and test results** should be directed to:

**Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure  
National Evaluation Systems, Inc.  
P.O. Box 660  
Amherst, MA 01004-9013  
Telephone: (413) 256-2892  
Fax: (413) 256-8221**

**For Operator Assistance:** Call 9:00 A.M.—5:00 P.M. eastern time, Monday–Friday, excluding holidays

**Automated Information System available 24 hours daily**

**Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD):** (413) 256-8032

**web site:** [www.mtel.nesinc.com](http://www.mtel.nesinc.com)

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## **Test Information Booklet Order Form**



## *How to Prepare for the Tests*

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This section of the Test Information Booklet offers suggestions on how to prepare for a subject matter test in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure program. Candidates planning to take a subject matter test may find the suggestions helpful. However, this booklet is not intended to address all possible strategies for preparation.

The primary approach to preparation for taking and passing one of the subject matter tests is adequate study at the collegiate level in the content defined by the Massachusetts licensure regulations and other state policies. This content is generally described by the test objectives. Candidates who determine that they have not yet studied this content should take courses or engage in other substantial preparation activities in order to master the subject matter knowledge that is expected for entry-level teaching in Massachusetts public schools. Reading this booklet does not substitute for coursework and other preparation activities.

## **Overview of the Subject Matter Tests**

The subject matter tests include both multiple-choice and open-response test items. The number of multiple-choice and open-response test items varies across the tests.

Many fields include approximately 80 multiple-choice items and two open-response items requiring candidates to spend about 60 minutes each to prepare an adequate response. The multiple-choice items count for 75 percent of the total test score and the open-response items count for 25 percent of the total test score.

Some fields include approximately 100 multiple-choice items and two open-response items requiring candidates to spend about 30 minutes each to prepare an adequate response. For these tests, the multiple-choice items count for 80 percent of the total test score and the open-response items count for 20 percent of the total test score.

The Dance test includes approximately 55 multiple-choice items and two open-response items. The multiple-choice items count for 75 percent of the total test score and the open-response items count for 25 percent of the total test score.

The foreign language tests in Spanish, French, German, and Italian include approximately 55 multiple-choice items and two open-response items, one of which requires a written response and the other an oral response. The multiple-choice items count for approximately 67 percent of the total test score and the open-response items count for approximately 33 percent of the total test score.

The foreign language tests in Russian, Chinese, and Portuguese include approximately 55 multiple-choice items and short-answer items and four open-response items. The multiple-choice items and short-answer items count for approximately 33 percent of the total test score and the open-response items count for approximately 67 percent of the total test score.

The Latin test includes approximately 55 multiple-choice items and two open-response items. The multiple-choice items count for 75 percent of the total test score and the open-response items count for 25 percent of the total test score.

The tests may include a number of test items that do not count toward a candidate's score because they are being tried out for future administrations of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. A more detailed description of the test for History follows.

## Development of the Subject Matter Tests

Creating the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure is a complex, ongoing process. During the development of the test objectives, the Massachusetts Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval, the Curriculum Frameworks, and other key state and national documents as well as Massachusetts educators were consulted. The objectives for each test field were reviewed and validated by an advisory panel of licensed and practicing Massachusetts school and university educators. A content validation survey was conducted, using randomly sampled, practicing Massachusetts public school educators and faculty members in educator preparation programs and in the arts and sciences. Each survey participant reviewed the test objectives in his or her field to ensure that the objectives are important to the job of a Massachusetts educator and reflect the subject matter knowledge necessary for entry-level teaching in Massachusetts public schools. The test questions were aligned with both the test objectives and the educational materials relevant to Massachusetts, including the state's licensure regulations and the curriculum frameworks. The test questions were reviewed and verified by Massachusetts educators for inclusion on the test.

An individual's performance on a test is evaluated against an established standard or qualifying score. The qualifying score for each test is established by the Massachusetts Board of Education and is based in part on the professional judgments and recommendations of Massachusetts educators. Candidates who do not achieve the passing score on a test may retake it at any of the subsequent test administrations at which the test is offered.

## Structure of the Content of the Tests

While the content covered by each test in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure program is different, the structure that underlies the content of the tests is similar. In general, the structure is as follows:

- The content of each subject matter test field is organized into three to nine subareas. These subareas define the major content domains of the test.
- Each subarea includes one or more test objectives. The test objectives are broad, conceptual statements, written in language that reflects some of the skills, knowledge, and understanding that an educator needs in order to teach the test field in Massachusetts public schools.
- Each test objective is clarified and further described by a descriptive statement, providing **examples** of the types of content covered by the test objective.
- Each multiple-choice item is written to assess understanding of a test objective.
- Each open-response item is written to assess understanding of one or more test objectives.
- The number of test objectives within a given subarea generally determines the proportion of multiple-choice items that will address that subarea on a test. In other words, subareas with a greater number of test objectives will generally receive more emphasis (i.e., have a greater number of corresponding multiple-choice items) on the test than those with fewer test objectives.

The chart on the following page illustrates the relationship among subareas, test objectives, descriptive statements, and test items in a typical test field; it is followed by a sample page from the Biology test objectives that shows each element of a set of test objectives (i.e., subarea, test objective, and descriptive statement).

## Organization of Content Within a Test Field

<b>Example</b>	<b>Description</b>
Biology (Field 13)	<p><b>Test Field</b> This is the name and code number of the test field. The test field corresponds to a particular Massachusetts licensure area.</p>
Principles of Heredity and the Evolution of Life (Subarea V)	<p><b>Subarea</b> Each test field is divided into major content subareas—broad content domains within the test field that reflect an organizational principle that is understandable to individuals studying and working in the field. The number of test objectives within each subarea may vary, depending on the breadth of content contained within the subarea.</p>
Understand the synthesis of DNA, RNA, and protein. (Test Objective 0023)	<p><b>Test Objective</b> Each subarea contains several test objectives that define subject matter knowledge Massachusetts educators determined to be important to the job of an educator in this field. Test objectives are broad, conceptual statements that reflect some of the skills, knowledge, and understanding needed by educators in Massachusetts public schools.</p>
For example: processes of replication, transcription, and translation; the relationship of molecular structure to these processes; and the genetic code (including analysis of problems involving codons and anticodons). (Descriptive Statement for Test Objective 0023)	<p><b>Descriptive Statement</b> Each test objective is further elaborated by a descriptive statement that provides examples of the range of knowledge and skill included within the test objective. The examples that are provided in descriptive statements are not inclusive of all content that may be covered.</p>
<p>A team of researchers has isolated a chemical from a tropical tree that causes insects to die when they ingest it. The researchers determine that the chemical deactivates the enzyme RNA polymerase. Based on this information, it is most reasonable to conclude that the chemical leads to the death of the insects by interfering directly with:</p> <p>A. transcription of RNA from the DNA template.</p> <p>B. transport of RNA from the nucleus to the cytoplasm.</p> <p>C. translation of polypeptides from RNA molecules.</p> <p>D. excision of transcribed introns from an RNA molecule.</p>	<p><b>Multiple-Choice Item</b> Each multiple-choice item corresponds to one test objective and typically presents candidates with introductory information, a statement or question to be answered, and a choice of four responses, one of which is the best choice of the responses given.*</p> <p>*The correct response to the sample item, which corresponds to Test Objective 0023, is A.</p>

**Field 13: Biology  
Test Objectives (Excerpt)**

**SUBAREAS:**

- I. SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY**
- II. CELLS AND CELL THEORY**
- III. CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANISMS**
- IV. HUMAN BIOLOGY**
- V. PRINCIPLES OF HEREDITY AND THE EVOLUTION OF LIFE**
- VI. MATTER AND ENERGY IN ECOSYSTEMS**

**EXCERPT: SUBAREA V**

**PRINCIPLES OF HEREDITY AND THE EVOLUTION OF LIFE**

**0022 Understand the principles of Mendelian and non-Mendelian genetics.**

For example: evidence that certain characteristics are inherited; basic principles of heredity (e.g., independent assortment); the relationship of Mendelian genetics to the structure and behavior of chromosomes; crossing-over and its effect on genotype and phenotype; sex-linked characteristics; incomplete dominance and co-dominance; polygenic inheritance; non-nuclear inheritance; and application of genetic principles to solve problems involving genetic crosses.

**0023 Understand the synthesis of DNA, RNA, and protein.**

For example: processes of replication, transcription, and translation; the relationship of molecular structure to these processes; and the genetic code (including analysis of problems involving codons and anticodons).

**0024 Understand genes, chromosomes, and changes in genetic material.**

For example: modern theories regarding gene structure and function; the relationship between genes and chromosomes; types of mutations and their consequences; the influence of environment on heredity; basic methods used in genetic engineering; and applications of genetic engineering/recombinant DNA technology (including positive effects and potential risks).

**0025 Analyze the process of natural selection.**

For example: the concept of variation in populations (including genetic and phenotypic variation); the concept of selection pressure; the influence of selection pressure on species adaptations; the concept of biological fitness; and the role of selection pressure on the survival of organisms and species and on the evolution of species.

**0026 Analyze the theory of evolution.**

For example: evidence that species change over time; research methods used to investigate evolutionary history; evolutionary relationships among familiar species and taxonomic groups, including hominids; and modern and historic theories of evolution.

## **Description of the History Test**

The design of the History test will be similar to the design of tests that are currently in place for the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. Each test will be consistent with paper-based (or audio-based for sections of selected fields such as music or foreign languages) test administration procedures and will fit within an administration of up to four hours.

The History test comprises 100 multiple-choice items and two (2) open-response items. The multiple-choice section will account for 80 percent of the points available and the constructed-response section will account for 20 percent of the points available. Each open-response item is expected to take a typical examinee response time of about 30 minutes. Although you can choose how much time to spend during the test session to respond to each open-response item, each item has been created so that an acceptable response could be written within 30 minutes.

The number of multiple-choice test items on the test in a given subarea will be based on the weight assigned to the subarea for the multiple-choice section by the DOE. For example, approximately 20 of the multiple-choice items on a test form will be selected for a subarea with an assigned weight of 20 percent for the multiple-choice section. The multiple-choice items will be selected to measure the test objectives included in the subarea. The Test Overview Chart on page 33 includes information about the number of test items and subarea weighting.

Approximately 15 percent of the multiple-choice item section of each test form will include items that are nonscorable. Nonscorable items will be included so that data can be collected on their psychometric characteristics for consideration of their use as scorable items on future test forms.

For each multiple-choice item there are four response options, one of which is the best response of the choices given. There is no penalty for guessing. Candidates record their responses to the multiple-choice items on a scannable answer sheet.

The subject matter tests contain two open-response items for which candidates are typically asked to prepare a written response or to solve a problem for each assignment. These items are designed to measure the depth and breadth of the candidate's knowledge in the subject area, the candidate's understanding of fundamental concepts of the discipline, and the candidate's familiarity with field-specific methodologies. In tests of foreign languages, the open-response items typically assess speaking, writing, listening, reading, and/or cultural understanding.

The open-response items on the test will comprise a separate, independent subarea. The open-response items may be designed to require the integration of knowledge from one or several subareas and to be comparable to each other in terms of information presented, the type of response required, and the difficulty of the items from one test form to the next. Responses to each open-response item will require about 30 minutes to complete.

## **Using the Test Objectives**

The test objectives may be useful to candidates preparing to take one of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. The test objectives are based on Massachusetts licensure regulations and other state policies. They reflect subject matter knowledge that the Massachusetts Department of Education has determined to be important for educators entering teaching in Massachusetts public schools. The content described in the test objectives is typically learned through college-level coursework and other educational experiences at Massachusetts educator preparation institutions.

The test objectives are organized in such a way that each element of the test objectives can be helpful in one or more aspects of test preparation. Test objectives for each of the tests can be obtained from the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure Web site ([www.mtel.nesinc.com](http://www.mtel.nesinc.com)), from the Massachusetts Department of Education Web site ([www.doe.mass.edu/mtel](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel)), or from schools of education at Massachusetts colleges and universities. The test objectives for the test covered in this booklet are provided in the section of the booklet titled "Test Objectives."

**Review the test objectives.** The first step in preparing for one of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure is to identify the information the test will cover. The test objectives can be a helpful study tool because they define the content that will be assessed by the test you are preparing to take.

Read the entire set of test objectives for your test field to get a general picture of the material the test covers. Remember that the number of test objectives within a subarea broadly reflects the emphasis given to that subarea on the test; the weighting for the subarea is listed in the Test Overview Chart. In general, subareas with greater weightings will include a greater number of test objectives and will be covered by more multiple-choice items on the test.

**Focus your studies.** When you have become familiar with the test objectives, make a list of those test objectives about which you feel you know the least. A suggested approach for outlining the content of the test objectives and identifying those on which you need to concentrate is presented below, under the heading "Developing a Study Outline." This approach can help you set priorities for your study time. You should leave time to review the content of all test objectives, both the familiar and the less familiar ones. Keep in mind that you may improve your total test score by improving your performance in any area of the test. So, any additional preparation that you undertake may contribute to improving your total test score.

### **Developing a Study Outline**

You may wish to use the test objectives and descriptive statements to prepare an outline of the content likely to be covered on the test(s), especially the content about which you are unsure. The process described here, which is designed to be used with the Study Outline Chart on pages 9 to 11 of this booklet, may help you organize your thoughts and your future studies for the test(s) both in college coursework and through other educational activities.

You may follow this process by yourself or with others in your program, such as the members of a study group. As you read the test objectives, remember that some of the test objectives may refer to content that you are currently learning or will learn in the near future during your college preparation, while other test objectives may refer to content you may have learned earlier or elsewhere.

1. The first column of the chart lists test objective numbers, from 1 to 35. In the second column, briefly summarize the topic of each test objective, using a two- or three-word phrase (e.g., "Reading Comprehension," "Statistics and Probability").
2. Read and consider each test objective and its associated descriptive statement and envision the content likely to be covered. Try to imagine the types of questions that might be asked about that content. Consider the content in relation to courses or other educational activities that you have undertaken in college or that you might undertake in the future. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can. Participation in a study group may be particularly helpful for this task.

3. In the fourth column, indicate the extent of your knowledge and educational preparation regarding the content of each test objective. Use symbols such as "✓" to indicate adequate knowledge and preparation, "X" to indicate partial knowledge and preparation, and "?" to indicate little or no knowledge and preparation. In cases of partial knowledge and preparation, circle in the third column particular aspects of the test objective that you need to study further.
4. Beginning with areas you identified where you have partial (X) or little or no (?) knowledge and preparation, devise a plan to increase your knowledge or enhance your preparation. See the next section on "Identifying Resources" to help you find solutions to your individual needs. Note in this column resources that may be particularly useful to you.

At the conclusion of this process you will have a chart listing the test objectives (and parts of test objectives) about which you will need to learn more in preparing for the test. You will also have a plan for addressing your preparation needs.

## Identifying Resources

After you have identified the test objectives on which you will focus your time, consider the resources you may use in studying the content of those test objectives. You may determine that you have not taken some relevant courses that would have covered content that will be assessed on the test. Consult with your advisor and, on his or her recommendation, take courses that will help you strengthen those areas where your content knowledge may be less strong.

Other resources include written materials, such as textbooks from relevant classes, your class notes and assignments, textbooks currently in use in Massachusetts public elementary and secondary schools, state curriculum frameworks, and publications from local, state, and national professional organizations. In addition, people can be important resources, including other students who have taken courses related to your needs and instructors who teach such courses. Instructors may be able to guide you in finding and reviewing notes and textbooks.

**Review the sample test items.** This guide contains examples of the formats of multiple-choice items and open-response items that you may encounter on the test. It also presents sample test items and correct responses. The sample items are designed to illustrate the nature of the test items; they should not be used as a diagnostic tool to determine your individual strengths and weaknesses.

**Develop study techniques.** It is usually best to approach preparing for a test with a study plan in mind, together with a schedule for accomplishing what you need to do to feel prepared. You may also wish to obtain from either your school's library or a bookstore one of the many books available on study skills.

For some people, study groups are particularly helpful; you may want to form or join a study group with others who will be taking the test at the same time. Find out if your school sponsors study groups. Study groups are more effective once you have identified the test objectives with which you are less familiar.

A gradual study pattern over an appropriate period of time can be effective for learning unfamiliar or difficult content. In the last few days before the test, take time to review those topics with which you feel most comfortable and avoid "cramming"—trying to learn too much new material quickly.

**Use subarea information.** If you are retaking a test, the information from your score report that indicates subarea-level strengths and weaknesses may further help you determine areas for additional preparation. You may be able to improve your performance on the test by studying in those areas in which you did well in addition to studying those areas for which your performance was weak.

## STUDY OUTLINE CHART

Test Field: \_\_\_\_\_ Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Obj. #	Topic	Notes on Test Content, Knowledge, and Courses	✓, X, ?	Resources
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				

✓ = adequate knowledge and preparation; X = partial knowledge and preparation; ? = little or no knowledge and preparation

**STUDY OUTLINE CHART (continued)**

Obj. #	Topic	Notes on Test Content, Knowledge, and Courses	✓, X, ?	Resources
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				

✓ = adequate knowledge and preparation; X = partial knowledge and preparation; ? = little or no knowledge and preparation

**STUDY OUTLINE CHART (continued)**

Obj. #	Topic	Notes on Test Content, Knowledge, and Courses	✓, X, ?	Resources
24.				
25.				
26.				
27.				
28.				
29.				
30.				
31.				
32.				
33.				
34.				
35.				

✓ = adequate knowledge and preparation; X = partial knowledge and preparation; ? = little or no knowledge and preparation

## *Approaching the Test Items*

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### **Multiple-Choice Item Formats**

The purpose of this section is to describe and give examples of multiple-choice item formats that you may see on the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. This section also suggests possible ways to approach thinking about and answering the multiple-choice items. The approaches described in this section are intended as suggestions; you may want to try using them on the sample items included in this Test Information Booklet. However, these approaches are not intended to replace test-taking strategies with which you are already comfortable and that work for you.

The multiple-choice items in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure program are designed to assess subject matter knowledge described in the set of test objectives for each test field. You will be expected to demonstrate more than your ability to recall factual information; you may be asked to think critically about information, analyze it, apply it, consider it carefully, compare it with other knowledge you have, or make a judgment about it.

The test covered in this Test Information Booklet includes multiple-choice items for which you must choose one of four response options, labeled A, B, C, and D, and fill in the corresponding circle in the correct row on your answer sheet.

You may see several multiple-choice item formats in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. Not every test will include all the item formats discussed in this section, but it is in your best interest to be prepared to answer all types of items in the event that they are included on the test(s) you elect to take. On the following pages, you will find examples of the most common multiple-choice item formats and descriptions of approaches you might use to answer the items.

#### ***Multiple-Choice Item Format One: The Single Test Item***

In the single test-item format, a problem is presented as a direct question or an incomplete statement, and four response options (A, B, C, and D) appear below the question. The following sample test item from a General Curriculum test is an example of this type. (The \* indicates the best response of the choices given.)

**Example of multiple-choice item format one: a single test item**

A town planning committee must decide how to use a 110-acre piece of land. The committee sets aside 20 acres of the land for watershed protection and an additional 46 acres for recreation. What percentage of the land is set aside for either watershed protection or recreation?

- A. 19%
- B. 44%
- \*C. 60%
- D. 66%

For test items in this format, a suggested approach is to read the entire item carefully and critically. Think about what it is asking and the situation it is describing. It is best to read and evaluate *all* four response options to find the best answer; you should not stop at the first answer that seems reasonable. After reading all four response options, eliminate any obviously wrong answers, and select the best choice from the remaining answers. There is no penalty for guessing.

### ***Multiple-Choice Item Format Two: Test Items with Stimulus Material***

Some test items are preceded by stimulus material to which the test items relate. Some examples of stimulus material that may be included on a test are maps, charts, tables, graphs, reading passages, and descriptions of classroom situations. In some cases, there is only one test item related to the stimulus provided. In other cases, two or more test items are related to a single stimulus. Each stimulus is preceded by a direction line indicating how many items are related to that stimulus. The following sample from an English test includes an excerpt from a poem as the stimulus for one sample test item. (The \* indicates the best response of the choices given.)

#### **Example of multiple-choice item format two: a test item with stimulus material**

**Use the excerpt below from a poem by Queen Elizabeth I of England to answer the question that follows.**

I grieve and dare not show my discontent,  
I love and yet am forced to seem to hate,  
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,  
I seem stark mute but inwardly do prate.  
    I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,  
    Since from myself another self I turned.

In this work, the poet constructs meaning by using:

- A. understatement to emphasize the speaker's sense of incompleteness.
- B. allusion to elevate the speaker's situation.
- C. onomatopoeia to heighten the dramatic effect.
- \* D. antithesis to dramatize the speaker's inner conflict.

The following approach is suggested when responding to test items with stimulus material. First, examine the stimulus. Note how the information is presented. In this test item, the stimulus is a poetic excerpt and must be read carefully and slowly to gain a sense of the meaning of the words and their artistic use in the passage.

Now you are prepared to address the sample test item associated with this stimulus. As you consider each response option, look back at the stimulus to determine which literary device is chiefly used in the excerpt. The device that is most clearly used to construct meaning in the excerpt is antithesis, the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas. Therefore D is the correct response.

## Open-Response Item Formats

All Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure include at least two open-response items. For this test, each test form contains two open-response items for which you are asked to prepare a written response of approximately 150 to 300 words. Each open-response item will typically include:

1. contextual or background information that presents the topic of the open-response item; and
2. one or more specific directions or assignments that advise you of the elements that you are expected to provide in your response.

The following open-response item from a Political Science test illustrates the components of a typical open-response item. The first paragraph introduces the topic of the assignment—the checks and balances that regulate the exercise of power among the three branches of the U.S. government. The second paragraph, and accompanying bulleted instructions, describe the writing task candidates must undertake and what elements to include in their response.

### Sample open-response item

**Read the information below; then complete the exercise that follows.**

The U.S. Constitution creates a government of checks and balances in which legislative, executive, and judicial authority reside in separate branches of the government.

Using your knowledge of the U.S. government, write a response in which you:

- describe the powers that are given to each of the three branches of the government under the Constitution; and
- discuss how these powers enable each branch of the government to check the activities of each of the other two branches.

## Scoring Open-Response Items

Open-response items are scored holistically according to standardized procedures, using scoring scales that have been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education. In judging the overall effectiveness of each response, scorers use scoring scales that describe varying levels of performance.

As a whole, the response to each assignment must demonstrate an understanding of the content of the field. Responses are scored on the extent to which they achieve the purpose of the assignment, are appropriate and accurate in the application of subject matter knowledge, provide high-quality and relevant supporting evidence, and demonstrate a soundness of argument and understanding of the subject area.

Open-response items are scored holistically by two or more qualified educators during scoring sessions held after each administration of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. Scorers are oriented before the scoring session to ensure that all responses are scored according to standardized procedures.

**Performance characteristics.** The following performance characteristics guide scorers in considering responses to the open-response items. It may be helpful for you to be aware of these performance characteristics as you prepare for and take the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure.

<b>Performance Characteristics</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter.

**Scoring scale.** The scoring scale below, which is related to the performance characteristics for the tests, is used by scorers in assigning scores to responses to the open-response items.

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p><b>The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved.</li> <li>• There is substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved.</li> <li>• There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved.</li> <li>• There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>
1	<p><b>The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of the assignment is not achieved.</li> <li>• There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge.</li> <li>• The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples.</li> <li>• The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>

A response to an open-response item is designated "unscorable" if it is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not in the appropriate language, of insufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment. If there is no response to an open-response item, it is designated "blank."

## Sample Test Administration Documents

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### Sample Test Directions

This test booklet contains two sections: (1) a multiple-choice section and (2) an open-response item assignment section. You may complete the sections of the test in any order you choose. The directions for the open-response item assignments appear before that section.

Each question in the first section of this booklet is a multiple-choice question with four answer choices. Read each question carefully and choose the ONE best answer. Record your answer on the answer sheet in the space that corresponds to the question number. Completely fill in the space having the same letter as the answer you have chosen. *Use only a No. 2 lead pencil.*

Sample Question: 1. What is the capital of Massachusetts?

- A. Worcester
- B. New Bedford
- C. Boston
- D. Springfield

The correct answer to this question is C. You would indicate that on the answer sheet as follows:

1. (A) (B) ● (D)

Try to answer all questions. In general, if you have some knowledge about a question, it is better to try to answer it. You will NOT be penalized for guessing. **You may use the margins of the test booklet for scratch paper, but only the answers that you record on your answer sheet will be scored.**

After you have completed a section, you may go on to the next section. You may go back and review your answers, but be sure you have answered all questions before raising your hand for dismissal.

**FOR TEST SECURITY REASONS, YOU MAY NOT REMOVE YOUR NOTES OR ANY OF THE TEST MATERIALS FROM THE ROOM.** Your test materials must be returned to a test administrator when you finish the test.

If you have any questions, please ask them now before beginning the test.



DO NOT GO ON UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.

## **DIRECTIONS FOR THE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENTS**

This section of the test consists of two open-response item assignments that appear on the following pages. You will be asked to prepare a written response of approximately 150 to 300 words (1 to 2 pages) for each assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for each assignment. **You must write responses to both of the assignments. You must respond to the first assignment on pages 3 to 4 of the answer document and to the second assignment on pages 5 to 6 of the answer document.**

For each assignment, read the topic and directions carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize your response. You may use any blank space in this test booklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. **However, your score will be based solely on the version of your response that is written in the answer document.**

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

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

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

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

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

Write your response to the **FIRST** assignment on pages 3 to 4 of the answer document.

Write your response to the **SECOND** assignment on pages 5 to 6 of the answer document.



(continued from previous side)

66	A B C D	93	A B C D	120	A B C D	147	A B C D	174	A B C D	201	A B C D	228	A B C D
67	A B C D	94	A B C D	121	A B C D	148	A B C D	175	A B C D	202	A B C D	229	A B C D
68	A B C D	95	A B C D	122	A B C D	149	A B C D	176	A B C D	203	A B C D	230	A B C D
69	A B C D	96	A B C D	123	A B C D	150	A B C D	177	A B C D	204	A B C D	231	A B C D
70	A B C D	97	A B C D	124	A B C D	151	A B C D	178	A B C D	205	A B C D	232	A B C D
71	A B C D	98	A B C D	125	A B C D	152	A B C D	179	A B C D	206	A B C D	233	A B C D
72	A B C D	99	A B C D	126	A B C D	153	A B C D	180	A B C D	207	A B C D	234	A B C D
73	A B C D	100	A B C D	127	A B C D	154	A B C D	181	A B C D	208	A B C D	235	A B C D
74	A B C D	101	A B C D	128	A B C D	155	A B C D	182	A B C D	209	A B C D	236	A B C D
75	A B C D	102	A B C D	129	A B C D	156	A B C D	183	A B C D	210	A B C D	237	A B C D
76	A B C D	103	A B C D	130	A B C D	157	A B C D	184	A B C D	211	A B C D	238	A B C D
77	A B C D	104	A B C D	131	A B C D	158	A B C D	185	A B C D	212	A B C D	239	A B C D
78	A B C D	105	A B C D	132	A B C D	159	A B C D	186	A B C D	213	A B C D	240	A B C D
79	A B C D	106	A B C D	133	A B C D	160	A B C D	187	A B C D	214	A B C D	241	A B C D
80	A B C D	107	A B C D	134	A B C D	161	A B C D	188	A B C D	215	A B C D	242	A B C D
81	A B C D	108	A B C D	135	A B C D	162	A B C D	189	A B C D	216	A B C D	243	A B C D
82	A B C D	109	A B C D	136	A B C D	163	A B C D	190	A B C D	217	A B C D	244	A B C D
83	A B C D	110	A B C D	137	A B C D	164	A B C D	191	A B C D	218	A B C D	245	A B C D
84	A B C D	111	A B C D	138	A B C D	165	A B C D	192	A B C D	219	A B C D	246	A B C D
85	A B C D	112	A B C D	139	A B C D	166	A B C D	193	A B C D	220	A B C D	247	A B C D
86	A B C D	113	A B C D	140	A B C D	167	A B C D	194	A B C D	221	A B C D	248	A B C D
87	A B C D	114	A B C D	141	A B C D	168	A B C D	195	A B C D	222	A B C D	249	A B C D
88	A B C D	115	A B C D	142	A B C D	169	A B C D	196	A B C D	223	A B C D	250	A B C D
89	A B C D	116	A B C D	143	A B C D	170	A B C D	197	A B C D	224	A B C D		
90	A B C D	117	A B C D	144	A B C D	171	A B C D	198	A B C D	225	A B C D		
91	A B C D	118	A B C D	145	A B C D	172	A B C D	199	A B C D	226	A B C D		
92	A B C D	119	A B C D	146	A B C D	173	A B C D	200	A B C D	227	A B C D		

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D PAGE 2

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Seat 99902

AM

Form # 090

MA 09/16/2006

ID# : 9-999-999-9

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BOX.



Open-Response  
Item One

Response Sheet

**90 FOUNDATIONS OF READING**

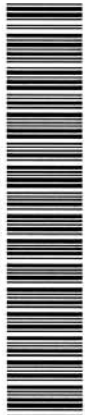
**DIRECTIONS**

The directions and the assignment are presented in your test booklet. Read them carefully before you begin to write. The lined pages of this response sheet are the only pages that will be scored for this assignment. **RESPONSES WRITTEN IN THE TEST BOOKLET WILL NOT BE SCORED. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ANYWHERE IN THIS SECTION.**

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

Lined writing area with 10 horizontal lines.

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DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

Lined writing area with 10 horizontal lines.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

**D PAGE 3**

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

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CONTINUE YOUR RESPONSE HERE.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

D PAGE 4

END OF OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM

Seat 99902

AM

Form # 090

MA 09/16/2006

ID# : 9-999-999-9

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BOX.



Open-Response  
Item Two

Response Sheet

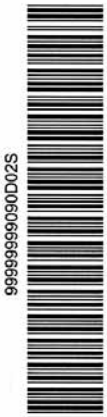
90 FOUNDATIONS OF READING

DIRECTIONS

The directions and the assignment are presented in your test booklet. Read them carefully before you begin to write. The lined pages of this response sheet are the only pages that will be scored for this assignment. RESPONSES WRITTEN IN THE TEST BOOKLET WILL NOT BE SCORED. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ANYWHERE IN THIS SECTION.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

Lined writing area for the response sheet.



999999090025

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

Lined writing area for the response sheet.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

D PAGE 5

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

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CONTINUE YOUR RESPONSE HERE.

DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

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DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THESE MARGINS.

D PAGE 6

END OF OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM

## ***The Day of the Test Administration***

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This section provides suggestions for preparing for the experience of the test administration as well as strategies you may wish to employ while taking the test.

### **Preparing for the Test Administration**

This section offers tips that you can use to prepare for the test day.

#### **Start early.**

- Make sure you leave plenty of time to have a good breakfast and to get to the test center.
- 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 (e.g., sweater, 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 candidates when you leave your seat.

#### **Take something to eat between sessions.**

- If you are scheduled to take tests at both the morning and afternoon sessions, it is recommended that you take along something to eat at the break between the two sessions.
- Eating and drinking will be permitted **ONLY** outside the test room; no food or drink may be consumed inside.

### **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 session and throughout the test, follow all directions carefully. This includes oral directions read by the test administrators and any written directions in the test booklet.
- The test booklet will contain general directions for the test as a whole and specific directions for individual test items or groups of test items.
- If you do not understand something about the directions, raise your hand and ask a test administrator.

#### **Pace your work.**

- Each test session is four hours long. The test schedule is designed to allow sufficient time for most candidates to complete the test.
- Before starting a test, flip through the booklet to determine how many test items there are and to set the pace at which you should answer them.
- You may find that you need less time than the four hours in a test session, but be prepared to stay for the entire time.
- Do not make any other commitments for this time period that may cause you to work more quickly than you should.
- 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.
- If you skip a multiple-choice item, 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 all response options.
- Remember that the test items call for the "best answer." Do not choose the first response option that seems reasonable; read and evaluate all choices to find the best answer.
- Read the test items closely so you understand what they ask.
- 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. For example, if a test item calls for an approximate answer and you skip over that detail, you could waste time performing a long computation.
- Read the test items, but don't read *into* them. The test items are designed to be straightforward, not tricky.

**Mark your answers carefully.**

- Your answers to the multiple-choice items will be scored by a machine; therefore, the answer you select 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.

IF YOU SKIP A MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEM, BE SURE TO SKIP THE CORRESPONDING ROW OF ANSWER CHOICES ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET.

- Your answer(s) to the written open-response item(s) must be recorded in the appropriate section of the answer document. Responses to the written open-response items that are recorded in the test booklet will not be scored.

REMEMBER TO RECORD YOUR RESPONSE(S) TO THE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM(S) IN THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF THE ANSWER DOCUMENT. **If you write your response to the written open-response items in the test booklet, it will not be scored.**

**Guess 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, guess 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 score(s) on the open-response items.
- There is no penalty for incorrect multiple-choice item answers; therefore, it is better to guess 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.

## ***After the Test Administration***

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### **Score Reporting**

After you have taken a test in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure program, you will receive a score report indicating:

- whether or not you met the qualifying score on the test;
- your total test score; and
- information about your performance on the subareas of the test.

Score reports will be mailed according to the schedule published in the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) Registration Bulletin. Your score(s) will not be released over the telephone or via fax.

Your test scores will be released to you and to the Massachusetts Department of Education. The score report you receive is for your information and for your personal records. Your test score(s) will also be reported directly to the Massachusetts Department of Education and will be added to your licensure application file, based on your social security number.

Your test results will also be released to the Massachusetts institution(s) of higher education that you indicated on your registration form. The institution(s) will receive information about whether you passed the test and your total test score. Information about your performance on the individual subareas of the test will be released to the institution(s) only if you give explicit permission on your registration form.

### **Interpreting Your Score Report**

Many tests are administered as part of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure program. Each test includes a set of multiple-choice items and at least two open-response items. Each test has its own qualifying score (i.e., passing score) set by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education.

In order to report test scores in a consistent way, the scores for all the tests are reported on the same scale. Test results are reported as scores in a range of 0 to 100, with a score of 70 representing the qualifying, or passing, score. A total test scaled score of 70 or higher is required to meet the qualifying score for each test.

Your total test score is based on your performance on all sections of the test. Your multiple-choice score and scores on open-response items are combined to obtain your total score, reported on the 0 to 100 scale.

For each test, the total test scaled score is derived by combining the scaled scores for the multiple-choice items and the open-response items. The scaled score for the multiple-choice items is obtained from the number of test items answered correctly. The scaled score for the open-response items is obtained from the scores assigned to the candidate's written or oral responses. If a candidate does not attempt an open-response item on the test, no points are contributed to the candidate's score for that test item.

The History test includes multiple-choice items and two open-response items. The open-response section counts for 20 percent of the total test score.